THE PRAYER BIBLE

A Modern Translation
by Elmer L. Towns & Roy B. Zuck

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ENDORSEMENTS

The Prayer Bible, a prodigious undertaking by academician, administrator, Elmer Towns, demonstrates a wellspring of creativity that joins biblical knowledge with special application to the individual's prayer life. This is done on a chapter-by-chapter basis through the entire Bible!

Don Campbell
Former President
Dallas Theological Seminary

The Prayer Bible will light a spiritual fervor and fire in your heart to know Christ and Him alone, like you have never known before.

Dr. James O. Davis
Cofounder/Billion Soul Network
Orlando, Florida

I use *The Prayer Bible* every day in my prayer ministry to God.

Jentezen Franklin
Jentezen Franklin Media Ministries

When I think of Dr. Elmer Towns, I think of a man of prayer. Not university leader, though he is a co-founder Liberty University and dean of the School of Religion and Liberty Baptist Theological Seminary and Graduate School. Not author, though he has written dozens of books and has received the Gold Medallion Award recognizing one of his books as Book of the Year. I think of a man of prayer. In *The Prayer Bible*, Dr. Towns has taken his passion for prayer coupled with his extensive knowledge of Scripture and written an outstanding resource for believers to grow in their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. *The Prayer Bible* not only helps believer's, new and old, in their devotional time each day, but also provides an excellent tool for teaching Bible studies on prayer. I highly recommend *The Prayer Bible.*

Bill Jones
President, Columbia International University

I have known Elmer Towns for over 36 years and know that he is a man of prayer. His notes in *The Prayer Bible* are an accumulation from his life of prayer and I know they will help and encourage you as you develop and strengthen your own prayer life.

John C. Maxwell
Speaker
Founder of EQUIP and The John Maxwell Company

A unique wedding of Scripture and prayer that provides a unique experience of both.

Robertson McQuilkin
President Emeritus
Columbia International University

I have said on many occasions that Elmer Towns has no unpublished thought. Now I can honestly say, "He has no unpublished prayer." This reference Bible will make an immense contribution to the Christian church and will be the shining legacy by which Elmer Towns is remembered.

Ed Stetzer
President, LifeWay Research
Author, Visiting Professor
Liberty University Baptist Theological Seminary

As one who has spent almost 20 years on the front lines of addressing and confronting the sin of child abuse, God has demonstrated to me time and time again the fundamental importance of prayer. *The Prayer Bible* will undoubtedly provide incredible encouragement and hope for so many who find themselves in life's darkest moments. I can think of no greater resource for hurting souls than a Bible that teaches and encourages prayer in every chapter and verse. I cannot wait to watch God use this amazing book to transform lives through drawing many to Himself through prayer.

Basyle Tchividjian
Professor of Law, Liberty University School of Law
Executive Director, Godly Response to Abuse in the Christian Environment
Former Division Chief, Sexual Crimes Division, 7th Judicial Circuit of Florida

I first met Elmer Towns in 1975 when he was writing on evangelism and church growth. I wondered why he was making such a deep impact on the church of Jesus Christ. Later, I realized his ministry and insights came out of his daily walk with Christ. Now, out of that daily prayer life has come a shining example to us all, i.e., *The Prayer Bible*. If you want to understand the heart of a great Christian hero, read his notes. If you want to be like Jesus Christ, use the many different prayers of this Bible to know God, and let His faith work through you.

Stan Toler
General Superintendent, Church of the Nazarene
Author and Inspirational Speaker

It's one thing to say that praying through the Scripture is good, but another thing is really to do it. Now with the magnificent *Prayer Bible,* anyone can do it. Elmer Towns has done the body of Christ a huge favor by providing this fantastic tool, and I congratulate him for it!

C. Peter Wagner
Vice-President and Apostolic Ambassador
Global Spheres, Inc.
Colorado Mission

Dr. Elmer Towns does not just write and teach about prayer, he prays!

Dr. Steve Wingfield, Evangelist
Steve Wingfield Evangelistic Association

Table of Contents

Before You Begin 11

Old Testament

Genesis 14
Exodus 103
Leviticus 165
Numbers 209
Deuteronomy 257
Joshua 307
Judges 343
Ruth 379
1 Samuel 387
2 Samuel 433
1 Kings 471
2 Kings 513
1 Chronicles 551
2 Chronicles 589
Ezra 637
Nehemiah 655
Esther 681
Job 696
The Book of Psalms 744
Proverbs 871
Ecclesiastes 921

Song of Solomon 937
Isaiah 946
Jeremiah 1037
Lamentations 1120
Ezekiel 1131
Daniel 1210
Hosea 1237
Joel 1252
Amos 1259
Obadiah 1270
Jonah 1275
Micah 1280
Nahum 1291
Habakkuk 1296
Zephaniah 1301
Haggai 1308
Zechariah 1313
Malachi 1332

New Testament

Matthew 1340
Mark 1406
Luke 1445
John 1513
Acts 1564
Romans 1626

1 Corinthians 1653
2 Corinthians 1682
Galatians 1701
Ephesians 1716
Philippians 1729
Colossians 1738
1 Thessalonians 1747
2 Thessalonians 1756
1 Timothy 1763
2 Timothy 1774
Titus 1783
Philemon 1790
Hebrews 1795
James 1822
1 Peter 1833
2 Peter 1844
1 John 1853
2 John 1864
3 John 1869
Jude 1874
Revelation 1879
Principles of Prayer 1918

Before You Begin

You hold in your hands the Word of God translated into Modern English with a prayer emphasis. This *Prayer Bible* was created to lead you into prayer as you read. Most people end up talking to God only after they read the Bible. But this *Prayer Bible* was designed so you talk to God as you read. Many phrases are turned into a prayer as, "Lord, You are my Shepherd, I will not want anything" (Ps. 23:1). As you read the Beatitudes (the blessings) you will pray, "Lord, thank You for blessing me" (Matt. 5:2).

Your translators are both graduates of Dallas Theological Seminary, known for thorough training in Greek, Hebrew and Systematic Theology. Elmer Towns wrote his thesis at Dallas examining the Greek word *Kardia*, i.e., the heart. Roy Zuck's doctorate was in Hebrew and he wrote his dissertation on *The Place of the Holy Spirit in Christian Education*. Besides their commitment to word accuracy of this *Prayer Bible*, they translated it with a focus on prayer. Isn't prayer talking with God? They have presented the Bible in a fluid modern language that you can understand and apply to your life.

You are holding a collaborative work. Elmer Towns translated the New Testament and poetic books. Roy Zuck translated the rest of the Old Testament, yet both worked together on each other's text so that they agreed on the final product. They both wanted it to be accurate and faithful to the original text. And they used the original language from the earliest and best manuscript. (When it was available in 1972, Towns read much of the original Dead Sea Scrolls posted in The Shrine of the Book, Jerusalem, Israel.)

There are guidelines when people translate from one language into another. First, translators bring their theological orientation to their work. Both Towns and Zuck believe in the verbal inspiration and inerrancy of every word in the original manuscripts. They believe the Holy Spirit guided men of God to write the Word of God without error. Because God inspired every word, they translated every word carefully according to the original meaning of the author.

The second guideline was the need to interpret the Scriptures accurately. They did that following a *historical* understanding of the biblical background and the *context* in which the Scriptures were written, and a commitment to a *literal* meaning in the mind of the author.

The third guideline was to give attention to each and every word in the Word of God. After all, the meaning of word reflects what is in the mind of the author, or speaker. But words have multiple meanings both in ancient Hebrew and Greek. Then words have multiple meanings in today's Modern English. So they chose the best Modern English words to express the ones in the original text. They followed the Golden Rule of interpretations suggest by Cooper,

> When the plain sense of Scriptures makes common sense, seek no other sense: therefore, take every word at its primary, ordinary, usual, literal meaning.[1]

The fourth guideline was to relate prayer to passages so that the reader did more than read the Bible to himself. Rather, the reader prayed each passage to God as he read the Scriptures.

THE PROVIDENCE OF GOD

Roy Zuck began translating the Old Testament in the spring of 2012. It was a one-year project. He often told Towns, "I'm having the greatest spiritual experience of my life." He explained that he had read much of the Old Testament in Hebrew, but translating the *Prayer Bible* drew him closer to God than anything in his life. Toward the end of the project his cancer gave him tremendous pain. He said, "I'm praying for strength to finish this project; it could be my greatest contribution to the cause of Christ." In the providence of God, Roy finished on Saturday, March 9, 2013, and died one week later on Saturday, March 16, 2013. Now Roy knows the original text of Scripture perfectly.

"Blessed are those who die in the Lord from now on. Yes, says the Spirit, they are blessed indeed, for they will rest from their hard work; for their good deeds follow them!" (Rev. 14:13, NLT).

NOTE

1. David L. Cooper, *Messiah: His Historical Appearance* (Los Angeles, CA: Biblical Research Society, 1958), 19.

Old Testament

Genesis

Ch 1 17
Ch 2: First Days in the Garden of Eden 19
Ch 3: The First Sun 21
Ch 4: Beginning Life Outside Eden 23
Ch 5: From Adam to Noah 25
Ch 6: Wickedness Demanded the Flood 26
Ch 7: The Flood Covers the Earth 27
Ch 8: The Flood Recedes 29
Ch 9: God's Covenant with Noah 30
Ch 10: The Descendants of Noah's Sons 31
Ch 11: Buidling a Huge Tower 33
Ch 12: The Abrahamic Covenant 34
Ch 13: Abram and Lot Separated 36
Ch 14: Abram Rescues Lot 37
Ch 15: The Lord Reaffirms His Covenant with Abram 39
Ch 16: The Birth of Ishmael 40
Ch 17: Abram Is Renamed Abraham 41
Ch 18: God Promises a Son to Sarah 43
Ch 19: Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed 45
Ch 20: Abraham Deceives Abimelech 47
Ch 21: The Birth of Isaac 48
Ch 22: Abraham's Faith Is Tested 50

Ch 23: The Death and Burial of Sarah 51
Ch 24: A Bride for Isaac 53
Ch 25: The Death of Abraham, and Esau Sold His Birthright to Jacob 55
Ch 26: Isaac Deceives Abimelech 57
Ch 27: Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing 59
Ch 28: God Calls a Deceiver to Himself 61
Ch 29: Jacob Arrives in Northern Syria 62
Ch 30: Jacob Works for Laban 64
Ch 31: Jacob Runs Away from Laban 67
Ch 32: Jacob Sends Gifts to Esau and Jacob Meets God 69
Ch 33: Jacob Meets Esau 71
Ch 34: Dinah Is Raped 73
Ch 35: Jacob Returns to Bethel 74
Ch 36: Descendants of Esau 76
Ch 37: Joseph's Dreams 78
Ch 38: Judah and Tamar 80
Ch 39: Jospeh in Potiphar's House 81
Ch 40: Joseph Interprets Two Prisoners' Dreams 82
Ch 41: Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams 84
Ch 42: Joseph's Brothers Come to Buy Grain 86
Ch 43: Joseph's Brothers Decide to Return to Egypt 88
Ch 44: Joseph's Cup Found in Benjamin's Sack 90

Ch 45: Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers 92
Ch 46: Jacob and His Family Go to Egypt 94
Ch 47: Pharaoh Welcomes Jacob 95
Ch 48: Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh 97
Ch 49: Jacob Blesses his 12 Sons 99
Ch 50: Joseph's Death 100

GENESIS*

Key Word: *Beginning* (Genesis 1:1)

Key Verses: "These are the generations of..." (2:4; 5:1; 6:9; 10:1; 11:27; 25:19; 37:2).

Theme: Genesis is a book of beginnings. It tells not only the beginning of the heavens and the earth (creation), but of plant life, animal life, and human life. It tells the beginning of marriage, worship, government, occupations, covenants, and the beginning of the Hebrew race, that is God's people, the Jews.

Genesis tells the beginning of prayer. It tells of *False-Prayer* (4:6-15), *Call-Prayer* (4:26), *Responsibility-Praying* (6:22), *Worship-Prayer* (8:20-22), *Repentance-Prayer* (12:1), *Blessing Expectation-Prayer* (13:14-18), *Protection-Prayer* (15:1), *Justification-Based Prayer* (15:2 ff.), *Intimacy-Prayer* (17:1 ff.), *Intercessor's-Prayer* (18:23 ff.), *Healing-Prayer* (20:17), *Deliverance-Prayer* (21:17), *Frightful-Prayer* (22:11-12), *Mourning the Dead-Prayer* (23:2), *Guidance-Prayer* (24:27). This is just the first half of Genesis. You cannot read Genesis without praying to God, and surely Genesis teaches us many ways to pray. *Lord, thank You for a book that explains in a logical way how everything began. I believe the creation story just as it was created, and I praise You for Your greatness and intelligence that is evident in the world I see. Amen.*

*The key verses for each Bible book are from the *King James Version* and *New King James Versions*.

Genesis 1

[1]Lord, in the beginning You created the heavens and earth, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} but You had not yet formed the earth into its final form, it was void.
[2]Everything was dark upon the face of the deep, and You—Spirit of God—hovered over the waters. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27}
[3]Then You said, "Let light appear" and light shone; {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[4]You saw that light was good, so You divided light from darkness. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [5]You called light day, and the darkness You called night, so the evening and the morning were the first day. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Creation beckons me to worship God, "The heavens reveal God's glory, and the skies display His powerful craftsmanship. Day after day they continue to reflect God's glory, and night after night we see His mighty power in the stars. They speak without using words; their message is silently seen in the sky" (Ps. 19:1-3, ELT). Lord, I can't deny Your existence or almighty power; I bow in Your presence and I confess Your greatness. Accept my praise and adoration. Amen.

6You said, "Let there be atmosphere around the earth"; You divided the waters under the atmosphere from the waters above the atmosphere. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 7You called the atmosphere sky, and it contained the air that gives life to all; {311 Morning-Prayer, John 21:4} 8so then evening and morning were the second day.
9You said, "Let the waters under the atmosphere be gathered together in one place and let dry ground appear." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:4} 10You called the dry land earth, and You called the waters seas and you said, "This is good."
11You said, "Let the earth bring forth grass and plants and trees with fruit to give life, with each having seed bearing fruit to reproduce itself." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
12So the earth brought forth grass and plants and trees with seed bearing fruit to give life, with each having seed bearing fruit to reproduce itself. And You said, "This is good;" {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 13so the evening and the morning were the third day.
14You said, "Let there be lights in the sky to divide the day from the night, and let them give light to the earth, {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 15and let them reflect seasons, days and years."

Many people have difficulty understanding anything bigger than the planet where they live. But the sun is one and a third million times larger than our planet. Antares in the next galaxy is 64 million times larger than our sun. Then Hercules in another galaxy is 100 million times larger than Antares. Finally, Epsilon is 700 million times larger than Hercules. Why so big? Because a huge God loves huge lights. And experts predict there are a trillion times a trillion stars, and the Hubble telescope continues to find more. Why so many? Because a limitless God loves an uncountable number of lights around Him. Lord, You call Yourself light (John 8:12), shine on me today to show me how to walk for You. You are light (Ps. 4:6; 27:1), take away my blindness so I can see You better and worship You with full understanding. Amen.

16-19You made two great lights, the larger to light the day and the lesser to light the night, and You also made the stars; so the evening and morning were the fourth day. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
20You said, "Let the waters swarm with living creatures, and let birds fly in the open sky." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 21And all kinds of creatures appeared

in the waters and all kinds of birds flew in the sky and You saw that it was good. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
22You said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the waters with living creatures and the sky with birds," and it was so; 23then the evening and the morning were the fifth day.
24You said, "Let the earth bring forth wild beasts, crawling things and livestock." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 25So You created livestock, crawling things and beasts of the field, and You said, "This is good." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen 45:5}
26Then You said, "Let Us make humans in Our image, and in the likeness of Ourselves." And You said, "Let them rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, the animals of the earth and everything that crawls over the earth." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam 2:19} 27So You created humans in Your image, in Your image You created them, male and female You created them. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1}
28You blessed the human and said, "Be fruitful, and multiply and fill the earth and make it obey you; rule over the fish of the sea, the birds of the air, and everything that crawls on the earth." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
29Then You said, "Have dominion over the whole earth; I am giving to you food from every plant and tree that has life in its seed-bearing fruit. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen 49:28} 30"And I am giving it as food to every animal on the earth, bird in the sky and everything that creeps on the earth."
31And You saw that everything You had made was good so the evening and the morning were the sixth day. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

God has always existed, but at an instant in time He created the earth and the heaven(s). The throne, angels, and stars didn't always exist, until God created them. Why? God didn't need them, God doesn't need anything. But God wanted something from outside of Himself, something He couldn't give Himself. He wanted authentic worship. So the angels cried out in adoration, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of hosts" (Isa. 6:3). The earth reflected His glory (Isa. 11:9). And the stars told His creative power. Lord, I worship You as the Creator of Creation, the Inventor of Space, and the Conductor of the Orchestra who originated the symphony of time. I bow in Your presence, my Lord of the Universe. Amen.

Genesis 2

First Days in the Garden of Eden

1God created everything in the heavens and the earth.
2On day seven God finished His creative work and rested, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} and 3He blessed the day to make it holy. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
4When He made the earth and the heavens, 5no shrub or plants had sprung up yet, and there was no rain, and no one to farm the soil. 6But streams from below the

surface of the earth came up and watered the ground. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
7Then God made man from the ground on day six, and breathed into his nostrils and man came alive. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}

The greatest spectacle in eternity is seen when God Almighty bends over a lifeless clay figure lying on the ground. As God bent over to breathe His breath into man, he "became a living soul" (2:7). Then man had God's breath pumping his lungs, but more importantly, man had personality; he possessed intellect to know, and emotions to feel, and a will to make choices. The Person of God created man into a person, so that "God created man in His own image" (1:27). What was man like? God said, "Let Us make man in Our image" (1:26). Lord, I'm wonderfully created in Your image, may I reflect glory back to You in all I think, say, and do. Thank You for the gift of life. Amen.

8God placed the man in a garden in the East, in Eden. 9Many kinds of trees grew there—beautiful trees that provided food for man. In the middle of the garden were two special trees—the tree of life and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
10A river that flowed from Eden divided into four main rivers. 11-12The first river is Pishon. It flows through the land of Havilah, where there is gold, resin, and onyx. 13The second river, Gihon, flows through Cush. 14The third is Tigris, which flows east of Assyria. And the fourth river is the Euphrates.
15God put man in the garden to take care of it. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
16And God told the man he could eat fruit from any tree in the garden, {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}
17except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, because if he did he would die. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
18Then God decided to make for man a wife, a helper suitable for him. {343 Partner-Prayer, Acts 3:1} 19God brought to Adam all the animals and birds He had made from the soil so that Adam could name them. And whatever he called them that was their name. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 20Adam named all the livestock, birds, and beasts. But he still had no companion. {343 Partner-Prayer, Acts 3:1}
21So God caused Adam to fall into a deep sleep. While Adam was sleeping, God took one of Adam's ribs and closed up the wound. 22Then God made a woman from the rib and brought her to him.
23Adam noted the close union he had with her, for he said, "She is bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh." He called her "woman" because she was taken out of man. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

When God made Eve from one of the ribs in Adam's side, what do you think Adam said when he first saw the woman? "Did he whistle as a man whistles at a woman? Adam was not disappointed because God makes

only perfect things. Lord, thank You for the perfect creation of both man and woman. I marvel at Your ingenuity for You made them exactly what they needed to be. Amen.

[24]Then God said that man is to leave his parents and be united to his wife, and they, like Adam and Eve, would become like one person. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [25]Though Adam and Eve were naked, they were not ashamed. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

When God brought Eve to Adam, He designed the perfect marriage, for people getting married are to leave their parents and create a new family for the expression of love, mutual help, and birth of children. They became one. Lord, thank You for the wonderful gift of love, marriage, and children. I will fulfill Your plan in my life. May I serve You through my family, and be glorified in all I do. Amen.

Genesis 3

The First Sin

[1]The serpent was very crafty, more so than any wild animal God had made. It (actually satan spoke through the snake) challenged God's word by asking the woman if He had said they must not eat fruit from any tree in the garden. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}
[2]Eve told the snake they could eat from any tree [3]except the tree in the middle of the garden. If they even touched it, they would die. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [4]Satan then contradicted God and said, "You won't die. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [5]"God knows that if you eat of this tree, you will be like Him, and you will know good and evil firsthand."
[6]Eve saw that the fruit looked good enough to eat and it looked very appetizing, and it would make her wise. So she ate some of it. Then she gave some to Adam, and he ate it.

Evil doesn't usually start by rebelling against God, but evil gets to us in subtle tiny ways. First, the snake was probably more beautiful than anything Eve had ever seen. That caught her off guard. Second, the snake planted doubt in her mind, "Has God said?" (3:1). Third, the woman perverted God's command by adding something God didn't say, "We can't even touch it." Fourth, the tempter denied God's Word, "That is not true" (3:4). Fifth, temptation wants you to believe the opposite of the truth. "You will not die!" (3:4) Sixth, temptation holds out an immediate reward that is not true. "Your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God" (3:5). Lord, I know I will be tempted to sin against You. Open my eyes to see temptation coming. Let the Holy Spirit strengthen me to say "no." Remind me of satan's desire to destroy me, and keep me pure inwardly and outwardly. Amen.

[7]As soon as they ate this fruit, their eyes were opened, and they realized they were naked. So they covered themselves by sewing together big fig leaves. {217

Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [8]Hearing that God was in the Garden, they hid among the trees. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}
[9]When God asked where they were,

Adam was used to talking daily with God. God had brought the woman to him after creating Eve out of his side. God had told Adam to care for the garden, to name the animals, and that he could eat from all trees, except the one in the center of the garden (2:16-17). God came daily to have fellowship with Adam in the cool evening. Lord, I will seek a daily relationship with You. I will listen to You by daily reading the Word of God and I will talk with You through prayer. Amen.

[10]Adam said he heard God was nearby and so he hid because he was afraid. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [11]God asked if someone told them they were naked and if they had eaten from the tree that He had told them to avoid. {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [12]Adam blamed the woman for giving him some fruit. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1}
[13]Then when God asked the woman what she had done, she said the snake tricked her into eating some of the fruit. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} [14]God told the snake it would be cursed, would crawl on its belly, and would eat dust. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [15]Also God said conflict would exist between the snake and the woman, and her offspring would crush satan's head, and satan would strike His heel. {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
[16]Then God told Eve that her childbearing would be painful, and she would still desire her husband even though he would rule over her. {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
[17]Then God told Adam that because he had disobeyed Him, he would have to work hard to produce food. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [18]God said that thorns would grow up from the ground, and he would eat plants from the field. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [19]His work would cause him to perspire. Then he would die and return to the dust from which he was made. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Adam knew he had disobeyed a simple, yet profound command from God. Many trees were in the garden. So Adam hid himself among the trees because he sinned. Isn't it our responsibility to go to God when we've disobeyed Him? Isn't the lack of prayer our fault? Since prayer is based on our relationship with God, God took the initiative to re-establish that fellowship with people. Lord, I should pray more than I do, and I should come asking forgiveness when I sin. But in my human weakness, I don't do it. Forgive me. Amen.

[20]Adam named his wife Eve, which means "living," because she would become the mother of all human beings. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[21]God then covered Adam and Eve with clothes made from animal skins. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Their clothing from animal skins means an animal was killed and blood was shed. Today our relationship with God is restored because "The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son, cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Lord, I come to re-establish my relationship with You. Forgive me for the time I've not come, but I've been in the "trees" of this world. Forgive me and cleanse me. Accept me into fellowship with You this day. Amen.

[22]God said, "Man now knows the difference between right and wrong as we do. He must not be allowed to eat from the tree of life for they will live forever." {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [23]So God sent Adam and Eve away from the Garden of Eden, and Adam had to cultivate the ground from which he had been taken. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [24]Then God placed angels on the east side of the Garden of Eden with a flaming, flashing sword to guard the entrance to the tree of life. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Genesis 4

Beginning Life Outside Eden

[1]Adam and Eve had a son whom they named Cain. She said, "The LORD helped me bring forth a man." (The name Cain sounds similar to the word for "bring forth.")}{32 Basic-Praying, Heb. 6:1} [2]Then she had another son and named him Abel. He herded sheep, and Cain farmed crops. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
[3]Eventually Cain brought some fruit to the LORD. [4]But Abel offered to the Lord some fat portions of meat from his best sheep, and the LORD was pleased with this. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} [5]But the Lord was not pleased with Cain's offering of fruit. This made Cain angry and depressed. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}
[6]The LORD asked Cain why he was angry and depressed. [7]He said to Cain, "You will be accepted if you do what is right. But if you don't, sin is waiting to attack you like a lion. Sin wants to defeat you, but don't let it do it." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [8]Cain encouraged Abel to go with him to the field, and then Cain attacked Abel and killed him. {79 Conditional-Prayer Promise, 2 Chron. 7:14} [9]When the LORD asked Cain where his brother Abel was, Cain denied that he knew, and he said he wasn't responsible to look after his brother.
[10]God said to Cain, "Abel's blood is calling out to me to punish you. [11]So you are now under a curse, and you will no longer be a farmer. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [12]And when you try to grow things in your field, you will get no results. In fact you will now wander from place to place." {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
[13]Cain admitted that the LORD's punishment was unbearable. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [14]He said, "I will be driven from the land away from Your presence, I will be a fugitive, wandering

from place to place, and if anyone finds me, he will kill me." {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}
15The LORD corrected Cain by saying that if anyone killed Cain, he would be punished seven times worse than God was punishing Cain. So the LORD put a mark on Cain so that no one would kill him. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} 16So Cain left the LORD and lived in the land of Nod, east of Eden. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8}

Cain's prayer was his justification for his human way of worshiping God. He brought a bloodless offering of fruit from the harvest of his farm. His brother offered "the firstborn of his flock" to God in obedience to God. "By faith Abel offered to God a more excellent sacrifice" (Heb. 11:4), which suggests God told Abel to bring a blood sacrifice, because faith is always a positive response to God's Word. Note the four things about Cain: (1) rebels against God's Word; (2) is angry with God; (3) murders his brother; and (4) lies to God. Note how sin influenced Cain's relationship with God. God asks, "Why are you so angry?" But Cain doesn't answer. Then God offered salvation by pointing out a lamb waiting on the other side of the door of opportunity. Cain reacts by doing nothing. When God asked, "Where is your brother?" Cain lied, "I don't know." Then Cain accepts responsibility for His eternal destiny with the confession, "Am I my brother's keeper?" Cain complains to God, but doesn't repent. He tells God, "My punishment is greater than I can bear" (v. 13). Cain blames God, "You have driven me out" (v. 14), which is the general response of the rebellious heart to God. So what does a rebellious person do? "Cain went out from the presence of the LORD" (v. 16). Lord, keep me from rebellion and hardness of heart that were found in Cain. May I never lie to You or to myself. Give me a soft heart to seek Your presence. I praise You for your continued grace. Amen.

17Cain's wife gave birth to a son Enoch. At that time Cain was building a city, so he named the city Enoch after his son. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 18Enoch had a son Irad, who had a son Mehujael, who had a son Methusaleh, who had a son Lamech. (Lamech thus was Cain's great-great-grandson.)
19Lamech married Adah and then Zillah. 20Adah had a son Jabal, who became the first to live in tents and who became a cattleman. 21His brother Jabal was the first musician, playing harps and flutes. 22Zillah. Lamech's second wife, had a son, Tubal-Cain, who made tools out of bronze and iron. His sister was named Naamah. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}
23Lamech told his wives, "I have killed a young man who had wounded me. 24But if anyone tries to get even with me, he will be punished 77 times, that is, 10 times worse than anyone who tries to get even with Cain." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
25Adam and Eve had a third son and they named him Seth. Eve said, "God has granted (Seth means 'Granted') me a son to replace Abel whom Cain killed." {410

Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[26]Later Seth had a son named Enosh. During that time people began to proclaim the name of the Lord as Lord. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}

Genesis 5

From Adam to Noah

[1]The following is a list of Adam's descendants to the tenth generation.

Men were created by God in God's likeness (v. 1). But when Seth was born "in his (Adam's) own image" (v. 3, NASB), Adam was confessing the human likeness of all future births. Lord, I confess I was born with a sinful nature, that I am limited by my sinful desires, and I will die because sin will have its way in my body. But I thank You for salvation in Christ Jesus. I praise You for a new nature that wants to do right, and I worship You for the gift of eternal life that I shall live with You after I die. Amen.

[2]When God created man to be like Himself, He made male and female, blessed them, and called them human beings.
[3]Seth was born to Adam when Adam was 130.

Two of the most tragic events in history: first, Adam and Eve disobeyed one of God's minor instructions, "Don't eat of the tree..." They didn't have to sin because God said they could eat fruit from any tree in the garden. Their children could have been a fresh new start to populate the earth; but there was a second tragedy. Cain sinned against God just as his parents did. So Adam and Eve realized salvation was not in their children. Lord, I realize there is no redemption in anything we do. I have great hope for my children, but I realize they must decide to follow You, just as I decided. They must call on Your name, just as I call on Your name. Amen.

[4]Then Adam lived another 800 years and had more children. [5]He died at the age of 930.
[6]At the age of 105 Seth became the father of Enosh. [7]Seth lived another 807 years and had other children, [8]and died at the age of 912.
[9]At the age of 90 Enosh had Kenan. [10]Enosh lived another 815 years and had other children, [11]and died at the age of 905.
[12]At the age of 70 Kenan had Mahalalal. [13]Kenan lived another 840 years and had other children, [14]and died at the age of 910.
[15]At the age of 65 Mahalalel had Jared. [16]Mahalalel lived another 830 years and had other children, [17]and died at the age of 895.
[18]When Jared was 162, he became the father of Enoch. [19]Jared lived another 800 years and had other children [20]and died at the age of 962.
[21]At the age of 65 Enoch became the father of Methuselah. [22]Enoch lived another 300 years and had other sons and daughters, [23]and lived to the age of 365. [24]Enoch walked with God, enjoying fellowship with Him, and then God took him away to heaven.

Enoch "walked with God" (5:22) after Methuselah was born, and perhaps in this birth Enoch realized God was going to judge the earth. Enoch walked so closely with God that God took him to heaven without dying. How did that happen? Enoch meditated on God as he walked and talked to God. One day he just kept walking and went to be with God, and never returned to his earthly home. Lord, I want to walk with You, talk with You, and meditate on Your goodness. I want to walk as closely to You as possible. May I please You in all I do. Amen.

25 At the age of 187 Methuselah became
the father of Lamech. 26 Methuselah lived
another 782 years and had other children
and 27 died at the age of 969 (the oldest
man to have lived). {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1}
28 When Lamech became the father of
Noah at the age of 182, he said, 29 "He
will give us comfort (comfort sounds like
the word "Noah") from our farming the
ground God has cursed." 30 Lamech lived
another 595 years and had other children
31 and died at the age of 777. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
32 When Noah was 500, he had three sons,
Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

Genesis 6

Wickedness Demanded the Flood

1 More and more people were born. 2 When
demon-controlled leaders saw that the
young women were beautiful, they took
any of them they wanted to be their wives.
{476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
3 Then the LORD said, "My Spirit will not
put up with men forever; they are mortal.
So I will limit their lives to 120 years." {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} 4 Giants
were on the earth then and afterward, and
they were known as heroes.
5 The LORD saw how bad people had
become and that everything they planned
and thought was evil all the time. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 6 He
felt bad that He had made man. It grieved
Him deeply. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

As sin seemed to run unhindered, there seemed no way to stop it. (1) God knows the wickedness of hearts and actions of everyone (6:9); (2) God opposed it, "My Spirit will not put up with men forever" (6:3); (3) God was grieved with sin (because He is holy); and (4) God said, "I will blot out whom I have created" (6:7, NASB); and (5) God planned to begin again with righteous Noah (6:8). Lord, when I see sin everywhere, I will pray against all public and private sin. I will pray most against the sin which is rebellion against You. I will pray against the sinful decisions of politicians, and pray for their salvation. Lord, be glorified in the midst of sin so that truth and righteousness prevails. Amen.

7 So He said, "I will blot out people, ani-
mals, reptiles, and birds. I am sorry I made
them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[8]However, the LORD was pleased with Noah. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [9]This is the story of Noah. He was a godly man, living a blameless life, and he lived in fellowship with God. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [10]Noah had three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth.

[11]God saw how terribly corrupt and violent everyone was. [12]Seeing how bad everyone was in all their ways, [13]God told Noah, "Because violence is everywhere, I will destroy every human being and the entire earth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [14]So make a large boat with many rooms in it, and seal it with tar inside and out. [15]Make it 450 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. [16]Leave a space of 18 inches between the roof and the sides. Put a door on one side, and make three decks on the boat.

The dimensions of Noah's large boat are similar to a three-story dormitory. It was seaworthy, the cracks were filled with pitch, and two animals from each species were taken aboard. It was a common-sense plan that would save the world. God didn't use a miracle to save the world; He used a plan that involved human initiative, skill, and hard work. In like manner the Great Commission is God's plan today to save the world, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). God doesn't use observable miracles like spaceships or angels to preach for us. God expects us to work the same way Noah worked, with initiative, skill, and hard work. Lord, I will give my all—thoughts, energy, and creativity—to reach lost people for Christ. I will use my common sense to reach them with the gospel. Amen.

[17]"I will bring a flood on the earth that will destroy every living thing and person. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [18]But I promise to keep you, your wife, your sons, and your daughters-in-law safe in the boat. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [19]"Bring into the boat two of every animal—male and female—to keep them safe. [20]Take into the boat a pair of every bird, animal, and reptile to keep them alive. [21]Store away in the boat every kind of food you and all the animals will need." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [22]Noah did all the Lord told him to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Genesis 7

The Flood Covers the Earth

[1]Finally the day came when the LORD said to Noah, "Go into the boat with all your family, for you above all the people on the earth are righteous.

When the ark was built, the Lord invited Noah and his family to "come into the ark," which is a type or symbol of God's invitation to all lost people today. Because there is coming judgment—on this earth or in hell—God invites lost people to come to salvation. (1) The invitation is given by God. (2) He urges the unsaved to take advantage of His perfect salvation. (3) God offers a place of protection. (4) Salvation is offered in view of coming judgment. Lord, I pray for the

salvation of all my family members who are unsaved. I also pray for friends and associates outside of Christ. Lord, I pray You will convict them of their sin, give them a desire to obey You, and compel them to desire salvation. Amen.

[2]Take seven pairs of animals for food and for sacrifice, and two of each of the other animals. [3]Take seven pairs of every kind of bird. That way these animals and birds will be alive after the flood. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}
[4]"In one week I will start sending rain that will continue for 40 days and nights, and this will destroy all the other animals I have made." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
[5]So Noah did what the LORD told him to do. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [6]When the floodwaters came, Noah was 600 years old. [7]He and his wife and three sons and three daughters-in-law boarded the boat. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Noah had faith that enabled him to believe and act on the words of God. His faith was so deep that he obeyed without question. Then scoffers ridiculed him for building a boat so far from water and it had never rained. "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark" (Heb. 11:7). Lord, give me faith to believe Your Word so deeply that I will act on Your promises and warnings. I believe in the coming rapture of all believers and coming tribulation on all unsaved. So I pray for my unsaved family and friends. Because I believe You will judge all unbelievers, I pray by faith for people today to get saved. Amen.

[8]With them the animals—two of each of the unclean animals and seven pairs of each for food and sacrifices—[9]male and female they entered the boat, as God had told Noah. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[10]In one week, as the LORD had said, the floodwaters came. [11]On the 17th day of the second month, when Noah was 600 years old, water under the earth started gushing up and heavy rain poured down from the sky. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [12]This continued, as the LORD had said, for 40 days and nights. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[13]Noah and his family had gone into the boat. [14]With Noah in the boat were all kinds of wild animals, domestic animals, reptiles, and birds. [15]They came in pairs into the boat, [16]male and female of every animal, as God had told Noah to do. Then the Lord closed the door. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10}
[17]For 40 days and nights the floodwaters came, lifting the boat high above the ground. [18]As the water got deeper, the boat floated on the water. [19]The water covered the highest mountains on the earth. [20]In fact the highest peaks were covered by 22 feet of water.
[21]Every living thing on earth and every human being perished. [22]Everything that breathed died by drowning. [23]Every living thing on earth died. People, animals, reptiles, and birds were all wiped out. Only Noah and his family and the animals he

took into the boat lived. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}
[24]The water covered the earth for five months—150 days.

Genesis 8
The Flood Recedes

[1]God didn't forget Noah and the animals in the boat. He sent a wind to cause the waters to go down. [2]He stopped the underground waters from gushing up, and He made the water from the sky stop falling. [3]Gradually the water went down for 150 days. [4]Exactly five months after the rain started, the boat rested on the mountains of Ararat. [5]For another three months the water went down so that Noah and his family could then see mountaintops. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}

After God punishes sin, He puts everything behind Him and doesn't forget those who faithfully serve Him. Lord, thank You for Your mercies in salvation and thank You for the spiritual gifts You've given me and opportunities to serve You. Thank You for physical life and health. While I'm not as strong as some, I'm healthier than others. Thank You for new mercies for this day to serve You. Amen.

[6]After 40 days Noah opened the window in the ark, and [7]he sent out a raven that kept flying till the earth was dry.
[8]Then to see if the water had gone down, Noah sent out a dove. [9]The dove could find no place to land, and so it flew back to the boat. Noah reached out and took the dove back into the boat. [10]Seven days later Noah sent the dove out again. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} [11]This time, when the dove returned in the evening, it had an olive leaf in its beak. Noah knew from this that the water was going down. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [12]A week later Noah sent the dove out again, and this time it did not return. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14}
[13]When Noah was 601 years old, about a year after the flood started, he looked out and saw that the ground was dry. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [14]Then two months later, exactly a year and 10 days after the rain started, the earth was completely dry.
[15-16]God told Noah to come out of the boat with his family and [17]to bring out all the animals so they could breed and reproduce.
[18]So Noah and his family of seven left the boat. [19]And all the animals in the ark came out. {369 Prayer-Journey Prayer, Ps. 126:5-6}
[20]Then Noah built an altar to the LORD and sacrificed on it some of the clean animals and birds as burnt offerings to the Lord.

The altar Noah built was a symbol of his priorities. Some might have doubted what he did, because some of those few animals were needed for food. But Noah put God first. Lord, forgive me when my doubts motivate me to compromise my obedience to You. I will bring my offerings on the first day of the

week and put You first in my life and belongings. Amen.

21The LORD was pleased with the sacrifice, and He said, "I will never again curse the ground, though people are sinful even from their childhood. And I will never again destroy all living things as I've done with the flood. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 22As long as the earth remains, there will be planting and harvesting, cold and heat, summer and winter, and day and night." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

Because Noah put God first as an act of faith, "The Lord was pleased with the sacrifice" (8:21). In the same way, we want to please the Lord in all we do because "the Father is seeking such to worship Him" (John 4:23). Lord, be pleased with all I do to serve You. Be pleased with the sacrifice of my words to You. "Let us continually offer the sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of our lips, giving thanks to His name" (Heb. 13:15). Amen.

Genesis 9

God's Covenant with Noah

1God blessed Noah and his sons, and He told them, "Have many children and fill the earth again with many people. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 2All animals, birds, reptiles, and fish will be afraid of you, for I have placed them under your power. 3They will be food for you just like the plants you have eaten. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

4"But do not eat any meat that still has blood in it. 5If an animal kills someone, it must die. And if any man kills another person, he must die. 6To kill someone is to kill a person made in My image. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God made an eternal covenant with Noah that extended to all people on the earth, and would last forever. (1) He would not judge the earth with water again (9:15); (2) mankind is responsible to enact the death penalty for those who murder another (9:6); (3) the order of seasons was established (8:22); (4) mankind could eat meat, whereas people were probably vegetarians. Lord, thank You for Your promises of protection from a judgmental flood, and Your assurance of the predictability of the seasons. Lord, help my culture to be properly responsible for the murderers among us. Amen.

7"Have many children and repopulate the earth." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

8Then God told Noah and his sons, 9"I promise you and your descendants {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and 10all the animals that were with you on the boat—birds, livestock, and wild animals—11that I will never again destroy life and the earth with a flood.

12-13"The rainbow I have put in the sky will be a sign of My promise to you and every living thing. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 14When I send clouds and a rainbow appears, 15I will

keep My promise to you and all living things that I will never again destroy all life by a flood. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 16Whenever a rainbow appears in the clouds, I will remember My promise. 17This is the sign of the promise I have made to all life on the earth."

18Noah and his sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, came out of the boat. (Ham is the ancestor of the Canaanites.) {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 19Everyone who is scattered across the earth has descended from these three sons.

20Noah was a farmer and he planted a vineyard. 21When he drank some wine from the vineyard, he got drunk and was lying naked in his tent. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 22Ham, Canaan's father, saw his father and went outside to tell his two brothers. 23Shem and Japheth took a robe, held it over their shoulders, and walked in backwards and covered their father as they looked the other way so they wouldn't see their father naked. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

24When Noah woke and learned what his youngest son Ham had done, he cursed Ham's descendants. 25He said, "Cursed be the Canaanites. They will be slaves of the descendants of Shem and Japheth."

26Then Noah said, "May the LORD bless Shem, and may Canaan be his servant. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 27May Japheth have more land and may he share in God's blessings to Shem, and may Canaan be his slave."

28Noah lived 350 years after the flood, 29and he died at the age of 950. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Noah preached against riotous living (Luke 17:26, 27) and ungodliness by which "he condemned the world" (Heb. 11:7). Yet when Noah got old and the challenge of ministry was gone, he got drunk (9:21). Be careful of "old men's sin" of forgetting in old age the vows made in youth. Did Noah sin because there were no more "worlds to conquer"? Did old age soften his self-discipline? Did old age blunt his mind so he didn't think clearly? Or did satan get to Noah when his guard was down? Those who are entering old age should pray, Lord, keep my mind and body strong to resist sin. Keep my memory keen of the victories I had in my youth. Protect me so I don't sin against You, and lose my testimony before the world. Strengthen me daily with Jesus Christ's power. Amen.

Genesis 10

The Descendants of Noah's Sons

1After the flood Noah's sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth, had many descendants. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

2Japheth's sons included Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 3Gomer's sons were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah. 4Javan, Japheth's son, had Elishah, Tarshish, the Kittim, and the Rodanim. 5Their descendants became seafaring nations, each with a different language.

6The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 7Cush's sons were Seba,

Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabtecah. And Raamah's sons were Sheba and Dedan (in Arabia). [8]One of the descendants of Cush was Nimrod, who became a great warrior. [9]In fact Nimrod was such a great hunter that people referred to him in a proverb, "You are like Nimrod, a great hunter before the Lord." [10]He ruled in Babylonia, over the cities of Babylon, Erech, Akkad, and Calneh.

Nimrod's name means "Rebel." Many commentators think he hunted people, not animals. He began the city of Babel (10:10). He established the nation Babylon, an autocratic, despotic government of tyranny (satan's rage against God was reflected through Babylon.) Nimrod was "Before the LORD" (v. 9, twice), which means his evil attracted the attention of God. Dictators are not the Antichrist who will arise in the end times. They only represent the spirit of Antichrist. The events in chapter 11 probably happened before chapter 10, which is an ethnological table that lists the nations of the ancient world. Lord, there always seems to be another political tyranny that destroys world peace. I pray against these evil antichrists who destroy world peace. Raise up good leaders who represent truth, righteousness, and peace. Amen.

[11]Nimrod then went to Assyria, where he built Nineveh, Rehoboth Ir, Calah, and Resen. [12]Resen, located between Nineveh and Calah, became the major city of the empire.

[13]Ham's son Mizraim became the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, [14]Pathrusites, Casluhites (from whom came the Philistines), and Caphtorites.

[15]Ham's son Canaan was the father of Sidon and the ancestor of the Hittites, [16]Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, [17]Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, [18]Arvadites, Zemarites, and Hamathites. [19]The Canaanite tribes spread all the way from Sidon south to Gerar and Gaza and east to Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, near Lasha. [20]These are Ham's descendants in various territories and speaking various languages.

[21]Shem, Noah's oldest son, was the ancestor of the descendants of Eber. [22]Shem had five sons: Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Luz, and Aram. [23]Aram had Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. [24]Arphaxad had Shelah, and Shelah had Eber. [25]Eber's two sons were Peleg (meaning "Division"), so named because in his day people separated and dispersed. Eber's second son was Joktan. [26]Joktan was the ancestor of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, [27]Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, [28]Obal, Abimael, Sheba, [29]Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. [30]Their land extended from Mesha toward Sephar in the hill country of the east. [31]These are the descendants of Shem, according to their tribes, languages, and geographical locations.

[32]These are Noah's descendants, who after the flood spread as nations all over the world.

Christians are commanded by Paul to intercede for the nations, "Therefore I exhort first of all that supplications, prayers, intercessions, and giving of thanks be made for all men, for kings and all who are in authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable life in all godliness and reverence" (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). The reference to "all kings and all who are in authority" includes all nations. Therefore, as you read the Table of Nations in chapter 10, pray for God to work in each nation. Some of these nations have had great revivals and Christian influence in the past. Can't God do it again? Lord, I pray peace for every nation in the world, but I know there will be no peace until You, Jesus, the Prince of Peace, returns to rule the world. Amen.

Genesis 11

Building a Huge Tower

1 At first everyone spoke one language. 2 As
people moved eastward, they settled in the
plains of Babylon. 3-4 The people said, "Let's
make bricks and tar (instead of stones and
mortar) by which to build a great city with
a tower reaching to the sky. This can be a
monument to ourselves, and it will keep us
from scattering all over the world." {424
Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}
5 When the LORD saw the great city
and the tower, 6 He said, "If these people
can do this with their common language,
soon they will be able to do anything they
want. 7 So let's go down and make them
speak different languages. That way they
won't understand each other." {163 Fear
of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 8 That's how the
LORD scattered them all over the earth.
9 The city was called Babel (meaning "con-
fusion") because God confused the people
with many languages. Then the people
scattered over the earth. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God is interested in the world; He created all of it and wants people to live in every part. God told Noah, "Have many children and fill the earth again" (9:1). He wanted His people to multiply "abundantly in the earth" (9:7). But mankind wanted to establish a one-world culture in opposition to God. They refused to scatter into all the world. Mankind said, "Let's build a great city and tower" (11:4), but God said, "Come, let Us go down" (11:5). God made them speak different languages (11:7). If it were just word symbols, they could have re-learned new symbols in a short time and continued working. But words stand for values and attitudes. When God gave them new words, He gave them new core values which made them different in culture and ethnic groups. Thus the different races came from the tower of Babel. Lord, help me see the differences in each cultural race, and love people for who they are. Also help me see how people are the same, and all represent one world brotherhood. I pray for the evangelization of all the ethnic groups of the world (Matt. 28:19; 24:14). Amen.

10 The account of Shem's line up to Abram is
as follows. Two years after the flood, when

Shem was 100 years old, his son Arphaxad was born. [11]Then Shem had other children and lived another 500 years.
[12]At the age of 35 Arphaxad had Shelah. [13]Then he had other children, and lived another 403 years. [14]At the age of 30 Shelah had Eber. [15]Then he had other children, and like his father Arphaxad, he lived another 403 years.
[16]When Eber was 34, he had Peleg. [17]Then he had other children and lived another 430 years. [18]When Peleg was 30, he had Reu. [19]Then he had other children and lived another 209 years.
[20]When Reu was 32, he had Serug. [21]Then he had other children and lived another 207 years. [22]When Serug was 30, he had Nahor. [23]Then he had other children and lived another 200 years.
[24]When Nahor was 29, he had Terah. [25]Then he had other children and lived another 119 years. [26]After Terah was 70, he had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[27]The account of Terah's line is as follows. Of his three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran, the latter became the father of Lot. [28]Haran died in Ur of the Chaldeans where he was born, and he was survived by his father Terah.

We see the beginning of the Jewish people in chapter 11. God separates one river out of the ocean of humanity through whom to focus His work. The choice of Abraham was based in the heart and unfathomable mind of God.

"How odd of God to choose the Jews,[1] And use that race to show His grace." "But odder still His plan to see, To use the likes of you and me."[2] Lord, thank You for choosing Abraham and through him giving us Scripture and Jesus Christ. Lord, thank You for Your unfathomable choice of me and Your plan to use me. Amen

[29]Abram's wife was Sarai, and Nahor's wife was Milcah, his niece. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} [30]Sarai was unable to have children.
[31]Terah took his son Abram, his grandson Lot (son of Haran), and his daughter-in-law Sarai, and left Ur of the Chaldeans to go to Canaan. But when they arrived in Haran, they settled there. [32]Terah died in Haran at the age of 205. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Genesis 12

The Abrahamic Covenant

[1]The LORD had told Abram, "Leave this country of Ur with your family and relatives, and I will show you where to go. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [2]I will make you the father of a great nation. I will bless you and make you famous. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} [3]I will bless anyone who blesses you and curse anyone who curses you. Everyone will be blessed because of you." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[4]When Abram left his country, taking Lot with him, he was 75 years old. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [5]Abram took Sarai

and Lot and all their belongings and servants they had acquired in Haran, and they moved to Canaan. [6]In Canaan they arrived in Shechem and set up camp by the tree of Moreh, where the Canaanites were living. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
[7]God said to Abram, "I will give this land to your descendants." So Abram built an altar there in memory of the Lord's visit to him. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Sometimes God makes His presence more real to us than at other times. It's as though we can actually feel the presence of the Lord with us when we pray. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} While we can't go on our feelings, it's a wonderful confirmation to feel His presence when we pray. What's that feeling like? Sometimes you walk outside and you know it's about to rain. You can feel the moisture in the air, even though you can't see rain on the street, nor are the leaves wet. But, you can feel the atmospheric rain; just as we can feel the atmospheric presence of God. Lord, I know You are always with me because You are omnipresent, that is, You are everywhere present at the same time. But thank You for those times when I pray confidently, because I feel Your presence with me. Amen.

[8]Abram then traveled south and camped between Bethel on the west and Ai on the east. Abram built another altar there and worshiped the Lord. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [9]Then he traveled on south to the Southern Desert.
[10]Because of a shortage of rain, crops, and food in the land Abram went to Egypt to be there for a while. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [11]As they approached Egypt, Abram said to Sarai, "You are very beautiful. [12]So when the Egyptians see you, they will kill me so they can have you. [13]So tell them you are my sister. Then they will treat you well and will spare my life." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [14]When Abram arrived in Egypt, the Egyptians saw how beautiful Sarai was. [15]Pharaoh's officers told Pharaoh about her, and they took her into the palace. [16]Because of her, Pharaoh gave a lot of gifts to Abram, including livestock, servants, and animals.
[17]The LORD then sent a terrible disease on Pharaoh's family because of Sarai. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [18]So Pharaoh called in Abram and asked, "What have you done? Why didn't you tell me she is your wife? [19]Why did you say, 'She is my sister,' thus making me willing to take her as my wife? She is your wife, and so take her and go." [20]Then Pharaoh told his men to let Abram and Sarai leave with their belongings. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

We read the amazing statement, "The Lord appeared to Abram" (12:7). Did Abram see the shekinah glory cloud, or did God appear to him in something like a burning bush that didn't burn up, as God appeared to Moses (Exod. 3:2)? The Bible doesn't tell us how God appeared, but it was probably more than the atmospheric presence we feel. Lord, I know You heard my prayers, because You promised in Scripture You will do it (John

14:13, 15). Also You hear me pray because You live in my heart (Gal. 2:20). But, Your atmospheric presence confirms You hear me when I pray.
Why did God appear to Abram? Because when God told him to go to a land he had never seen, Abram obeyed. And Abram worshiped at an altar he built (12:7). Jesus said, "The Father seeks individuals to worship Him" (John 4:23, ELT), so when we obey Him and worship Him, the Father comes to receive our worship. Lord, when I do Your will and when I worship You, then I get an added blessing: I get to enjoy Your confirming atmospheric presence. Amen.

Genesis 13

Abram and Lot Separated

[1]Abram, Sarai, and Lot went from Egypt to the Southern Desert with all their belongings. [2]Abram was very rich in livestock and silver and gold. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [3]Abram traveled from the Southern Desert and came to Bethel {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [4]where earlier he had built an altar. There he proclaimed the LORD's name. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[5]Lot too was wealthy, with sheep and goats and many tents. [6]But with the Canaanites and Perizzites there too, there wasn't enough land for all of Abram's and Lot's belongings. {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20} [7]Abram's herdsmen and Lot's herdsmen started quarreling over the use of the land. [8]Abram told Lot, "This quarreling needs to stop. After all, we are close relatives. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [9]I suggest we go separate ways. If you move to the east, I'll stay here. Or if you want to stay here, I'll go east." {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20}
[10]Lot saw that the fertile plain of the Jordan Valley near Zoar was well watered, like the Garden of Eden and like Egypt. (This was before the LORD destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.) {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [11]Lot chose the Jordan Valley to the east, and left Abram. {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7}
[12]Abram stayed in Canaan, and Lot lived near the cities of the Plain, settling down near Sodom, {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7} [13]where the people were unusually wicked and were terrible sinners before the Lord. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[14]After Lot left, the LORD said to Abram, "Look in every direction. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12}

God told Abraham to walk in every direction and see what He was giving him. The land was possessed by pagan nations, but God wanted to give it to him. What does God want to give to you? Once Liberty Mountain was owned by U. S. Gypsum, so Jerry Falwell walked the length and width of the rabbit trails, praying and claiming the Mountain. Today, Liberty Mountain and over 6,000 acres are owned by Liberty University. Lord, I will go to the place You

want me to possess. I will walk around it and claim it for Your work. Amen.

15 All the land you see I will give to you and
your descendants forever. 16 Your descen-
dants will be as numerous as dust. {47
Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 17 So
walk across the land and explore what I am
giving you." {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen.
13:17}
18 Abram moved to be near the oaks of
Mamre at Hebron. There he built another
altar to the Lord. {541 Worship-Prayer,
John 4:23}

Prayer walking is defined as "praying on site, with insight." Before Abraham could walk and pray, God told him, "All the land you see I will give to you and your descendants forever" (13:15). You have to see it before you can pray in faith, or walk in faith. Lord, I will walk around the "thing" You want me to possess. Give me a vision of what You desire; I will walk and pray for it. Amen.

Genesis 14

Abram Rescues Lot

1 Four kings—Amraphel, Arioch. Kedor-
laomer, and Tidal—attacked five kings—
Bera, Birsha, Shinah, Shemeber, and the
king of Bela. 2 These five were all near the
cities of the Plain, including Sodom and
Gomorrah. 3 These five kings gathered
their military forces near the Salt Sea.
4 The five were subject to Kedorlaomer for
12 years, but they rebelled in the 13th year.
5-6 In the 14th year the four kings defeated
several peoples—the Rephaites, Zuzites,
Emites, and Horites. The Horites were in
the countryside near Mount Seir, as far as
El-Paran near the wilderness.
7 The four then went to En Mishpat (also
called Kadesh) and defeated the Amale-
kites and the Amorites living in Hazezon
Tamar.
8-9 The armies of the five kings prepared for
battle against the four in the Valley of Sid-
dim near the Salt Sea.
10 But the valley had many asphalt pits,
so that when the soldiers of the kings of
Sodom and Gomorrah fled, some fell into
the pits. But others escaped to the hills.
{141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} 11 The
four kings took all the goods of Sodom
and Gomorrah, including all their food,
and left. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2}
12 Also they captured Lot, Abram's nephew,
who lived in Sodom, and they took all
his belongings. {29 Backslider's-Denied
Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}
13 Someone from Sodom escaped and told
Abram the Hebrew, who was living near
the trees of Mamre the Amorite. Mamre
and his relatives Eshcol and Aner were
Abram's allies. {296 Loving-People Prayer,
James 2:8} 14 Hearing that Lot had been
captured, Abram took 318 of his ser-
vants and pursued Kedorlaomer's army as
far north as Dan, about 150 miles. {334
Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}
15 Dividing his men, Abram pursued the
enemy during the night as far north as
Hobah, beyond Damascus about another
50 miles. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps.
88:3} 16 Abram rescued Lot and all the loot

the enemy had taken, and women and others. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

Sometimes we must move into action quickly. Abram heard that Lot had been captured by a raiding band of soldiers from Mesopotamia (the area Abram was from). Abram gathered all his men trained to fight, and some from other tribes who suffered from their raid. In a night attack, Abram's soldiers defeated the raiding army. Abram did something because he had to save his nephew, Lot. Lord, when an emergency comes, may I not forget emergency prayers. Sometimes we must act decisively because of an accident, sickness, or crisis that happens to our family or friends. It may not be our responsibility, but we are dragged into a "mess" for some reason. When we don't know what to do—pray! This may be called desperate prayers or emergency prayers, but we must bring God and His resources into the crisis. Lord, when everyone else panics, help me keep a level head to think soundly. Help me know what to do. Help me do it with authority so I lead others to do the right thing. Then beyond all that humans can do, send Your resources to solve the problem. Amen.

17 After Abram defeated Kedorlaomer and the kings with him, Bera, king of Sodom, went to meet Abram near Jerusalem in the Valley of Shaveh (the King's Valley). {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2}
18 Melchizedek, king of Jerusalem and priest of God Most High, took bread and wine to Abram. 19 Melchizedek gave Abram this blessing: "May God Most High and Creator of heaven and earth honor Abram. And may God Most High be honored for giving you victory over your enemies." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}
20 Then Abram gave Melchizedek a tenth of all the goods he had recovered. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5}
21 Bera said to Abram, "Give me my people who were captured, but keep the goods for yourself."
22 Abram said to Bera, "I have promised the Lord God Most High, Creator of heaven and earth, {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
23 that I won't keep anything of yours, not even a piece of thread or a sandal strap. That way you can never say you are the one who made Abram rich. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 24 Yes, I'll accept what these men have eaten. But give some of the loot to Aner, Eshcol, and Mamre, my allies." {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

When Abram returned home, he was met by Melchizedek, king of Salem (Jerusalem). There in the Kidron Valley, far below the towering walls of the city, Melchizedek gave Abram a banquet, and he blessed Abram. When we bless others, we are adding spiritual value to their lives. Melchizedek was adding spiritual riches to Abram's life. Abram had won the spoils of war, namely, animals, clothing, gold, silver, etc. Now he had the blessing of God who possesses heaven and earth. Lord, beyond all the money and

property and "stuff" I gather in this life, I want Your spiritual riches. Amen.

Genesis 15

The Lord Reaffirms His Covenant with Abram

[1]Later the LORD spoke to Abram in a vision, saying, "Don't be afraid, Abram. I will protect you like a shield. And I will bless you greatly." {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

Because Abram defeated the larger invading army of four nations (14:1), he might have been afraid of a counterattack. So God came to Abram and told him not to be afraid (15:1). That meant, "Don't be afraid of what those enemies might do to you." Why? Because the Lord said, "I am your shield" (15:1). When you are afraid of attacks and retaliation, remember to pray protectively, because God can protect you when no one else can do it. Lord, all kinds of dangers are in this world; protect me from friends, enemies, swindlers, robbers, and crazies. Protect me when I can't protect myself. Protect me when I don't know I need protection. Protect me from all kinds of dangers that would steal from me and compromise me or kill me. May nothing come into my life except the things that are Your will. Amen.

[2]Abram responded, "O sovereign Lord, what good will your blessings be since I don't have a son, and my servant Eliezer will inherit my wealth. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [3]With my having no children, this servant of mine will inherit everything."

[4]The LORD said, "No, Eliezer will not be your heir. You will have a son of your own, and he will inherit your estate." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

[5]God then took Abram outside and told him to try to count the stars. He told Abram that his offspring would be innumerable like that. [6]Abram believed the Lord, and God declared him righteous because of his faith. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31}

[7]God then said, "I am the LORD who brought you out of Ur of the Chaldeans to give you this land." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [8]Abram asked, "O sovereign Lord, how can I be sure of that?"

[9]God said, "Bring me a three-year-old cow, a three-year-old goat, and a three-year-old male sheep, and a dove and a young pigeon." [10]Abram brought them to Him, cut them in half, and separated the halves, but he did not cut the birds in half. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [11]Vultures came down to eat the carcasses, but Abram shooed them away.

[12]That evening Abram fell into a deep sleep, and saw a terrifying vision in deep darkness. [13]The LORD said, "Your descendants will be enslaved in a strange country for 400 years. [14]But I will punish that nation, and in the end your offspring will leave with many belongings. [15]You will die in peace at a ripe old age. [16]After four generations your descendants will return here, when the sins of the Amorites will

be ready to be punished." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
17When darkness came, Abram in his vision saw a smoking pot and a flaming fire move between the two halves of the animals. 18The LORD promised Abram, "I will give this land to your descendants—from the river at Egypt's border to the Euphrates River, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 19the land of the Kenites, Kenizzites, Kadmonites, 20Hittites, Perizzites, Rephaites, 21Amorites, Canaanites, Girgashites, and Jebusites."

Abram gave away all the spoils of war. He was not a lustful man. So God told him, "I will protect you" (15:1). When you have God, who owns heaven and the earth, why be lustful of things? God can give you more than you could ever make with hard work, or by winning battles. Lord, I lift my hand to You as Abram did, for You are my reward. I will be satisfied with the belongings You give me. Amen.

Genesis 16
The Birth of Ishmael

1Since Sarai could have no children, {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} 2she took her Egyptian maid Hagar to Abram and said, "The LORD has kept me from getting pregnant, so sleep with Hagar and her child will be mine." Abram agreed. 3When Sarai gave Hagar to her husband, this was 10 years after they had arrived in Canaan.
4So he slept with her. But from the moment she knew she would have a baby, Hagar was mean to Sarai. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 5Then Sarai blamed Abram for the way Hagar was treating her. "I gave her to you and now that she's pregnant and I'm not, she hates me. The LORD will make you pay for this." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
6Abram said, "She is your slave, so do with her whatever you want." So Sarai treated Hagar so badly that she ran away. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}

Because of Sarah's jealousy, Hagar took water and food and ran away from the camp of Abraham. She was Egyptian, so she headed home to Egypt, but got lost in the desert. She was about to die from the harshness of the desert but God protected her. In response she declared, "Thou God seest me" (16:13, KJV). How many times has God protected you from danger and you didn't know it? Did you praise God for His presence in danger? Lord, thank You for protecting me from danger in the past. I am alive this day because of Your providence. I ask for Your protection in the future. Amen.

7Finding Hagar near a desert spring by the road to Shur, 8the angel of the Lord said, "Hagar, what are you doing out here in the desert?" She answered, "I'm running away from Sarai." {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 9The angel said to her, "Go back and submit to Sarai. 10I'll give you more descendants than you can count.

{42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

11"You are pregnant, you will have a son, and you are to name him Ishmael (meaning 'God hears') because the LORD has heard about your misery. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 12He will be like a wild, untamed donkey. He will be against everyone, and everyone will be against him. Though living near his brothers, he will be at odds with them."

13Hagar named the LORD, "You are the God who sees me." This was because she had seen Him and lived to tell about it. 14Later the people called the well near her Beer Lahai Roi, which means "The Well of the Living God Who Sees Me." It is located between Kadesh and Bered. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

15Hagar gave birth to a son and named him Ishmael. 16At that time Abram was 86 years old. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

Hagar prayed to God because she recognized that God was with her and God saw all that happened to her. Circumstances had worked against her, but she knew that God saw what happened. Hagar had not originally tried to win the love of Abraham away from Sarah, her master. So Hagar called on God who saw all the wrong done to her. Lord, see me when people treat me wrong, and see me when I am punished for something I haven't done. Lord, see me when others despitefully use me. Protect me when I can't protect myself from dangers I see, and from dangers I can't see. Amen.

Genesis 17

Abram Is Renamed Abraham

1Thirteen years later, when Abram was 99, the LORD said to him, "I am El Shaddai (God Almighty). I want you to serve Me and live a blameless life. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 2I will keep My promise and give you many descendants."

When Abraham was 99 years old, God appeared to Abram and said, "I am El Shaddai (God Almighty)" (17:1). So learn two things in your walk with God. God will show Himself to you when you worship Him and do His will, just as He did to Abraham. Second, when God has a special task for you to do, He will show you something about Himself that you may not have known previously. Lord, what do You want me to do today? Or what do You want me to do for the rest of my life? I wait for an answer in Your presence. I will worship as I wait, because I know You manifest Yourself to those who worship You. Amen.

3As Abram bowed down before the Lord, God continued, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 4"I promise to make you the ancestor of many nations. 5So I am changing your name from Abram (meaning 'Exalted Father') to Abraham (meaning 'Father of Nations'). {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 6Your many descendants will become many nations, and some of your offspring will even be kings. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

7My promise to you will last forever. It will be between us and between Me and your descendants for many generations to come. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 8I will give the land of Canaan to you and your descendants. And I will be their God." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}

God reaffirmed His covenant to Abraham (first revealed in 12:2, 3). Abraham was to have a son by Sarah, his wife. This son—Isaac—would be the one through whom God would bless the world. (The Jews would be the source of the Scriptures, the Messiah, and the people of God.) In obedience, Abraham was to be circumcised and all his male children and servants (17:10-14). This was to be a sign of separation from the unsaved world. Lord, I will be baptized to show the difference between me and those who will not believe nor identify with Your death, burial, and resurrection. I will often drink the cup of communion and eat the broken bread to remind me of my allegiance to you. Amen.

9God continued, "Your part in this contract and that of your descendants is to obey Me. 10One of the things you are to do is to circumcise every male in your household. 11Circumcision will be a sign of this contract. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 12You must circumcise every eight-day-old male born in your family and those born to slaves whom you've purchased. 13Even if they are not your family members, they must be circumcised. And circumcision will be a sign that I will keep My promise forever. 14Anyone who refuses to be circumcised will not be one of My people.

15"Change your wife's name from Sarai to Sarah (meaning 'Princess'). 16I will honor and cause her to become pregnant. So honored, she will be the mother of nations. Some of her descendants will even be kings." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

17Abraham again fell on his face to the ground. But he laughingly said to himself, "How can I be a father when I am 100 years old and Sarah is 90?" {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 18Then he asked God, "Why not let Ishmael be honored with Your promises?" {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

Immediately after God told Abraham his life-defining purpose, Abraham did what so many of us do. He resisted God's plan. God's plan was Isaac. We mess up the moment, when we try to substitute our selfish desires in place of God's perfect will for our life. Abraham prayed for Ishmael to have a prominent place in his life. Often we try to put our selfish ambitions right up next to God's plan for our life. Lord, sometimes I'm blinded and I pray for the wrong things that will divert me from serving You. Forgive my blindness and stupidity. Don't hear my selfish prayer. Make me do Your perfect will, and make me do it willingly. Amen.

19God responded, "You and Sarah will have a son, and you will name him Isaac (meaning 'He laughs'). The promise I

made to you will also be for him and his descendants. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 20I've heard what you suggested about Ishmael, and I will honor him with many descendants. In fact he will have 12 sons and they will be rulers, and he will be the head of a great nation. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 21But my contract will be with Isaac, who will be born next year." 22God then finished talking with Abraham and left.

23That very day Abraham took his son Ishmael and other males in his household and circumcised them, just as God had said for him to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 24When Abraham was 99, he was circumcised, and 25his son Ishmael was 13. 26Father and son were circumcised the same day.

27All the men and boys in Abraham's household, including those born there and those bought as slaves, were circumcised.

Genesis 18

God Promises a Son to Sarah

1One hot day as Abraham was sitting by his tent door near the trees of Mamre near Hebron, the LORD appeared to him again. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2Seeing three men there, Abraham quickly ran to meet them, and he welcomed them by bowing to the ground.

3He said, "If it pleases you, stay and 4let me get some water for you to wash your feet, and rest awhile in the shade. 5I'll get you something to eat to refresh you. And stay awhile before continuing on." They answered, "Thank you. We appreciate your kindness." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

6Abraham ran into his tent and said to Sarah, "Hurry and get some flour and make some bread for our guests." 7Then he ran to his herd, selected a calf, and told a servant to butcher it. 8He served the men some curds and milk and beef. While they were eating, he stood nearby. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

9When they asked where his wife Sarah was, he answered, "She's in the tent." 10The Lord, who was one of the three guests, said, "I will return next year, and Sarah will have a son." Sarah was listening near the tent door. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}

11Because Abraham and Sarah were both old, and Sarah was past the age of having children, 12she laughed, thinking, "With my husband and I being so old, how could I have the joy of having a baby?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

13The LORD said to Abraham, "Why did Sarah laugh, questioning whether she could have a child? 14Nothing is too difficult or marvelous for Me. As I said, I will be back next year and Sarah will have a son." {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} 15Sarah denied having laughed, but God said she did.

16When the three left to go toward Sodom, Abraham went with them part of the way. 17The LORD said to Himself, "I'll tell Abraham what I'm going to do. 18His family will become a great nation, and other nations will be blessed because of him. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}

Abraham's prayer represents one of the greatest examples in Scripture of intercession for people who are exposed to God's judgment. It began when God invited Abraham to stand in the gap between lost people and His judgment. This reveals Abraham's compassion for his nephew Lot (who had selfishly chosen better land, chapter 13), but it also reveals his compassion for all lost people. Lord, give me an opportunity to pray for my friends and family who are out of Your will. Amen.

19 I have chosen him to teach his children
and all those in his household to obey Me
by doing the right thing. Then I will do for
him all I have promised. {206 Guarding
Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
20 "I have heard that the people of Sodom
and Gomorrah are terribly wicked. {112
Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 21 So I'll see
if these reports are true. Then I'll know."
22 When the men started toward Sodom,
the LORD stayed with Abraham. 23 Abra-
ham asked Him, "Will you destroy good
and evil people together? {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 24 If there are 50
good people in Sodom, will You not spare
the city for their sake? {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 25 You wouldn't
kill righteous and wicked people together,
would You? I know that You, as Judge of
the world, will do what is right."

Abraham based his prayers on God's character "I know that You, as Judge of the world, will do what is right" (18:25). Abraham did not base his prayers on his persistence, his faith, or his family relationship. What better prayer can we make than to base it on the character of God? "He who calls you is faithful, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24). Lord, I pray for my unsaved family and friends because You love them, Jesus died for them, and You are not willing that any should perish. Amen.

26 The LORD answered, "I'll not destroy
Sodom if 50 godly people are there."
27 Abraham spoke again and said, "I know
I'm being bold about this, because I'm
only dust and ashes, 28 but what if there are
fewer than 50 good people in the city?"
God said, "If I find 45 righteous people
there, I won't destroy the city." {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1}

Abraham kept interceding because he had a deep burden for prayer. (His burden deepened because Lot was a relative, and Abraham's interceding became intense because of God's willingness to negotiate in prayer. However, Abraham stopped interceding before God stopped answering. Lord, thank You for a "prayer burden" you've given me. Without a "burden" to express in intercession, I might give up before I get the answer I seek. Amen.

29 Abraham then asked, "What about 40?"
God said, "If there are 40, I'll spare the
city."
30 "Don't be angry with me, but what if 30
are there?"
"Yes, I'll spare the city for the sake of 30
good people."

[31]Abraham spoke again. "Let me be bold once more. What if 20 are in the city?" God answered that He would spare the city if 20 good people were in it.
[32]Abraham dared ask one more question. "What if there are 10 good people in Sodom?" God responded that for 10 He would spare the city. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} [33]Then the LORD left, and Abraham returned home.

Abraham began to intercede because God gave him the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of lost people. Abraham asked God to withhold judgment if 50 righteous, then 45, 40, 30, 20, or 10 were found in Sodom. This prayer interchange shows as much about God's heart as it does about Abraham's persistence. When we struggle in prayer, we intercede against our tendency to give up, and against satan's resistance, and against God's nature to judge sin. Lord, I pray for unsaved family and friends to be saved. I pray for the unsaved to come under the shelter of Your grace before judgment comes. Amen.

Genesis 19

Sodom and Gomorrah Destroyed

[1]When the two angels who had visited Abraham arrived in Sodom in the evening, Lot was sitting in the city's gateway. When he saw them, he got up and bowed to the ground to welcome them. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [2]He urged them to go with him to his home, to wash their feet, to spend the night there as his guests, and then be on their way in the morning. They said, "Thanks, but we'll sleep here in the city square." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [3]But Lot insisted, so they went to his house. He cooked a meal for them, including some freshly baked bread. {461 Stir Up Your Spiritual Gift-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:6}
[4]As the two were getting ready for bed, every man in Sodom surrounded Lot's house and [5]yelled, "Where are the two visitors of yours? Bring them out so we can have sex with them." {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}
[6-7]Lot went outside and said, "Don't do such a wicked thing. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [8]I have two daughters who are not married. You can do with them what you want. But don't do anything to these men because they are my guests." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[9]They responded, "Get out of our way. Who are you to tell us what to do? We'll do worse things to you than we will to these two men." They kept pressing him and started to break down his door. {148 Expedient-Prayer, Est. 4:16}
[10]Then the two angels pulled Lot in and shut the door. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [11]Then they struck all these men of Sodom with blindness. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[12]The two men said to Lot, "If you have any other relatives here in Sodom, get them out of here. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [13]Why? Because God has sent us to destroy the city since it is

so sinful." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
14When Lot told his daughters' fiancés to hurry and leave because God was going to destroy the city, they thought he was joking. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}
15At dawn the angels told Lot to hurry and take his wife and two daughters and leave, because if they didn't they would be killed. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 16Lot hesitated, so the two angels took him, his wife, and his two daughters by the hand and led them out of the city. Obviously the Lord was being merciful to them. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}
17Outside the city the angels urged them, "Run for your lives, and don't look back or stop anywhere. Run to the mountains."
18Lot said, "You have been kind to us, but we don't want to go to the mountains. 19We'll die if we try to get there. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} 20Let us go to a nearby small town. We can be safe there."

God planned to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah, but Lot couldn't believe God would do it. Instead of running for his life he hesitated (19:16), and the angels had to drag him away (19:16). Then Lot didn't want to escape to the mountains. He wanted to go to another town. Have you ever resisted God in prayer? It's an oxymoron to say, "Not so, Lord." If He is your Lord, you can't tell Him "No!" If you call Him Lord, then He must control every part of your life. Lord, forgive me when I resist Your plan for my life. I yield again to You; Your will be done. I yield to You for this day, do Your will in my life today. Amen.

21An angel said, "Okay. Go there. I won't destroy that town. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} 22But be quick about it." (The town is called Zoar, meaning "Small.") {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}
23When they reached Zoar, the sun was coming up. 24The Lord sent down burning sulfur from the sky on Sodom and Gomorrah. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 25In this way God destroyed these cities and everyone in them, as well as the land and the crops. 26But Lot's wife disobeyed by looking back, and she turned into a pile of salt. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62}

Why did the angels tell Lot, "Run for your lives, and don't look back"? (19:17). Because looking back is the first step toward going back. Also if you look back, it means your heart is back there. Your look reflects who you really are and where you really want to be. So what happened? Lot's wife looked back. She didn't want to go back to Sodom; she was still there. Taking a drunk person out of the tavern doesn't make him sober; he won't be sober until you take the tavern out of him. Lord, thank You for saving me and taking me away from sin; but do a sanctifying work in me. Take a desire for sin out of me. Amen.

27The next morning when Abraham got up, he went to the place where he had

stood before the LORD. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [28]As he looked southeast, he saw pillars of black smoke rising from that area. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}
[29]Remembering what He had told Abraham, God brought Lot out of Sodom safely.
[30]Afraid of the people of Zoar, Lot went with his daughters to live in a cave. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [31]One day Lot's older daughter said to her sister, "No man is around for us to marry. [32]So let's get Dad drunk and then sleep with him. By having children that way we can preserve our family line."
[33]So they got him drunk, and the older daughter slept with him, and he was unaware of what was going on. [34]Then the older daughter said, "Let's get him drunk again and you go to bed with him." {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [35]The next day they got him drunk again, and the younger daughter lay with him, and he knew nothing about it.
[36]Both girls became pregnant. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [37]The older daughter named her son Moab, who is the father of the Moabites. [38]The younger daughter had a son and named him Ben-Ammi, the father of the Ammonites.

Genesis 20

Abraham Deceives Abimelech

[1]Abraham moved from Hebron to the Southern Desert and lived in Gerar between Kadesh and Shur. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}
[2]While there he told everyone that his wife was his sister. Hearing this, Abimelech brought Sarah to his palace.

Apparently Abraham didn't deal completely with his sin of lying. When he went to Egypt, he told Sarah to say, "You are my sister" (12:13). God judged Pharaoh because he took Sarah to be his wife. Now years later, the same sin of lying cropped up. Abraham told Abimelech, King of Gerer, "She is my sister" (20:2). When you voice the prayer of crucifixion, you put to death the sin that plagues you. Didn't Paul say, "Those who are Christ's have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires" (Gal. 5:24)? Lord, I'm not perfect, and I have an old sin nature; I lay every sin before You. Forgive me, cleanse me, and take away my bent to sinning. I yield completely to You; I will not go back to my old sin that I did before. Amen.

[3]Then God told Abimelech in a dream that Sarah was married and that because he took her into his harem he would die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
[4]Abimelech hadn't slept with her, so he said, "God, don't kill me. Our nation is innocent. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} [5]Abraham and Sarah both told me she is his sister. I've done nothing wrong." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [6]God responded, "I know you didn't. I kept you from sinning by not letting you touch her. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [7]So send her back to her husband. He is a prophet and he will pray for you. But

if you don't, you and your people will all die." {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
[8]When Abimelech told his palace officials what had happened, they were afraid. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [9]Then Abimelech told Abraham, "Think of what you have done. What have I done to you to make my nation guilty? {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

When we've been "caught" in a sin, we don't feel like intercession, nor do we feel spiritual enough to touch God. But it's expedient to pray to reverse a crisis we've caused. All we want to do after we've been caught is ask for forgiveness, and beg God for cleansing. Abraham must have been embarrassed when Abimelech caught him in a lie. When we're caught in sin, as was Abraham, we don't feel like praying, but Abraham needed to pray, and his prayer needed to get results. "So Abraham prayed to God; and God healed Abimelech, his wife, and his female servant" (20:17). Lord, forgive me when I sin ignorantly, and forgive me when I sin with my eyes wide open. Cleanse me and restore me to "praying ground." Listen to me and hear my intercession. Amen.

[10]Why did you do this?" {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31}
[11]Abraham responded, "I didn't think any of you were godly people, and I was afraid that someone would kill me to get my wife. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [12]She really is my sister, that is, she is my half-sister, because we have the same father but different mothers. [13]When we left our home in Ur, I told her, 'If you really love me, say that I am your brother.'" {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[14]Abimelech gave Abraham sheep, cattle, and slaves, and then he sent Sarah back to him. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [15]Abimelech told Abraham that he could live anywhere in his kingdom he'd like. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [16]He then told Sarah he was giving Abraham a thousand shekels of silver to show they had done nothing wrong. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [17]Abraham prayed that God would allow Abimelech and his slaves to start having children again. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [18]That is because when Abimelech took in Sarah, God kept them from having children. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Abraham had to pray even when he didn't feel like praying, and probably wasn't on "praying ground." Abraham's sin had broken his fellowship with God. He had to first get back in fellowship with God, then he could intercede for Abimelech. Lord, make me pray when it's the right thing to do. Even when I don't feel like praying and I'm not spiritually able to pray, give me a burden to pray and make me do it. Amen.

Genesis 21

The Birth of Isaac

[1]Then the LORD did what He had promised Sarah. [2]Abraham was old, but Sarah

got pregnant, just as God had said. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [3]Abraham named him Isaac, and [4]Abraham circumcised Isaac when Isaac was eight days old, just as God had told him to do. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
[5]On Isaac's birthdate Abraham was 100 years old.
[6]Sarah said, "God has made me laugh in unbelief, but people who hear this will laugh with me in joy. {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} [7]Whoever thought Abraham and I would have children? But in his old age I have given my husband a son." {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20}
[8]When Isaac was weaned, Abraham had a big party to celebrate. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [9]At the party Ishmael was making fun of Isaac, and so Sarah told Abraham to get rid of Hagar and her son. She said, "I don't want her to inherit anything of our estate. [10]It should all go to Isaac."
[11]This upset Abraham because Ishmael was his son too. [12]But God said, "Listen to Sarah because My promises will be fulfilled through Isaac.

Sometimes your spouse may tell you what to pray for, and you must listen to your mate because you've been wrong. Doesn't God give us a mate to help us walk with God? Abraham was arguing for Ishmael, his other son. This became a "my son versus your son" argument. God didn't try to make both feel good, like a lawyer or judge might try to mediate a marriage argument today. Lord, I am very selfish and I usually think I am right. When I'm wrong, teach me to listen to my spouse. Teach me to pray for the things that are right. Amen.

[13]I'll also make Ishmael, your son, into a great nation." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
[14]Abraham gave Hagar some food and water, and put them on her shoulders and sent them off. She wandered in the desert of Beersheba. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [15]When their water was gone, she put Ishmael under a bush for some shade. [16]And she went off because she couldn't bear to watch him die. She sobbed bitterly. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}
[17]Hearing her crying, God asked Hagar, "What is wrong? Don't be afraid. I've heard the boy crying. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [18]So lift him up because I will make of him a great nation." [19]Then she saw a well, and she filled her canteen with water and gave her son a drink. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[20]God was with the boy, and he grew up in the desert and was good with bows and arrows. [21]While they were living in the desert of Paran, Hagar got him a wife from Egypt.
[22]Abimelech and his army commander Phicol said to Abraham, "Obviously God helps you in everything. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [23]Now promise me you won't cheat me and my descendants in any way. Be kind to me just as I have been kind to you." [24]Abraham

said, "I will." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
25Then Abraham complained that Abimelech's servants had taken over one of his wells. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 26Abimelech said, "I have no idea who did this. I never heard about this till now." 27Then Abraham took some sheep and cattle to Abimelech to seal their agreement. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
28When Abraham set aside seven lambs, 29Abimelech asked why he did that. 30Abraham said, "Please accept these lambs as proof that I dug this well." {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}
31That place was called Beersheba (meaning "Well of Oath") because they agreed by oath about the well.

Sometimes we can't pray because we don't know the plans of God. We can't pray if God hasn't shown us the things or events that concern us. Abraham had an altercation with Abimelech over water rights (21:25). God had promised to give Abraham the Promised Land, so he went to the very edge of the Promised Land and dug a well. Beersheba was an oasis on the edge of the desert. Abimelech, king of the Philistines, claimed the well and the two men came to an agreement about the well (21:32). Abraham planted a tree of ownership (I've done that at almost every house where I've ever lived.) Then Abraham called him The Everlasting God, El Olam. Lord, You know the things I don't know, so guide my life today. Because You know what will happen in the future, I yield to Your control of my life. Amen.

32Abimelech and Phicol went home to the land of the Philistines. 33Abraham planted a tamarisk tree in Beersheba and worshiped the Lord, the eternal God.
34And Abraham stayed in Philistine country a long time.

Genesis 22

Abraham's Faith Is Tested

1God planned to test Abraham. So when God called him by name, Abraham replied, "I'm here." {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7}
2God told him, "Take your son Isaac whom I know you love and go to the Moriah district and sacrifice him there as a burnt offering on the mountain I'll tell you."

God wanted to test Abraham, so He called Abraham by his name. Abraham's answer, "Here I am," (22:1) shows Abraham recognized God's voice and was ready to serve the Lord. Would you recognize God's voice if He called, and how quickly would you be ready to answer when God calls? Lord, speak for your servant is ready to serve You. Forgive me for having so many distractions in my life that I missed Your call in my life in the past. Amen.

3The next morning Abraham saddled his donkey and took Isaac and two servants. After cutting wood for the sacrifice, they left. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4On the third day of their trip Abraham saw

the place in the distance. [5]He told his servants to wait with the donkey while he and Isaac would go worship there, and he said, 'We'll be back.'" {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
[6]Abraham put the wood on Isaac's shoulders, and he took the fire and the knife. As they walked along, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]Isaac asked, "Father, we have the wood and fire, but where is the lamb?"
[8]Abraham responded, "God will provide a lamb." So they continued on.

When Abraham said, "God will provide a lamb" (22:8), this pictured God the Father offering His Son Jesus as a lamb sacrificed for our sins. When we don't understand God, or even doubt Him, God will provide. Lord, I trust You to provide for all my needs. Amen.

[9]When they got to the place God had told them, Abraham built an altar, put the wood on it, and lay his son on the wood.
[10]As he started to slay his son, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [11]the angel of the LORD shouted, "Abraham! Abraham!"
"I'm here."

God called Abraham when he was about to plunge the knife into Isaac. Again God showed a ram caught by his horns in a thicket. God is Jehovah-Jireh, the LORD who provides. Lord, thank You for providing for my needs in the past. I trust You to provide for me in the future. Amen.

[12]"Don't hurt your son. Now I know that you obey Me because you were willing to offer to Me even your own son." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
[13]When Abraham looked up, he saw a ram caught by its horns in a bush. So he got the ram and sacrificed it in place of his son. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
[14]Abraham called that place "The LORD Will Provide." So people say, "On the mountain the LORD will provide." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
[15]Again the angel of the LORD spoke to Abraham, saying, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [16]"Since you willingly offered your son, [17]I will bless you and give you so many descendants that they will be numerous like the stars and the sand. They will defeat their enemies, taking over their cities. [18]Because you have obeyed Me, your descendants will be a blessing to many nations." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
[19]They went back to the two servants, and then they all went home to Beersheba. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
[20]Later Abraham learned that his sister-in-law Milcah and his brother Nahor had eight sons: [21]Uz, Buz, Kemuel, [22]Kesed, Hazo, Pildash, Jidlaph, and Bethuel. [23]Bethuel became the father of Rebekah. [24]Nahor had four other sons by his concubine Reumah: Tebah, Gaham, Tahash, and Maacah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Genesis 23

The Death and Burial of Sarah

[1]When Sarah was 127, [2]she died in Hebron in Canaan. Abraham mourned and wept for her.

The Bible says, "There is a time to weep" (Eccl. 3:4). Abraham had spent most of his adult life with Sarah, then she died first. He appropriately mourned (inwardly) and wept (outwardly), which is only natural. Some mistakenly say that when a loved one dies, we should trust God and not mourn or weep. But when that special person who is a part of our life is gone, we're left with a hole. It's all right to weep and mourn, as Abraham did. Lord, when I weep at funerals, it's because of my human love for that person. It doesn't mean I don't trust You to have taken them to heaven, nor does it mean I don't trust You to work through the details after their death. I have great confidence in death because I know only You determine the date when any of us will die. Amen.

[3]Then he went to the Hittite leaders and said, [4]"As a foreigner in your land, I don't own any property where I can bury my wife. So sell me some land." [5]They said, [6]"You are an honored person. So bury your wife in one of our best grave sites. No one of us would refuse you such a place." {247 Intention-Praying, Rom. 15:24, 25}
[7]Abraham bowed down [8]and said, "Since you are so cooperative, please ask Ephron [9]to sell me the cave of Machpelah, which is in the end of his field. Tell him I'll pay the full price." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
[10]Ephron was sitting nearby and he said to Abraham, [11]"I'll give you not only the cave but also the whole field where the cave is. My people are witnesses of what I just said, so you can go bury your dead."
[12]Abraham bowed down again, [13]and he said to Ephron in the presence of many witnesses, "I'm willing to pay the full price of the field. So please accept my offer so I can bury my dead." {35 Benediction-Bless Prayer, Num. 6:24-26} [14]Ephron answered, [15]"The land is worth 400 shekels, but that's nothing between friends. So you are free to bury your dead."
[16]Abraham gave him 400 shekels of silver. [17]So the cave and the field near Mamre were sold [18]to Abraham as the Hittites looked on. [19]Abraham buried Sarah in the cave near Mamre (at Hebron in Canaan). [20]The Hittites deeded the field and the cave to Abraham as a burial site for his wife.

After a time of mourning and weeping, "Abraham stood up from before his dead" (23:3, KJV). You can't mourn and weep forever; you can't stay in the cemetery forever. You must turn your back to the grave and walk away to face your life. Life goes on, and so must you. That doesn't mean you can't occasionally visit their grave—you can—but they are with the Lord (John 14:1-3). So, live in the present without them, knowing God who controls the hour of our death, took them at the right time. Lord, I will look beyond the grave to the challenge of my life. I will serve You as diligently after their death as I did before when they were alive. Amen.

Genesis 24

A Bride for Isaac

[1]Abraham was a very old man. The LORD had blessed him abundantly. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [2]One day he said to his top servant, [3]"Promise me, in the name of the LORD, the God of heaven and earth, that you will not get one of these local Canaanite girls as a wife for Isaac. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [4]Go to my homeland and get him a bride there." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[5]The servant said, "But what if she doesn't want to make the move? Should I then take Isaac there to look for a wife?" {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

[6]"No, don't do that," Abraham said. [7]"The LORD, the God of heaven who brought me here promised me He would give this land to my descendants. So He'll send an angel to help find a daughter-in-law for me. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [8]If she doesn't want to move back here, then you are under no further obligation. Just don't take my son there." [9]The servant then assured Abraham he would follow his instructions. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[10]The servant loaded 10 of Abraham's camels with gifts, and set out for the town in northern Syria where Abraham's brother Nahor lived. [11]Late afternoon he had the camels kneel down by the city well. [12]He prayed "LORD, God of Abraham, help me succeed. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

The servant who was sent to find a wife for Isaac was probably Eliezer. He had an almost impossible task to find a girl from the right family, when he didn't know anyone in northern Syria, and he had to find the right girl to be the mother of God's people. Eliezer prayed that God would guide him in this matter. In the same way we should pray for God's guidance when we have special tasks, especially tasks when we don't know how or where to get the task done. Lord, guide me when I don't know where to go. Even before I get lost, find a correct path for me to go even when I don't know what to do; help me solve my problems. I trust You to be my guide. Amen.

[13]As I'm standing by this well, [14]may it be that when I ask one of the girls for a drink, and she offers to give my camels water too, let her be the one for Isaac." {79 Conditional-Prayer Promise, 2 Chron. 7:14} [15]While he was still praying, Rebekah came with her water jar on her shoulder. She was the daughter of Bethuel, son of Abraham's brother Nahor and his wife Milcah. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [16]She was very beautiful. She went to the well and filled her jar. When she came back, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [17]Abraham's servant said, "May I have a drink of water?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [18]She said, "Sure," and she gave him a drink from her water jar.

[19]Then she said, "I'll get water for your camels too." [20]She ran back to the well and drew water for his camels. [21]Without

saying anything, the servant watched her to see if she was the one God had chosen. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

22Then he gave her a nose ring and two four-ounce gold bracelets. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 23He asked her, "Who is your father? And do you have room for me and my men to stay overnight?" 24She said, "I am the daughter of Bethuel, and my grandparents are Milcah and Nahor. 25We have plenty of straw and food for your animals, and room for you to spend the night." 26The servant bowed and prayed, {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} 27"Praise to the Lord, who is kind and faithful. You led me directly to my master's relatives." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

28The girl ran home and told her family what had happened. 29Her brother Laban rushed out to see the man at the spring. 30Seeing the nose ring and bracelets on his sister, and hearing her story, Laban found him with his camels. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 31He said, "No need to stay out here. A room is ready for you; there is also a place for your camels."

32Abraham's servant went home with Laban, and the camels were unloaded and straw and food were given to them. And Laban had water brought to the men so they could wash their feet. 33When supper was served, the servant said, "Before I eat, let me tell you why I've come." Laban said, "Okay." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 34He said, "I am Abraham's servant. 35The Lord has blessed him greatly, and he is wealthy, with many sheep, goats, camels, and donkeys, lots of silver and gold, and many servants. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 36His wife Sarah gave birth to a son when she was very old. 37My master made me promise to get a wife for his son not from the Canaanites, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 38but from his father's family. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}

39"I asked him, 'What if she won't come back with me?' 40He said, 'She will. God will send an angel and make your journey successful. 41But if she doesn't agree to go with you, you have no further obligation.'

42"So at the well I asked God to make my journey a success. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 43I said to the Lord, 'If when a girl comes to get water 44and she offers water to me and for my camels, let her be the one for my master's son.'

Similar to Gideon putting out a fleece (Judg. 6), Eliezer put out a "fleece" by praying that if he asked a young virgin girl for water she would volunteer to water his camels. Some say we can put conditions on our prayers to prove that God is answering our requests. Others say we can't use a fleece because God guides us through Scripture. Also, they say a fleece is tempting God (Jer. 1:13). The answer happened just as Eliezer prayed. Lord, when I pray for guidance, I will trust You to lead me. Show me what to do and go before me to guide me to the right path I should take. Amen.

45"While I was still praying, Rebekah came and I asked her for a drink. 46She did it

quickly, and she offered water to my camels too!
47"I asked her who her father was, and she said Bethuel was her father and her grandparents were Milcah and Nahor. I gave her a nose ring and bracelets. 48Then I bowed and praised the Lord for leading me to my master's relatives. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 49So will you be kind to my master? If you will not give me Rebekah, let me know, so I can plan my next steps.'" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
50Laban and his father Bethuel said, "The LORD has done this, so what can we say? {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 51Take Rebekah and let her marry your master's son. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 52The servant bowed before the LORD. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 53Then he gave jewelry and clothing to Rebekah, and expensive items to Laban and her mother.
54Then they ate supper and the servants and his men stayed overnight. In the morning as they were ready to leave, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 55-56Laban and her mother suggested they stay 10 days before going away. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} 57They said, "Well, let's ask Rebekah what she thinks." 58So they did, and she said she was willing to go. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
59So Rebekah and one old family servant left with Abraham's servant and his men. 60Her family blessed her and prayed that she would have many descendants and that they would defeat their enemies. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
61When Rebekah and her maids got ready to travel, they mounted their camels and left. {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4}
62Isaac was living in the Southern Desert near Beer Lahai Roi. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} 63One evening when he was out in the field, he saw camels in the distance. 64When Rebekah saw him, she asked who he was. 65The servant said, "He is my master." So she covered her face with her veil. 66The servant told Isaac everything that had happened with Rebekah. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1, 8}
67So he took her into his mother's tent and married her. He loved her very much, and she was a comfort to him in the loss of his mother Sarah. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}

Genesis 25

The Death of Abraham, and Esau Sold His Birthright to Jacob

1Abraham married another wife, named Keturah. 2She had Zamram, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. 3Jokshan had two sons, Sheba and Dedan, and Dedan's descendants were the Asshurites, the Letushites, and the Leumnites. 4Midian had five sons: Ephah, Epher, Hanock, Abida, and Eldaah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
5Abraham left everything to Isaac. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 6But while still alive he gave gifts to the sons of Hagar and Keturah and sent them off to the East.

7Dying at the age of 175, 8Abraham was an old man who had lived a full life. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

When it comes to money, houses, and "stuff," "Abraham left everything" (25:5). And we, like Abraham, will leave it all when we die. Lord, I surrender all I have to You and Your use, because I'll surrender it when I die. When he died, he was "full of years" (25:8, KJV), that is, he had filled every year of his life. Isn't that the way to live, that is, to live fully? Lord, I want to live each year fully until I go home to be with You.
After Abraham died, God blessed his son Isaac (25:11). The greatest compliment to our life is that our children live for God, just as we lived. Lord, may my children live for You, just the way I lived for You, but may they go beyond anything I did. May they do it better and with Your blessing. Amen.

9Isaac and Ishmael buried him with Sarah in the cave of Machpelah near Mamre, 10which was in the field he bought from Zohar. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} 11Then God richly blessed Isaac, who was living near Beer Lahai Roi in the Southern Desert. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
12The following is the list of the descendants of Ishmael, born to Hagar the Egyptian. 13Ishmael had 12 sons: Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 14Mishma, Dumah, Massa, 15Hadad, Tema, Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 16These 12 were the founders of tribes, each with a village named after him. 17Ishmael died at the age of 137. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
18Ishmael's sons settled from Havilah to Shur, near Egypt's border. And they were constantly fighting each other.
19The following is the list of Isaac's sons. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 20Isaac was 40 when he married Rebekah, Laban's sister from northern Syria. 21Like her mother-in-law Sarah, Rebekah could not have children. But when Isaac prayed for her, she got pregnant. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22}

When Isaac prayed that the Lord would give his wife Rebekah children, the Lord answered and she got pregnant. Rebekah had twins who struggled in her womb. This shows a mother can pray about her pregnancy. Lord, I pray for healthy babies, and for their salvation and growth as Your children. Lord, You give life, so I receive my children from Your hand. Amen.

22The twins were struggling with each other in her womb, and wondering why, she asked the LORD. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 23-24He said, "They will become two nations. The descendants of the younger will be stronger, and the descendants of the older will serve the younger." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4}
25The first of the twins had reddish hair, so he was named Esau (sounds like "hairy"). 26When his brother was born, he was holding Esau's heel, so he was named Jacob

(sounds like "heel"). Isaac was 60 years old at the time.
27When they grew up, Esau became a hunter, enjoying the outdoors, but Jacob was quieter and liked the indoors. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 28Isaac favored Esau and liked the wild game he brought home, but Rebekah favored Jacob.

Even though Isaac and Rebekah prayed for their sons, each one favored one boy over the other. Did one parent's partiality over the other create animosity between the twins, or did a sin's problem in the boys cause problems between the parents? We don't know the answer for sure, but we do know Jacob tricked Esau out of his spiritual birthright. Lord, keep me from partiality toward anyone, and give me an equal love for all my children, and help me show it equally. Amen.

29One day when Jacob was cooking some stew, Esau came home very hungry. 30He urged Jacob to give him some red stew quickly. (Esau was also called Edom which means "red.") {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 31Jacob said, "Okay, but first give me your rights as the firstborn son." 32Esau said, "I'm dying, so the birthright won't do me any good." 33Jacob insisted that Esau promise him his birthright. So Esau did. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 34Then Jacob gave Esau some bread and lentil stew. And Esau ate and left, with no concern for his having sold his rights as the firstborn.

Genesis 26

Isaac Deceives Abimelech

1A severe famine struck the land just as it had years earlier in Abraham's time. Like his father, Isaac went to Abimelech in Gerar. 2The Lord had told Isaac, "Don't go to Egypt, but stay here. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 3I will be with you and bless you, and I will give this land to you and your descendants just as I promised Abraham. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 4Your descendants will be as numerous as the stars, and they will be a blessing to many nations, 5because Abraham obeyed what I told him to do." 6So Isaac stayed in Gerar.
7When people asked him about Rebekah, he, like his dad, said, "She is my sister." (Actually she was his first cousin, once removed.) He thought that because of her beauty someone might kill him in order to get her. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 8Later Abimelech looked out a window and saw Isaac hugging Rebekah. 9Abimelech called Isaac in and said, "She is obviously your wife. Why did you lie about her?" Isaac answered, "Because I thought someone might kill me to get her." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 10Abimelech exclaimed, "But if someone slept with her, our entire nation would be guilty." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 11So Abimelech warned his people that if anyone harmed Isaac or Rebekah, he would be executed.
12Isaac had a great crop. He harvested a hundred times as much as what he planted. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer,

Luke 11:4} 13He continued to increase in wealth. 14The Philistines were envious of all his flocks and herds and servants. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

Abimelech, king of the Philistines, became hostile toward Isaac: (1) because of Isaac's sin (26:7-11), (2) because of Abimelech's greed over Isaac's prosperity (26:12-14), and (3) because Isaac could successfully dig for water (26:15-22). In all their bitterness Isaac did not attack or argue with Abimelech, Isaac simply moved away. As a result, "the Lord appeared to him" (26:24). Lord, teach me to pray for those who hate me or covet my belongings. Protect me from their threats and/or dangers. Change their attitude toward me. May my testimony change their attitude toward You. Amen.

15To get back at him, the Philistines filled up the wells Isaac's father's servants had dug. 16Abimelech finally told Isaac to leave because he had become too wealthy and influential to stay there.

17Relocating in the Gerar Valley, 18Isaac reopened his father's wells that had been stopped up by the Philistines, and he gave them the same names his father gave them. {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6}

19When Isaac's men dug another well, 20local men argued with them that the water was theirs. Isaac named the well Esek (meaning "Quarrel"). 21When yet another well was dug, the men argued over that too. So Isaac named it Sitnah (meaning "Opposition"). {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} 22When they dug another well elsewhere, no one argued about it, so Isaac named it Rehoboth (meaning "Room"). That's because Isaac said, "The LORD has given us room so we can survive here." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

23After Isaac moved on to Beersheba, 24the Lord appeared to him one night and said, "You have no need to be afraid, because I, the God your father worshiped, will bless you and give you many descendants." {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 25Isaac built an altar there and proclaimed the LORD's name. Then he settled there, and his servants dug another well. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Because of Isaac's tolerance to Abimelech, "God reassured Isaac that the Abrahamic agreement would extend to him. Did Isaac see the Shekinah glory cloud, or God in the fire of a bush that didn't burn up? Maybe it was the atmospheric presence of God when Isaac heard the audible voice of God. When Isaac heard God speaking, he built an altar there (26:25). When God comes, we must worship Him. Lord, I will worship You often, especially when You speak to me through the Scriptures, or when I realize You have blessed me in a special way. Amen.

26Isaac was surprised to be visited by Abimelech along with his adviser Ahuzzath and his army commander Phicol. 27He asked them why they came since they had sent him away. 28They said, "We realize the LORD is with you, so we would like to make a treaty with you {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 29that you won't harm us just as

we didn't harm you." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
30Isaac put on a big feast for them, and everyone had a lot to eat and drink. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 31The next morning they agreed to a peace treaty, and the men went on their way. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
32That same day Isaac's servants struck water again. {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} 33He called it Shibah (meaning "Oath" or "Seven").

When we put God first in our lives, God will reinforce our commitment to Him with His special blessing. When Isaac refused to fight Abimelech—and Isaac worshiped, then the servants found water that same day (26:25, 32). Lord, I will put You first in my life because it's the biblical thing to do. If you give me a blessing, I will thank You for it. If I don't receive something special, I will still thank You for all I possess. To know You intimately is a blessing more and above any tangible thing I could receive. Amen.

34At age 40 Esau married two women: Judith and Basemath, both Hittites. 35This made Isaac and Rebekah very unhappy. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}

Genesis 27

Jacob Steals Esau's Blessing

1When Isaac was old and blind, he asked for his older son Esau to come see him. Esau said, "I'm here." 2Isaac said, "I'm old and might die any day now. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 3So get your bow and arrow and hunt some wild game. 4Prepare it the way I like it, and bring it to me and I will bless you before I die." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
5Rebekah had heard this conversation. So when Esau left, 6Rebekah told Jacob that she overheard Isaac say to Esau, 7"Bring me some tasty wild game so I can eat and bless you before I die." 8Rebekah then said to Jacob, "Here's what I want you to do.

Previously Jacob tricked Esau out of the birthright (the spiritual headship of the family), and Jacob stole from Esau the blessing (the financial inheritance of the family). Thus Esau fulfilled the prophecy, "The older will serve the younger" (25:23). To bless someone meant to add value to their lives. Thus Jacob received both spiritual and financial fulfillment. Lord, I want to be blessed by You in every area of my life. Add value to all I do, and add value to all I am. Amen.

9Bring me two young goats and I'll prepare some tasty food the way your father likes it. 10Then you take this to him, and he will give you a blessing." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
11Jacob said, "But, Mother, Esau is a hairy man and I'm not! 12If my father touches me, he'll know I'm trying to trick him. He would then curse me, not bless me." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
13Rebekah said, "Don't worry, Son. The curse can come on me. Just do as I say, and bring the meat to me." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 14So Jacob brought

the meat to her, and she prepared some food just the way Isaac liked it. 15Rebekah then dressed Jacob in Esau's best clothes. 16She covered his hands and neck with hairy goatskins. 17Then she gave the food to Jacob to take to Isaac.

18Jacob took the food to Isaac and said, "Father." "Yes, who is it?" 19"I am Esau. I did what you told me to do. Please sit up and eat and give me your blessing." 20"How did you find it so quickly?" He said, "God helped me." 21Isaac said, "Come here. Let me feel you so I can be sure you are Esau." 22When Isaac touched Jacob, he said, "Your voice sounds like Jacob's, but your hands are hairy like Esau's." 23Since Jacob's hands were hairy, Isaac was fooled into thinking Jacob was Esau. 24He asked, "Are you really Esau?" "Of course," Jacob replied. 25"Okay. Bring me some of the food you prepared, and I will give you my blessing." Jacob brought it to him and he ate it and drank some wine. 26Then Isaac asked Jacob to come nearer to him so he could kiss him. 27So when he did, Isaac smelled Jacob's clothes and then blessed him. He said, 28"The smell of my son is like that of the fields God has blessed. May God give you rain, good harvests, and grain and wine. 29May nations be subservient to you, and may you rule over your brothers and may they bow down to you. Cursed are those who curse you, and blessed are those who bless you."

30As soon as Jacob left, Esau came running in. 31He prepared the food and then asked his father to sit up, eat, and give him a blessing. 32Surprised, Isaac asked, "Who are you?" "I am Esau, of course." 33Trembling, Isaac asked, "Then who brought game to me and I gave him my blessing?" 34Esau then sobbed deeply, and asked Isaac to bless him too.

35Isaac said, "Your brother tricked me into getting your blessing." 36Esau said, "You certainly named him correctly. He is a deceiver just as his name says. In fact he cheated me twice, once by taking my birthright, and now by stealing my blessing. Can't you bless me too?"

In this chapter both parents asked their favorite child to do something sneaky. First, Isaac asked his favorite son—Esau—to prepare a venison meal so he could bless his son. God had already predicted His blessing on Jacob, but obstinate Isaac tried to bless his favorite son Esau. Rebekah overheard the conversation and asked Jacob to help her "trick" Isaac into blessing Jacob. Both parents should have yielded their favorite child to God, and sought God's will in each life. Lord, I yield my children to You, and I ask that You accomplish Your plan in their lives. Amen.

37Isaac answered, "I have made him master over you, and I have made his relatives his servants, and I have promised him lots of grain and wine. So nothing is left to give to you." {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4}

38Esau said, "Don't you have even one blessing for me?" {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} Then Esau sobbed bitterly again. 39Isaac said, "You will have a difficult life, 40you will live by your sword, and you will be your brother's slave. But you

will finally break loose from him." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
41Esau was mad at Jacob for stealing his blessing, so he said, "After my father dies, I'll kill Jacob."

When Esau found out Jacob had tricked him twice (27:36), he hated his brother and vowed to kill him. Whereas God created the family to be a place of relationship to encourage and support one another, yet when money is involved, a family will fight and kill each other. Lord, thank You for the family into which I was born. Thank You for the good things I got from my father and mother. Thank you for my brother(s) and sister(s). Help me to bless them to fulfill Your will in their lives. May I never do anything revengeful to harm them. Give me a deeper love for each of them. Amen.

42When Rebekah heard about this, she told Jacob what Esau planned to do. 43So she said, "Leave town, and 44go stay with your Uncle Laban till Esau cools off. 45Then when he is no longer angry and forgets what you did, I'll send words for you to come home. I don't want to lose both of you in one day."
46Rebekah said to Isaac, "I'm tired of these local Hittite girls. If Jacob marries one of them, I'd prefer to die."

Genesis 28

God Calls a Deceiver to Himself

1Isaac blessed Jacob and told him not to marry a Canaanite. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 2"Instead, go to northern Syria to your grandfather Bethuel and marry someone there. 3I pray that God will give you many descendants, and 4that you will possess the land God promised to Abraham." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

Isaac came to his senses and blessed his son Jacob according to God's plan. Jacob was blessed by the name Almighty, which is El Shaddai. Lord, I look to You, the Almighty One, for strength to serve You, and strength to stand against evil in this world. El-Shaddai, bless me. Amen.

5Then Jacob went to be with his cousin Laban.
6-7Esau noticed that Jacob, obeying his parents, left to get a wife in northern Syria. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 8Esau realized that his father Isaac didn't like his Canaanite wives. 9So he married Mahalath, his cousin.
10On his way from Beersheba to Haran in Syria, 11Jacob slept outdoors one night, using a stone for a pillow. 12In a dream he saw a ladder reaching from earth to heaven, with angels going up and down on it. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
13The LORD said to Jacob, "I, the God of your grandfather and father, will give you descendants on this land where you are. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
14Your descendants will be as numerous as dust particles, living in every direction. People everywhere will be blessed because of you. 15I'll be with you and bring you

back here and I won't leave you." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Sometimes we pray because we are scared. Jacob was running scared from an angry brother who vowed to kill him. Jacob was all alone in a threatening world and his mother was not there to look out for him. Jacob was heading toward the land of his mother, probably a country he only heard about from his mother. The Lord appeared to Jacob and promised He would be with him and protect him. Lord, when I am scared, help me realize You are with me. Protect me physically and spiritually when I can't protect myself. Amen.

16Waking up, Jacob knew the LORD was with him. He said, "The Lord is in this place, and I didn't even know it. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 17This awesome place is like being in heaven." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 18Then Jacob dedicated his stone pillow to the Lord by pouring oil on it. 19He called the place Bethel, though its earlier name was Luz.

20Jacob promised the LORD, "If You will be with me on this journey, will watch over me, and will give me food and clothes, 21and help me return home, then You will be my God. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 22This will be Your home, and I will return to you a tenth of everything you give me." {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

One of our greatest blessings is for God to show us His plan for our life. When we know God's will for our life, everything we do has purpose. We will plan, we will educate ourselves, we will work, and we will sacrifice to accomplish a goal in life when we know God has a plan for our life. Lord, show me Your plan for my life, I will sacrifice to accomplish it, and will work hard to do it. Bless me with a plan for my life so I may bless others. Amen.

Genesis 29

Jacob Arrives in Northern Syria

1Jacob continued on his trip. {379 Prevailing-Prayer, Jer. 12:1} 2He saw a well with some sheep lying nearby waiting to be watered from the well. The well had a huge stone over the top, {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} 3and the sheep were waiting for the shepherds to move the stone away so they could drink.

4When Jacob asked the shepherds where they were from, they said, "Haran." 5When he asked if they knew Laban, they said, "Yes." 6"How is he?" "He is fine, and here comes his daughter Rachel." {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 7Jacob said, "Since it's now afternoon, why don't you water the sheep and take them back to pasture?" 8They said, "It's too early. We'll wait till all the flocks are here." {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 9Then Rachel came with Laban's sheep, 10and when Jacob saw her and the sheep, he moved the stone from

the well and watered Laban's sheep. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} 11Then he kissed Rachel and cried because he was happy. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 12He told her he was her cousin, her aunt Rebekah's son. So she ran and told her father.

13Hearing this news about his nephew, Laban ran to meet Jacob and hugged and kissed him and brought him to his home. When Jacob told them everything, 14Laban was amazed that his own relative was there. About a month later {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 15Laban said, "True, you are a relative. But that doesn't mean you should work for me for nothing. What should I pay you?" {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 16Laban had two daughters, Leah, who had dull eyes, and 17Rachel, who was shapely and a real beauty. 18Jacob was in love with Rachel, so he said, "I'll work for you seven years if you will give me Rachel for my wife." {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 19Laban said, "It's better for you to have her than someone else, so stay here." {473 Tarrying-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

Jacob told his Uncle Laban that he would work for seven years as a dowry for the privilege of marrying Rachel. When love and vision become partners, they are powerful forces to motivate us to endure hardships and attempt the impossible. So Jacob spent seven years because of his love for Rachel and his vision for the future. Lord, deepen my love for You and give me a vision for serving You, and I will sacrifice everything for You, and attempt the impossible for You. Amen.

20So Jacob's seven years went by quickly because of his love for her. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

21Then Jacob told Laban that he was ready to marry Rachel. 22Laban put on a big party. 23But that evening he brought Leah to Jacob. 24And Laban gave Zilpah as Leah's servant girl. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

25In the morning Jacob was completely surprised to see Leah there. So he said to Laban, "Why have you deceived me? I worked for Rachel, not Leah." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 26Laban explained that their custom was to marry off the older daughter first. 27"Of course you can have Rachel after you have spent a week with Leah." 28So a week later Jacob married Rachel. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 29Laban gave Bilhah to Rachel as a servant girl. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

Jacob, the trickster, was tricked by Uncle Laban. He switched Leah for Rachel on the wedding night. Then after heated negotiations, Jacob agreed to work another seven years for Rachel (29:27). Why? Because he loved Rachel more than Leah. Don't we go through many sacrifices because of our love for our spouse, children, or someone we love? Lord, show me who/what to love, and deepen my love so I'll do more for You. But sometimes I've loved the wrong person or thing; change my heart and give me love

for the right person or thing. Give me a pure love, and motivating love. May I love You first in my life and may I love you wholeheartedly. Amen.

30 Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah, but he had to work another seven years for Laban. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}
31 God gave children to Leah, but not to Rachel. Leah named her son Reuben (meaning "Look, a son") because she said, "The LORD has taken away my sorrow, and now Jacob will love me." 32 She got pregnant again and said, "The LORD knows I am not loved, so He gave me this son too." {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 33 She named her son Simeon (meaning "Someone Who Hears"). 34 Again, she had a son and said, "Maybe now my husband will feel attached to me." So she named her third son Levi (meaning "Attached"). 35 Once more she conceived and named her son Judah (meaning "Praise") because she said, "I will praise the LORD." {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22}

Jacob loved Rachel more than Leah probably because of Rachel's good looks. But Leah had God's blessing, Leah gave birth to Judah, the son through who came Jesus the Messiah. Leah was buried next to Jacob (49:31). Rachel was buried where she died, alone beside the road to Bethlehem (35:19). Lord, sometime I've been blinded by love, and I've sought the wrong person or thing. Forgive me. Focus my heart on Your heart. Make me do right even when I love what is not Your will. May I love what You love. Amen.

Genesis 30

Jacob Works for Laban

1 When Rachel realized she wasn't having any children, she was jealous of Leah. So she said to Jacob, "If you don't give me children, I'll die." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 2 This made Jacob mad. He said, "I'm not God. So don't blame me." {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2}

Rachel was frustrated because Leah had children and she didn't. Rachel's desire was appropriate, but her motives were wrong; she was jealous of Leah (30:1). She should have directed her prayers to God (See next section when Rachel prayed inappropriately). Lord, forgive me for asking humans for the things I should ask of You. Give me a wholly focused trust in You and Your power to do the things I ask. Focus my prayers on You. Amen.

3 Then Rachel said, "Sleep with my maid Bilhah. Maybe I can have a family through her." {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22}
4 So Jacob slept with Bilhah, {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} 5 and she became pregnant and had a son. 6 Rachel named the son Dan (meaning "Justice") because she said, "God has given me justice and given me a son." {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 7 Then Bilhah had a second son,

{376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} [8]and Rachel named him Naphtali (meaning "My Struggle") because she said, "I have struggled with my sister." {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12}

[9]Leah realized she could not have any more children, so she gave her maid Zilpah to Jacob. [10]She had a son and Leah named him Gad (meaning "Luck") {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [11]because she said, "I am lucky to have a son." {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [12]Then she had a second son, and named him Asher (meaning "Happy") because, [13]as she said, "I am really happy." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

[14]In the wheat harvest Reuben, Leah's oldest, found some mandrakes which people thought helped women get pregnant. He took them to his mother Leah. Rachel saw this and asked Leah for some of them. {123 Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Mark 10:38}

Do we ever pray with wrong motives? Have we ever prayed with a jealous motive, but God hears the content of your prayer to give us what we ask, even when we had a deceitful heart? Yes! That was true of Rachel. She seemed to act like a spoiled child to get her way. "I'll let you sleep with him (Jacob) tonight in exchange for the mandrake roots" (30:15). Rachel prayed for a son and God answered her prayer. Lord, forgive me for every inappropriate prayer I've made with wrong motives. May Your will be done in my life. Look beyond the words I pray and give me Your perfect will for my life. Amen.

[15]But Leah objected. "You took away my husband, and now you want my son's mandrakes too!" {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} "Okay," Rachel said. "Give me some mandrakes and you can sleep with Jacob tonight." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [16]When Jacob came in, Leah told him about the arrangement. So he slept with her that night. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [17]Then Leah became pregnant {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} [18]and had a fifth son whom she named Issachar (meaning "Reward") because she said; "God has rewarded me." {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [19]Then she had a sixth son. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [20]She named him Zebulun (meaning "Honor") because she said, "Because of this precious gift, my husband will now honor me." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [21]Later Leah had a daughter and named her Dinah. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

[22]Finally God answered Rachel's prayer and {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [23]enabled her to have a son. She said, "God has removed my shame." [24]She named him Joseph (meaning "May He Add") because she prayed, "May God add to me another son." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

[25]Later Jacob told Uncle Laban, "I need to go back home. [26]Let me be on my way with my wives and children. You know I have paid for them by working for you." {156

Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [27]But Laban said, "Please don't leave. A fortune-teller has told me the many blessings I'm enjoying because of you. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [28]Do you need a raise? Just say so, and I'll pay it." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

[29]Jacob said, "You know I've worked hard for you and your livestock has grown as I've cared for them. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [30]You didn't have much when I came, but you are well off now. So now I need to look out for my family." {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} [31]Laban then asked, "What do I owe you?" Jacob replied, "Nothing. But I have one request. As I continue working for you, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [32]let me take from your flocks any sheep or goats that are speckled or spotted and any black lambs, and they can be my wages. [33]Then if you find any of my goats that are not speckled or spotted or any lambs that are not black, you will know I stole them." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}

[34]Laban said, "Okay." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [35]So that day Laban separated all his speckled or spotted goats and his black lambs, and put his sons over them. [36]Then he separated them from Jacob by taking them away the distance of a three-day journey. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

[37]Jacob cut branches from various trees and peeled back the bark so that the white inner stripes showed on the wood. [38]He placed the peeled branches near the watering troughs so the animals would see them when they came to drink. {335 Optional Answer-Prayer, Mark 10:38} [39]The goats mated in front of the branches, and their young were speckled and spotted. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8} [40]He took the young sheep of Laban's and had them mate only with Jacob's black sheep. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [41]When the stronger females were ready to mate, Jacob made sure they would do so near the branches. [42]But he didn't place the branches in front of the weak animals. So the weak animals were Laban's, and the strong ones were Jacob's. [43]As Jacob's flocks grew large, he became wealthy with many flocks, camels, donkeys, and servants. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

God should not have blessed Jacob because he had a habit of "tricking" people to get what he wanted. His stew got him the birthright. He got the blessing from his father Isaac. Now he used questionable breeding tricks for his flocks to prosper and diminish the flocks of Laban. Why would God bless Jacob? It was not because of his deceptive ways. Instead God blessed Jacob for His own sovereign purposes which are not always understood by humans. Lord, when I've been deceptive, forgive me. Bless me according to Your sovereign purpose, and for Your sovereign glory. I don't always understand what You're doing in my life, but I submit to it. Bless me for Your glory. Amen.

Genesis 31

Jacob Runs Away from Laban

[1]Jacob heard that Laban's sons were complaining that Jacob got rich off their father. [2]And Laban was not as friendly toward Jacob as he had been. [3]God said to Jacob, "Go back home to your relatives, and I will be with you." {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [4]Jacob then told Rachel and Leah, {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [5]"Your father is no longer friendly toward me, but God has been with me. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8}

Two things motivated Jacob to return to his family home. First, he heard threatening rumors about his father-in-law, Laban. Second, God told Jacob to return to his homeland. God reminded Jacob, "I am the God of Bethel where you poured oil on a stone pillar and made a vow to me" (31:13). Sometimes we must be reminded of our vow to God, then immediately go about keeping our promises to God. Jacob instructed his wives and children, packed up his belongings and then left for the Promised Land. When God reminds us of a promise we made to him in the past, we must obey and immediately make preparations to do what God told us. Lord, my memory is not perfect; forgive me when I've not done anything I promised to do. My actions also are not perfect; forgive me if I have not done completely anything I promised to do. Today, I will do what You tell me to do. Amen.

[6]I've worked hard for your father, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [7]but he kept changing my wages. However, God hasn't allowed him to harm me. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [8]When he said the speckled flock would be mine, all of them were speckled. And the same was true of the spotted ones. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [9]That's how your father's sheep and goats became mine." {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

[10-12]"Once I dreamed that the angel of God told me to notice that all the male goats were either spotted or speckled. God said, 'I know what Laban has been doing to you. [13]I am the God of Bethel, where you poured oil on a stone pillar and made a promise to me. So leave and go to your homeland.'" {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}

[14]Rachel and Leah asked, "Will we not inherit anything from our father Laban's estate? [15]He treats us like foreigners and he has cheated us out of our bride price. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [16]The wealth God took from him belongs to us and our children." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

[17]Then Jacob, his children, and wives {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [18]left for Canaan with all his livestock and other property. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [19]Rachel stole Laban's family idols. [20]Jacob didn't tell Laban he planned to leave. [21]But he crossed the Euphrates River and headed toward Gilead. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

22Three days later Laban learned that Jacob had skipped town. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} 23So he pursued him for a week and finally caught up with him in Gilead. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 24In a dream God told Laban not to say anything good or bad to Jacob. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
25Laban and his relatives camped in Gilead near Jacob. 26Then he said to Jacob, "Why have you been deceptive and run off with my daughters? 27Why were you so secretive about it? If you had told me, I could have sent you off with singing and playing of musical instruments. 28Foolishly you didn't even let me kiss my grandchildren and daughters good-bye. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} 29I could hurt you for this, but God told me to be careful what I say to you. 30You went off to your homeland, but why did you steal my idols?" {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
31Jacob answered, "I left because I was afraid you would not let your daughters go with me. 32If you find anyone of us has stolen your idols, then that person deserves to die. You can look, and if you find anything that belongs to you, take it." Jacob did not know Rachel had stolen the family idols. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
33So Laban went into Jacob's and Leah's tents looking for the idols, but he found nothing. Then he went into Rachel's tent. 34She had put the idols in her camel's saddle and was sitting on it. As Laban searched her tent, he found nothing. 35Rachel said to her father, "Don't be mad at me for not getting up, but I'm having my period." Laban kept on searching but could not find the idols. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25}
36All this upset Jacob and he said to Laban, "What crime have I committed? {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} 37You've searched everything of mine. But if you have found anything that belongs to you, put it here in front of everyone so we can see it. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1}
38"In the 20 years I've worked for you, your sheep and goats have not had a miscarriage, and I've never eaten one of your male sheep. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 39If a sheep or goat of yours was killed by a wild animal, I paid for it myself, whether it was killed in the daytime or at night. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 40It was hot during the day and cold at night, and at times I couldn't sleep. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} 41Things have been like this for 20 years. I worked for you for 14 years for your two daughters, and six more years to buy your sheep and goats, and you kept changing my wages. 42If the wonderful God of my father and grandfather had not been with you, you probably would have sent me away with nothing. But God has seen how hard I've worked for you, so it's not surprising that He has rebuked you." {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}
43Laban said, "Leah and Rachel are my daughters, and their children are my grandchildren, and all these sheep are mine too. But I can't do anything about all this now. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 44So let's make an agreement between us." {233 Impartial-Prayer, Gen.

25:22-34} [45]Jacob set up a large rock, {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [46]and he told his relatives to pile up more rocks. They did and they ate there by the rock pile. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} [47]Laban named the rock pile Yegar-Sahadutha (which means "Heap of Witness" in Aramaic), and Jacob named it Galeed (which means "Heap of Witness" in Hebrew). {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [48]Laban said, "This rock pile will remind us of our agreement." And the name Galeed conveyed the same idea. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [49]Laban said, "May the LORD watch over us while we are apart. {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49}

When I was a child in the Eastern Heights Presbyterian Church, Savannah, Georgia, we would all pray out loud at the end of youth meetings what was called "The Mizpah Benediction." "May the Lord watch between you and me, when we are absent one from another" (31:49, NKJV). To me it was a prayer-covenant between my buddies asking for God's blessing. But it meant something very different to Jacob and Laban. Jacob would have sneaked away if he could have gotten away with it. He was scared of his father-in-law. Laban would have killed Jacob, but God warned him not to harm Jacob. They set up a pile of stones to warn each other not to come past those stones again to attack each other. Lord, I pray The Mizpah Benediction for my friends, that is, that You will watch over them while I'm gone. I pray for my enemies that You will bless them (Luke 6:28), and that You will keep them from harming me. Lord, I trust You more than a hand shake, or a written agreement, or a court protective order. Amen.

[50]If you mistreat my daughters or take other women to be your wives, no one may see you, but God will know. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [51-52]This rock pile and the large rock are witnesses that I will not go past them to harm you and you will not go past them to harm me. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [53]The God of your grandfather Abraham and the God of my father Nahor and the God of their ancestors will know if we are keeping the agreement." Jacob agreed to all this. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [54]Jacob offered a sacrifice there, and invited his relatives to a meal. They ate supper, and spent the night on the mountain. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} [55]Early in the morning Laban kissed his grandchildren and his two daughters good-bye, and then he left for home. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

Genesis 32

Jacob Sends Gifts to Esau and Jacob Meets God

[1]As Jacob was on his way, some angels met him. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [2]Seeing them, he named the place Mahanaim (meaning "Two Camps"), because he said, "This is the camp of God." [3]He sent messengers ahead of him to greet his brother Esau in Seir, also called Edom.

{434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11}

Jacob was rooted in fear; he would meet his brother the next day who 20 years earlier had threatened to kill him (27:41). Does being scared motivate us to pray more fervently than ever before? Lord, remind me to pray when I'm afraid, and remind me to cover all my sins and trespasses against persons by the blood of Christ. Amen.

4"I, your servant have been living with Laban. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} 5I have lots of oxen, donkeys, sheep, goats, and servants. I am sending these messengers of mine to greet you."
6The messengers went back to Jacob and told him, "Esau is coming to see you with 400 men." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 7This scared Jacob, and so he divided his people and livestock into two groups, thinking, {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} 8"If he attacks one group, the others will be safe." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
9Then Jacob prayed, "LORD, You are the one who told me to go back home. I don't deserve all your kindness to me. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

Jacob reminds God that he is in the line of Abraham (32:9), and then Jacob reminds God that He was obeying His command to return home to face trouble (32:9). Lord, I don't count on my prayer persistence, nor my faith, not any other reasons. I count on Your character for my answers. Amen.

10Years ago when I crossed the Jordan on my way to northern Syria, I had nothing. Now I have two large groups of animals and people. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} 11Please save me from Esau. I'm afraid he'll attack me and my wives and children. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 12You told me you would prosper me and make my descendants as countless as the sand." {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}
13After spending the night there, he selected a gift for Esau, 14including 220 sheep, 1530 camels, 40 cows, 10 bulls, and 30 donkeys. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 16He told his servants to go ahead of him and keep some distance between the herds. 17"When my brother Esau asks who you are and where you are going, and whose animals these are, {169 Fleece-Prayer, Judg. 6:36-40} 18then say, 'They belong to your servant Jacob. He sends them as a gift to you. And he is coming behind us.'" {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 19He told the men with the other herds to say the same thing to Esau.

Jacob couldn't deny his old nature to "trick" his brother again. He separated himself to pray all night, but left his wife and children on the other side of the river. Then he divided his wives, children, flocks (wealth), to meet Esau in successive waves (is this a peace offering to save his life?). In case one group is destroyed, at least Jacob could flee.

Was this common sense, fear, or trickery? Lord, help me use my common sense to find Your will, and help me apply common sense to my prayers. Yet I know sometimes I must go beyond normal expectations, to trust You for supernatural answers to prayer. Amen.

20"And be sure to tell him I am coming behind you." He thought, "Hopefully these gifts will please him. Then when we meet, he'll not be angry." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 21Jacob's men sent the gifts to Esau, and Jacob spent the night in the camp. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
22During the night Jacob got up and took his wives, their maids, and his 11 sons across the Jabbok River, 23and then had his belongings taken across. 24That night a man wrestled with him until daybreak. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

Jacob was left alone, and a man wrestled with him until the breaking of day" (32:24). This seems to be "wordless" praying, for sometimes we pray without words. Isn't prayer a relationship with God? And sometimes isn't prayer wrestling with God? Lord, when great issues are at stake, I will wrestle with You until I get an answer. Give me faith to know when to wrestle with You, and when to surrender to You. Amen.

25Seeing that he couldn't defeat Jacob, the man threw Jacob's hip socket out of joint. As they continued wrestling, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 26the man said, "Let me go. It's almost daylight." But Jacob said, "I won't unless you bless me." {311 Morning-Prayer, John 21:4}
27When the man asked Jacob his name, he answered "Jacob." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 28"I am changing your name from Jacob to Israel (meaning "One who struggles with God") because you have struggled with God and man and have won." {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8}
29When Jacob asked the man his name, the man said, "Why do you ask?" Then he blessed Jacob. {398 Reluctant Answers to Prayer, Gen. 6:6} 30Jacob named the place Peniel (meaning "Face of God") because he said, "I saw God face to face and I'm still alive." {124 Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen. 32:30}
31As Jacob was leaving Peniel, the sun was coming up and he was limping because of his dislocated hip. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 32Therefore even now Israelites do not eat the hip muscle of any animal. {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1}

Genesis 33

Jacob Meets Esau

1Jacob saw Esau coming with 400 men, so he put his children with their mothers. 2He put the maids Zilpah and Bilhah with their sons in front, Leah and her children were next, followed Rachel and Joseph. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 3He walked ahead of all of them and bowed down to Esau seven times. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

[4]Jacob was surprised when Esau ran to him and hugged and kissed him, and they both cried. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.}

This was a volatile situation when Jacob met his brother Esau. They had not seen each other for 20 years. Esau had become very wealthy, he had 400 men—a small army. Jacob had also become wealthy with wives, and children, servants, and herds. Bowing seven times has been documented in ancient literature as a way of expressing humble submission and sincere contrition. Jacob bowed seven times, then offered him a gift which was probably Jacob's attempt to repay the "blessing" he deceptively tricked from Esau. Technically Jacob didn't get to receive the "blessing"—which was a double inheritance over Esau, because out of fear, Jacob left the family compound with nothing but a walking stick. Lord, I want to do all things right, and I want to treat all people right; especially my relatives. Forgive me when I've wronged someone ignorantly. Then if I wronged someone and forgot about it, bring it to my mind. I will humbly confess my wrong. I will attempt to reconcile myself to them. Use my testimony to all people to glorify You. Amen.

[5]When Esau saw the women and children, he asked who they were. Jacob answered, {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [6]"These are the children God in His grace has given me." [7]Next Leah and her children bowed down, followed by Rachel and Joseph. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

[8]Esau asked about the herds he met on the road. Jacob said, "I wanted you to be friendly with me." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [9]Esau replied, "I have lots of flocks, my brother. Keep these yourself." [10]Jacob responded, "No, please accept them as a gift. What a delight it is to see your face. It's like seeing the face of God. {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} [11]Please accept these gifts. God has been good to me, and I have all I need." So Esau finally accepted them. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

[12]Esau said, "Let's be on our way. I'll go with you." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} [13]Jacob said, "No need for you to do that. Traveling is hard on children and on younger livestock. If I drive the animals too hard, they'll die. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [14]So you go on ahead, and we'll go more slowly and meet you in Seir."

Apparently Jacob didn't plan to meet Esau, but he was caught. He couldn't outrun Esau's army of 400 men. Jacob had herds, women, and children. He tried strategy to disarm Esau (33:1, 2), then God apparently arranged it so Jacob would confess. But Jacob told Esau to go ahead because of the women and children and herds (33:13, 14). Then Jacob went another way (33:17-19). Jacob never intended to go to Esau's home. Lord, the heart is deceitful and desperately wicked (Jer. 17:9). Forgive me when I'm blinded by my own selfish urges. Give me spiritual eyes

to see Your plan for my life, and strength to do Your will. Amen.

15Esau responded, "Okay. But let some of my men go with you." {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} Jacob said, "No need for that either. Just continue to be friendly." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}
16That day Esau left for Edom. {369 Prayer-Journey Prayer, Ps. 126:5-6} 17But Jacob went to Succoth (meaning "Shelter") where he set up camp and made shelter for his flocks and herds. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 18The place is called Succoth because of the shelters he built there. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}
19Having left southern Syria, Jacob arrived in Shechem and camped outside the city. The land where he camped he bought from the sons of Hamor for 200 pieces of silver. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 20Jacob built an altar there and named the place El Elohe Israel (meaning "The God of Israel"). {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

Genesis 34

Dinah Is Raped

1Dinah, Leah's daughter, went to visit some of the women in the area. 2Shechem, a son of Hamor, who was ruler of the area, saw her and raped her. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 3Shechem told her how much he loved her, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 4and he asked his father to get her for him as his wife.
5When Jacob heard that Dinah had been raped, he said nothing until his sons came in from herding their cattle. {216 Heavy-Prayer, Matt. 11:28:30} 6Shechem's father Hamor went to talk with Jacob. 7Just then Jacob's sons came in from the fields, and when they heard what happened to their sister, they were grieved and were extremely angry. Shechem had done a terrible thing, something that was a disgrace in Israel. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}
8Hamor told them, "My son truly loves Dinah, and wants to marry her. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 9Why don't you let your daughters marry our sons, and our daughters can be wives for your sons. {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3} 10Settle here, move about freely, and buy property." 11Shechem, Hamor's son, said to Jacob and his sons, "Please let me have Dinah as my wife, and I'll do whatever you ask. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 12Set the dowry price or gift as high as you want, and I'll pay it. I really want Dinah as my wife."
13Jacob's sons tricked Shechem and Hamor {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 14by saying, "We can't do that because you men of Shechem are not circumcised. That would be disgraceful for her to marry an uncircumcised man. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} 15But we'll let you marry her if you circumcise all the males in your family. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 16Only then can we let your men marry our daughters. And we'll settle in your land and we can live together. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer,

James 4:3} [17]But if you don't do this, we'll take Dinah and be on our way."
[18]Hamor and Shechem liked this idea. Shechem, {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [19]who was highly respected, quickly went into action. [20]He and his father met with their city leaders and told them their plan. [21]"These men are friendly, so we suggest they settle in our land and let our sons marry their daughters and they marry ours. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [22]But there is one condition: our males must be circumcised. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14} [23]If we do this, just think. Their livestock and property will become ours. So let's agree to the plan, and they will settle among us." {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3}
[24]The city leaders agreed to the plan, and every male in the city was circumcised. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14} [25]Three days later, when the males were still sore, Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brothers, killed every male there. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [26]After killing Hamor and Shechem they took Dinah and left. [27]Jacob's other sons looted the city, taking everything they wanted, including [28]flocks and herds in the city and the countryside. [29]They also took the women and children, and everything of value in their houses. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17}
[30]Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, "Because of what you've done, the Canaanites and Perizzites will hate me. We are so few; they will come and destroy all of us." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [31]But Simeon and Levi replied, "But it wasn't right for our sister to be raped." {434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11}

We must confess our sins when we sin against God. It is obvious that Shechem sinned when he raped Diana. The greatest sin of a pagan is unbelief, because that is the sin that condemns them to hell. But the sin of rape is bad because of the consequences in other lives. Then the sin of murder by Simeon and Levi was bad because of what they did to the men of the city. This made the pagan despise Jacob's family and Jacob's God. Jacob complained of being made "obnoxious among the inhabitants of the land" (34:30). Lord, forgive my sin that is against You and destroys my testimony among the unsaved. Cleanse me by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7) and restore me to fellowship with You. Amen.

Genesis 35

Jacob Returns to Bethel

[1]God told Jacob to move on to Bethel, where He had first appeared to him, and build an alter there. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [2]So Jacob told his family, "Destroy your idols, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} wash, and put on clean clothes. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [3]We are moving to Bethel where I will build an altar to God because He has been with me in all my troubles and travels." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

4They gave Jacob their idols and earrings,
and he buried them under an oak tree. 5So
they started out, and people everywhere
were so afraid of their God that they didn't
bother them. {163 Fear of God-Praying,
Heb. 5:7} 6When they arrived at Bethel
(formerly called Luz), 7Jacob built an altar
there and named it El-Bethel (meaning
"The God of Bethel") because that was
where God had appeared to Jacob when
he was running from Esau. {377 Presence
of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

God changed the name of the place from Bethel to "El-Bethel," which means "The God of the house of God." Also God changed Jacob's name. He would no longer be known as "Jacob, meaning "trickster or deceiver," but God said, "Your name will be Israel," which means "Prince with God." If God were going to give you a new name, what would it be? Lord, I want to be sheep, because You are my Shepherd. I want to be called Redeemed, because You are my Redeemer. I want to be called Saved one, because I once was lost. I want to be called Servant, for You are my Master. Amen.

8Rebekah's nurse, Deborah, died, and
Jacob buried her under the oak tree
near Bethel; and named it Allon Bacuth
(meaning "The Oak of Weeping"). {276
Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}
9Again God blessed Jacob {377 Presence
of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 10and said, "I am
changing your name from Jacob (meaning
"Heel Grabber") to Israel (meaning "One
Who Wrestled with God")." 11God added,
"I am El Shaddai (meaning "Almighty
God"). Have many children, for you will
be the father of an entire nation, and kings
will be among your descendants! {179
Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 12The land I
promised to Abraham and Isaac I am giv-
ing to you and your descendants." 13God
then left. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen.
32:24-30}
14Jacob then took a stone and set it
upright where God spoke to him. {286
Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} He poured
out a drink offering to the Lord and then
poured oil on the stone pillar. {412 Sacri-
ficial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 15And he called
the place Bethel (meaning "The House of
God"). {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt.
6:6}
16On the way from Bethel toward Bethle-
hem Ephrath, Rachel was having difficulty
in her labor. 17Her midwife told her not
to worry because she was giving birth to
another son. 18As she lay dying, Rachel
named her son Benoni (meaning "The
Son of My Sorrow"). But Jacob named
him Benjamin (meaning "The Son of My
Right Hand").
19Rachel died and Jacob buried her by the
side of the road to Bethlehem. 20Over her
grave Jacob set up a pillar which still marks
her burial place. 21So Israel moved on and
settled near Migdal Eder. {276 Leave the
Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} 22While
there, Reuben, Jacob's oldest son, slept
with his father's concubine. Israel heard
about it but didn't do anything. Jacob's
12 sons were these: {160 Family-Heritage
Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 23Reuben, Simeon,
Judah, Issachar, Zebulun – six sons born

to Leah; [24]Joseph and Benjamin born to Rachel; [25]Dan and Naphtali, sons of Bilhah; and [26]Gad and Asher, sons of Zilpah. These (except for Benjamin) were all born to Jacob in northern Syria.

[27]Finally Jacob arrived in Mamre, near Hebron (also called Kiriath-Arba) where his father Isaac lived and where Abraham and Isaac had been. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [28]At age 180 {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [29]Isaac died, having lived a full life. His sons Jacob and Esau buried him there in Mamre. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}

Jacob and his household went to Bethel. Perhaps it was fear of retaliation from the surrounding tribes because of the murder of the men of Shechem by Simeon and Levi. First, they repented, which means turning away from sin both inwardly and outwardly. "They gave Jacob their idols and earrings" (35:4). Jacob buried them under a tree. Next, they went to Bethel (house of God), a symbol of returning to God (35:6). Third, they sought the presence of God when they built an altar. "God appeared to Jacob" (35:7). Then, in restored fellowship, God left Jacob (35:13). Revival is when God pours His presence on His people. Lord, I want revival in my life. I repent of my sins and confess them to You. Forgive me and cleanse me by Your blood (1 John 1:9). Restore me to Your fellowship and pour out Your presence on my life. I want to know You better. Amen.

Genesis 36

Descendants of Esau

[1]This is the record of the descendants {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} of Esau (also called Edom).

[2]Esau married three Canaanite women: Adah (daughter of Elon the Hittite), Oholibamah (daughter of Anah and granddaughter of Zibeon the Hivite), [3]and Basemath (daughter of Ishmael and Esau's first cousin). [4]Adah had Eliphaz, Basemath had Reuel, [5]and Oholibamah had Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. These were the five sons born to Esau.

[6]Then Esau moved away from Jacob with his family, livestock, and belongings. [7]He and Jacob had so much livestock and property that there wasn't enough room for both of them. [8]Esau (also known as Edom) lived near Mount Seir.

As so often happens, material belongings become the basis of envy and bitterness among friends and family. Esau's enormous wealth is described in Genesis 36:6-8. He had many children, servants, cattle, and other animals. It was so much that Esau left Canaan. Lord, it is all right to possess money; it's just that money should not possess me. I give all my belongings to You; I will use what You allow me to use for Your glory. Amen.

[9]This is the record of the Edomites from Esau. [10]His sons were Eliphaz and Reuel, [11]and Eliphaz's sons were Teman, Omar, Zepho, Gatam, and Kenaz. [12]Eliphaz had

a concubine Timna, and she had a son Amalek.
13The sons of Reuel were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, Mizzah, grandsons of Basemath. 14Oholibamah, daughter of Anah, had Jeush, Jalam, and Korah.
15Eliphaz's sons, who were Esau's grandsons, were chiefs of the clans of Teman, Omar, Zepho, Kenaz, 16Korah, Gatam, and Amalek. They descended from Eliphaz, son of Esau and Adah. 17Reuel's sons were chiefs of the clans of Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. They descended from Reuel, son of Esau and Basemath. 18Oholibamah's three sons were chiefs of the clans of Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. They descended from Oholibamah 19and Esau, also known as Edom.
20Seir the Harite had seven sons there in Edom: Lotlan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, 21Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. These chiefs were heads of clans in Edom. 22Lotlan's sons were Hori and Heman and Lotlan's sister was Timna. 23Shobal's sons were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shepho, and Onam. 24Zibeon's sons were Aiah and Anah. (Anah is the one who found springs in the desert while grazing his father Zibeon's donkeys.) 25Anah had Dishon and Oholibamah, 26and Dishon had four sons: Hemdan, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran. 27Ezer, Seir's son, had Bilhan, Zaavan, and Akan.
28Aishan, another of Seir's sons, had sons Uz and Aran. 29As mentioned, the Horite clans, Lotlan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and 30Dishan were chiefs, all of whom lived in Seir.

The kings of Edom were listed before the kings of Israel, {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} "Now these were the kings who reigned in the land of Edom (name for Esau) before any king reigned over the children of Israel (name for Jacob)" (36:31). Cain was discussed before Abel, Cain's posterity before Abel's posterity, Saul before David, and were listed of first working six days and then resting on the seventh. This reflects the principle of the natural before the spiritual. "The spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual" (1 Cor. 15:46). This principle means we must have a physical body to reflect our spiritual life and if there is no physical, the spiritual can't be expressed. Lord, I will give my strength to work for a living, then I will give one day of the week to You. I will give to Caesar the things that are Caesar's and spiritual things to You. Amen.

31The kings of Edom in order were 32Bela, son of Beor, whose city was Dinhabah, 33Jobab son of Zerah, 34Husham from the land of Teman, 35Hadad son of Bedad, (Bedad defeated the Midianites in Moab), 36Samlah from Avith Masrekah, 37Shaul from Rehoboth, 38Baal-Hanan son of Acbor, 39Hadad, whose city was Pau and whose wife was Mehetabel.
40The chiefs of Esau were his sons, whose clans lived in various regions: Timna, Alvah, Jetheth, 41Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, 42Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, 43Magdiel, and Iram. Each one gave his name to

the area where he lived. All were Edomites, whose ancestor was Esau.

God had predicted Esau would live by the sword (27:40), and that eventually he would "shake loose from him [Jacob] and be free" (27:40, NLT). The physically weaker Jacob dominated his physically stronger older brother. Here finally, Esau left the domination of his brother. Lord, help me see Your principles in Scripture. Amen.

Genesis 37

Joseph's Dreams

[1]Jacob settled in Canaan, where his father Isaac had lived. [2]This is the story of Jacob's family. When Joseph was 17, he was taking care of sheep with his half-brothers who were sons of Bilhah and Zilpah. He tattled on these four to his father about their bad behavior. {434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11}

[3]Israel loved Joseph more than any of his other sons, because Joseph was born when Israel was old. And he had given Joseph a beautiful coat to show he was his favorite son. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [4]So his brothers hated him and said nothing good about him. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

[5]When Joseph told them a dream he had, they hated him even more. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}

A dream makes the dreamer special, {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} whether it's God's supernatural prediction of the future, or it's a contemporary vision of what one wants to do because God has put a burden on one's heart to do it. Such was the content of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Dream" sermon on the Washington Capitol Mall on August 28, 1963. Joseph's dream made his brothers hate Joseph all the more; they already hated him for being a tattle tale (37:2), and because he got the special coat (37:3). The dream even made Joseph's father and mother question him (37:11). Because one is special to God, he has a dream and the dream sets him apart even more. Lord, You've put a dream upon my heart of what I must do for You. I believe You exist and that You give tasks to those who love You, so I will do the dream You've put upon my heart; it will be my heart's passion. Amen.

[6]"Listen to this dream," he said. [7]"We were all in the field tying up bundles of grain. Suddenly my bundle stood straight up and your bundles bowed down to mine." [8]They said to him, "So you think you will be king over us?" Because of this dream the brothers hated Joseph even more. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}

[9]Then he told them about another dream. "This time the sun, moon, and 11 stars were bowing down to me." [10]He told his father about this dream, and his father said, "Do you think that I, your mother, and your brothers will bow down to you?" [11]Joseph kept wondering about this dream, but his brothers were jealous.

[12]One day Joseph's brothers were grazing the sheep near Shechem. [13]Jacob said, "I

want you to check on your brothers and the flocks, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [14]and tell me how they are." Going from Hebron to Shechem, [15]Joseph was wandering in the fields when a man asked him what he was looking for. [16]Joseph said he was looking for his brothers who were grazing sheep. "Do you know where they are?" [17]"Yes, I heard them say they are moving on to Dothan." So Joseph left and found them near Dothan. [18]Seeing him coming, [19]they said, "Here comes our dreamer. [20]Let's kill him and throw him into a pit. We can tell our father that a wild animal ate him. Then his dreams can't come true." {129 Dream-Rejection Prayer, Gen. 37:5, 9}

[21]Reuben heard their plans, and said, "Let's not kill him. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [22]Just throw him in this pit here in the desert." Reuben said this because he wanted to take him back home. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [23]When Joseph arrived, they tore off his beautiful robe [24]and threw him in a dry, empty pit. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [25]As they were eating, they saw Ishmaelites coming from Gilead to the east. They were going to Egypt to sell spices, balm, and myrrh. [26]Judah said, "We won't gain anything if we kill Joseph. [27]So let's sell him to the Ishmaelites. After all, he's our own brother." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} The brothers agreed to this suggestion. [28]So they pulled Joseph out of the pit and sold him for 20 pieces of silver to the Ishmaelites, who took him to Egypt. [29]This so displeased Reuben, that he tore his clothes in grief. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [30]He said to his brothers, "Now what do we do?" [31]So they took Joseph's coat, killed a goat, and dipped the coat in the goat's blood. [32]They took the coat to their father and said, "We found this. Could it be Joseph's?" {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [33]Immediately Jacob recognized it and said, "Yes, it's his coat. Maybe an animal has killed him and torn him to pieces." {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22}

[34]In grief, Jacob tore his clothes and put on burlap clothing, and mourned for his son for a long time. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [35]His sons and daughters tried to comfort him, but it was no use. He said he would mourn till he died, and then he wept. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

[36]Meanwhile, the Midianites sold Joseph in Egypt to Potiphar, an official of Pharaoh, in charge of the guard.

God told Abraham that He would send the family into Egypt where it would grow into a mighty people until "the sins of the Amorites will be ready to be punished" (15:16). God used the rivalries and family squabbles to bring about a series of events that led to Joseph being sold into Egypt as a slave. While it seems that evil wins, and the people of God suffer; {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} circumstances are never out of God's control. "All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose" (Rom. 8:28). Lord, sometimes I complain about circumstances because I don't see Your larger plan for my life. Open my eyes {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} to see Your

"perfect will" for my life. I yield to do Your will. Amen.

Genesis 38

Judah and Tamar

[1]At that time Judah moved to Adullam, where he visited Hirah. [2]Judah met a Canaanite woman, a daughter of Shua, and married her. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} [3]They had three sons: Er, [4]Onan, and Shelah. [5]When Shelah was born, they were living in Kezib. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [6]Judah arranged for Er to marry Tamar. [7]But Er was so wicked that the Lord took his life. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [8]Then Judah told Er's brother Onan to marry Tamar. "As her brother-in-law it is your duty to marry her. Then your son will be Er's son."

[9]But Onan didn't like that idea. So whenever he slept with Tamar, he spilled his semen so that she couldn't get pregnant. [10]This displeased the Lord, so he took Onan's life too. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[11]Judah told Tamar, his daughter-in-law, to go live with her parents until Shelah grew up. Then Tamar did so. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

[12]Sometime later Judah's wife, Shua's daughter, died. After grieving he and his friend Hirah went to Timnah to help shear his sheep. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} [13]Tamar heard that Judah was going there, so she disguised herself with a veil and sat beside the road to Enaim. [14](She had heard that Shelah had grown up, but Judah hadn't given him to her as her husband.) [15]When Judah saw her, he thought she was a prostitute. [16]Not realizing she was his daughter-in-law, he asked to sleep with her. She asked, "How much will you pay me?" [17]He said, "I'll send you a young goat." "But how will I know you will do that?" [18]He said, "What do you want?" She replied, "I would like to have the cord around your neck and your walking stick." So Judah gave those items to her, and he slept with her, and she became pregnant. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [19]She went home and put on her widow's clothing again.

[20]Judah asked his friend Hirah to take a goat to the woman and to get back the pledged items he had left with her. But Hirah couldn't find her. [21]He asked the men of Enaim, "Where is the prostitute who was by the road near town?" They replied, "No prostitute has ever been here." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [22]When Hirah told Judah, he said, "I couldn't find her, and the men of the town said a prostitute was never there." [23]So Judah said, "Let her keep the pledges. And if we tried to send her the goat, people would laugh at us."

[24]Three months later someone told Judah that Tamar was pregnant as a result of her being a prostitute. Judah responded, "Bring her out of town and burn her!" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [25]As she was being taken to be killed, she sent this message to Judah: "The man who owns

this ring, cord, and walking stick is the one who got me pregnant."
[26]Judah admitted they were his. And he said, "She's better than I am because I didn't let her marry my son Shelah." He never slept with her again.
[27]Later Tamar had twin boys. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} [28]At birth one of them put his hand out of her womb. The midwife tied a red thread around his wrist to identify him as the one who appeared first. [29]But he drew back his hand, and the other baby was born first. Then the midwife exclaimed, "How did you come out first?" So he was named Perez (meaning, "Breaking Out"). [30]Then the other baby was born, and he was named Zerah (meaning "Scarlet").

Since an Israelite could end up in slavery because of poverty, a family member could buy him as his property out of slavery to protect the family. A near relative had the first obligation to buy the property out of bondage and/or re-establish the family lineage (Lev. 25:23-28). That kinsman has the right to redeem. Onan (38:8-10) refused to be a kinsman-redeemer, to his brother, apparently for selfish reasons; he wanted his own lineage. When Judah refused to allow Shelah (38:11) to be a kinsman-redeemer, Tamar took matters into her own hands. Lord, I don't understand why You use dishonest people in Your work, but You work grace through people's sin. Thank You for Your grace to save me and use me even when I'm not perfect. Amen.

Genesis 39

Joseph in Potiphar's House

[1]The Ishmaelites took Joseph to Egypt and sold him to Potiphar, Pharaoh's captain of the guard. [2]The Lord blessed Joseph, and he succeeded in everything he did. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [3]Potiphar noticed that the Lord made Joseph successful. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} [4]Joseph was a favorite of Potiphar's, and so he put Joseph in charge of his household and his business affairs. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [5]Then because of this God blessed Potiphar. Everything ran smoothly, and his crops and livestock did well. The only thing Potiphar had to be concerned about was what to eat. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} [6]Joseph was a handsome guy, [7]and Potiphar's wife asked him to sleep with her. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [8]But Joseph refused. He said to her, "My master has put everything in his household under me. [9]I have more authority than anyone. Obviously he held nothing back from me except you because you are his wife. I could never do such a wicked thing sinning in that way against God." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [10]She kept urging him every day to sleep with her, but each day he refused to be with her or refused to be around her. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [11]One day when he was in Potiphar's house to take care of things, no one was around except Potiphar's wife, [12]who grabbed him and said, "Sleep with me!" He pulled

himself away, but she held onto his shirt. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
13With his shirt in her hand, 14she began screaming. She told her servants, "Look, this Hebrew is making us look like fools. He tried to rape me, so I screamed for help. 15That's when he ran and left his shirt with me."
16When her husband Potiphar got home that night, she told him what happened. 17"Your Hebrew slave tried to rape me, 18but when I screamed he left his shirt and ran."

Joseph had committed himself to sexual purity. He would not commit adultery with Potiphar's wife, which he said would be a sin against God (39:9). Also Joseph had a commitment to Potiphar, "My master has put everything in his household under me" (39:8). No wonder God was with Joseph. He could be trusted in private areas of his life. Lord, I want Your presence with me, and I want Your blessing on all I do, so I will constantly do right in all areas of my life. Amen.

19This made Potiphar so mad that 20he put Joseph in prison with other prisoners of the king. 21The LORD was kind to Joseph there too, and he was favored by the jailer. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
22So the jailer put Joseph in charge of the other prisoners and all prison affairs. 23The jailer wasn't concerned about anything because the LORD was with Joseph and helped him succeed in everything he did. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

Four times in this chapter the Lord is said to have been with Joseph (39:2, 3, 21, 23). This must have been the defining characteristic of Joseph's life. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Because Joseph did things right, God prospered him and all those for whom he worked. As a result, Potiphar made him overseer with all his household affairs (39:4). Because a Christian lives and works by God's standard, he will work harder to reach that standard, and he will work honestly. Lord, I belong to You and I will work hard to reach Your standards on my job and I will work honestly. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} I want Your blessing on all I do at work, and I want Your presence with me. Amen.

Genesis 40

Joseph Interprets Two Prisoners' Dreams

1Pharaoh's cupbearer and chief baker had offended him in some way. 2He was so angry with them 3that he put them in the prison where Joseph was. 4They were imprisoned for a long time, and Potiphar had Joseph wait on them.
5One night each man had a dream, each one different from the other. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 6Next morning when Joseph saw them looking sad, 7he asked them, "Why are you so sad-looking today?" 8They said, "We each had a dream, but no one can tell us what they mean." Joseph said, "God knows their meanings.

So tell me the dreams." {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
9The cupbearer told Joseph, "I saw a vine
10with three branches that budded and
blossomed and they had lots of grape clusters. 11I squeezed the grapes into Pharaoh's
cup, and then gave him the cup." 12Joseph
said, "Your dream means this: the three
branches mean three days. 13In three days
Pharaoh will release you from prison and
he will give you back your job as cupbearer. 14Do me a favor. Ask Pharaoh to
release me from this prison. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 15I was kidnapped
from my homeland, and I haven't done
anything to deserve being in jail."

Of all the inner strengths, gratitude is the least remembered of all traits, but it is the foundation of our character. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} The person who doesn't show appreciation to others usually has an ego problem. They think only of themselves and they think they've arrived in life without the aid of others. But the grateful person realizes the contribution of others to his life, that is, he realizes he can't get anywhere without others. Joseph asked the butler to help get him out of prison. (40:14). Lord, forgive me for thinking only of myself. I realize I couldn't be where I am without the help of others. Thank You for all my family, friends, and work associates and what they have done for me. I praise You for Your work in my life. Amen.

16When the chief baker heard that good
dream interpretation, he told his dream to
Joseph. "In my dream three breadbaskets
were on my head. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 17But birds came and
ate the breads in the top basket. 18Joseph
said, "Your dream means this: the three
baskets mean three days. 19In three days
Pharaoh will cut off your head, hang you
on a pole, and birds will come eat your
flesh."
20Three days later Pharaoh had a birthday
banquet for his officials and he released
the cupbearer and the baker from prison.
21He put the cup-bearer back in his job,
22but he hung the baker on a pole as Joseph
had predicted. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 23Unfortunately the cupbearer forgot all about Joseph's request.

While dreams can be a supernatural prediction of the future, they can also be like a goal to point out our life's calling or the task we want to do. However, each person has a different dream for his life. The main point is to make sure our dreams match God's plans for our life. Obviously the baker's dream from God didn't match the baker's plan for his life. Lord, I have plans for my life. When my plans don't match Your will, show me and I'll change. I want to be in the center of Your will and accomplish Your plan for my life. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Forgive me of my sin and don't let my past failures destroy the future. Thank You for all the good things my family, friends, and business associates

have done for me. Also I praise You for all the good things You've done for me. Amen.

Genesis 41

Joseph Interprets Pharaoh's Dreams

[1]Two years later Pharaoh dreamed he was standing by the Nile River. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [2]Suddenly seven fat cows came out of the river and were grazing in the grass. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [3]Then seven skinny cows stood beside the fat cows. [4]The thin cows ate the fat cows. Then Pharaoh woke up.

[5]He fell asleep again and had another dream. He saw seven full heads of grain on one stalk. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [6]Suddenly in his dream he saw seven more heads of grain on the stalk, but the east wind had shriveled them up. [7]These seven thin heads of grain swallowed the full heads. Then Pharaoh woke up again. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}

[8-9]Next morning Pharaoh was upset, {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} wondering what his dreams could mean. So he called all the magicians and wise men and asked them what his dreams meant, but they didn't know. [10]The cupbearer said, "Awhile back, after you put the baker and me in prison, [11]we each had a dream. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [12]We told them to a Hebrew slave, who told us their meaning. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [13]And just as he said, I was again given back my job and the baker was hung on a pole."

[14]Immediately after Pharaoh released Joseph from the dungeon, Joseph shaved, changed clothes, and went to the king. [15]"I had a dream last night but no one can tell me their meaning. But I have heard that you can interpret dreams." [16]Joseph said, "I can't do it, but God can." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

Because Joseph could interpret dreams in the past, he was taken from prison and given the opportunity to again interpret a dream. Joseph was wise enough to recognize his limited ability. "It is beyond my power to do this" (41:16). Joseph gave God praise, "God has shown Pharaoh what He is about to do" (41:25). Since only God knows the future, we should let Him direct our lives if we want to be in His will. Lord, I realize only You know the future. So I yield to Your plans for my future life. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Show me what to do and where to go. Keep me from making mistakes. Guide me into Your perfect will and may all I do praise You. Amen.

[17]So Pharaoh told Joseph, "While I was standing by the Nile River, [18]seven fat cows came out of the river and began grazing in the grass. [19]Then seven thin cows came up from the river. I've never seen such poor-looking cows in all of Egypt. [20]These cows ate the seven fat cows, [21]though the thin cows still looked skinny. Then I woke up."

22"Then in a dream I saw seven heads of grain on one stalk, all full and ripe. 23From the same stalk came seven shriveled-up heads of grain. 24The withered heads swallowed up the full heads. I told all this to the magicians, but they couldn't explain them."

25Joseph said, "In your dreams, which mean the same thing, God has shown you what he is going to do. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 26The seven fat cows and the seven ripe heads of grain both refer to seven years of prosperity. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 27The seven skinny cows and seven shriveled-up heads of grain both refer to seven years of famine. 28God has shown you what he will do. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 29In the next seven years there will be great prosperity throughout Egypt. 30Then there will be seven years of famine. 31That time will be so bad that everyone will forget the prosperous years. 32But why two dreams of the same thing? To stress that God has determined to do this, and this will happen very soon."

33"I suggest you find the wisest man in Egypt, and put him in charge of a national farm program. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 34Appoint officials who will collect one-fifth of all the crops in the next seven years. 35Have them gather the grain and food under your authority. 36Keep the food in storage to be eaten in the years of famine. If you don't, the country will be devastated by the famine." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

37Pharaoh and his officials liked Joseph's plan. 38 Pharaoh said to them, "No one is better qualified than Joseph to head up this program because obviously the Spirit of God is in him." {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}

God elevated Joseph because He was completely yielded to God, because he had solid internal character, and because he glorified God in all things. When Pharaoh needed a man to "save" Egypt, he looked for one "who is obviously filled with the Spirit of God" (41:38, NLT). Don't wait until you have a task to ask God to fill you with His Spirit (Eph. 5:18). No. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit every day for both big tasks and little ones. Be filled with His Spirit for normal life so you can glorify God in all you are and do. Lord, fill me with Your Spirit now so I can pray properly. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Fill me with the Spirit to think, react, and bring glory to You in all I do. Fill me with Your Spirit because I want You in my life. Amen.

39So he said to Joseph, "You are obviously the wisest man in the nation since God has revealed these dreams to you. So I am appointing you to head up this project. 40I am putting you in charge of all my palace affairs. No one will be over you except me." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 41"I now put you over all Egypt." 42To symbolize Joseph's authority, Pharaoh put his own signet ring on Joseph, gave him beautiful clothes, and gave him a gold chain to wear. 43He also let Joseph ride in the chariot next to his, and wherever he went people were told, "Kneel down."

Most of us will never make it to the very top in our vocation. Usually, there's someone over us, so we must learn in life to live, work, and ride in the second chariot. Joseph rode "in the second chariot" (41:43). That means we must learn to work under the authority of another. Lord, I want to ride in the second chariot after You. Get all the glory; I give it to You. Teach me to live and work effectively under the authority of another. Amen.

44So Joseph was in charge of all Egyptian affairs.
45Pharaoh named Joseph Zaphenath-Paneah (meaning "God Speaks and Lives"). Also he gave him Asenath, daughter of Potiphera, the priest of Heliopolis, to be his wife. Joseph traveled throughout Egypt. 46He was 30 years old at the time, and he traveled everywhere. 47For seven years the crops were abundant. {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} 48He stored one-fifth of all the crops in cities near the farms. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} 49After a while there was so much grain that Joseph could not keep track of it all. It was like sand on the seashore. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
50During these years of plenty Joseph had two sons. 51He named one Manasseh (meaning "Forget"), to recall how God had helped him forget his troubles. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.}
52Joseph named his second son Ephraim (meaning "Fruitful"), to recall that God had blessed him in Egypt. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
53The seven years of plentiful crops ended. 54Then came the famine. Though crops failed everywhere in Egypt and other countries, plenty of food was in the Egyptian storehouses. 55-56When people began to starve, they asked Pharaoh for food. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} He sent them to Joseph saying, "Follow his instructions." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 57People in Egypt and in other countries came to Egypt to buy grain from Joseph because the famine was severe everywhere.

Genesis 42

Joseph's Brothers Come to Buy Grain

1When Jacob learned there was grain in Egypt, he said to his sons, "Don't just sit there. 2I have heard there is grain in Egypt. So go there and buy some food so we won't starve to death." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 3Ten of Joseph's brothers went to Egypt to buy grain. 4But Joseph didn't let Benjamin go because he was afraid he might be harmed in some way just as Joseph was. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 5So Israel's sons arrived with others who were traveling to Egypt to buy food. The famine was bad everywhere and especially in Canaan.

God allows calamities and hardships to bring us to a place of repentance where we seek the Lord and put Him first in our lives.

{57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} As difficult days unfolded in Jacob's family, God was working behind the scenes to bring His people to Egypt. When a disaster or catastrophe strikes, people turn to God and pray to Him. Lord, teach me to seek Your presence when calamities strike. May I look beyond natural disasters to see how You develop Your perfect will in my life. Amen.

6As governor of Egypt in charge of selling grain, Joseph saw his brothers when they bowed to him to the ground. 7He recognized them, but he pretended not to know them and he spoke gruffly to them. When he asked where they were from, they said, "The land of Canaan." 8They didn't recognize him. 9He recalled the dreams he had about them years ago. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} And he said, "You are spies. You've come to see if the famine has weakened out nation." 10"Not so," they said. "We've come just to buy food. 11We brothers are your servants, not spies." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 12"I repeat," Joseph said, "You've come to spy on our land." 13They replied, "We 10 are brothers, sons of one man who lives in Canaan. Our youngest is still at home, and one of our brothers is dead." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

14Joseph said, "Yes, you are spies. 15And here's how I'll prove it. Nine of you will stay here, 16and one of you will go get your youngest brother. I'll keep the rest of you here in prison. Then we'll know if your story is true. If you don't have a younger brother, then I'll know you are spies." 17And he jailed them for three days. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7}

18The third day Joseph said to them, "I respect God, so I'll give you a chance to live. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 19To see if you are honest, {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} I'll keep one of you here in prison. The rest of you may take grain back home. 20But you must bring your youngest brother back here. That way, I'll know if you are being truthful, and if you are, you won't die." So they agreed to this.

21They said to themselves, "This has happened because of what we did to Joseph years ago. We saw how distressed he was when we put him in a pit and then sold him to the Ishmaelite traders. But we didn't listen." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 22Reuben said, "I told you not to do it, but you wouldn't listen. Now we'll all die." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 23Joseph knew what they were saying because an interpreter had been speaking for him. 24Joseph went into another room and cried. Then he came back and told them to tie up Simeon while the brothers looked on. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

Sometimes our memory reminds us of the good or bad things in our past. Then we act in certain ways because of past events. Memory is also effective to praying about the present and future. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} Joseph recalled the dreams he had dreamed (42:9). He

remembered God predicted they would bow to him. Also the 10 brothers remembered how distressed he was when they put him in a pit (42:21). Memory is good because it caused the 10 brothers to attach their past sin to their present dilemma. "That's why this trouble has come upon us" (42:21, NLT). Lord, my memory is not perfect. Help me remember the good things of the past, so I can effectively be used by You in the present. Help me remember my past sins and failures, so I can repent and change my present life to serve You more effectively now. Amen.

25Joseph had his servants fill the nine brothers' sacks with grain and to put their money at the top of each sack. He also gave them food for their journey home. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 26So they loaded the sacks on their donkeys and left. 27When one of the brothers opened his sack to feed his donkey, he was surprised to see his money right there. 28When he told his brothers, they were terrified for their lives, saying, "Why has God done this to us?" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

29Arriving back home, they told Jacob about their experiences. 30They said, "The governor of Egypt treated us as if we were spies. 31But we denied that, and {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 32we explained that we are 12 brothers, one of whom is with you and one of whom is dead. 33He said, 'I'll know if you are telling the truth if one of you stays here while the others return home with the grain. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 34Then bring your youngest brother here. That way I'll know you are being honest. Then I'll give back your brother, and you can continue to buy grain here.'"

35As they were emptying their grain sacks, they were all surprised to find their money there. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 36They were terrified, as was their father. Jacob said, "Why have you brought me so much sorrow? Joseph is dead, Simeon is in prison, and now you want to take Benjamin to Egypt. Woe is me." {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 37Reuben spoke to his father, "If I don't bring Benjamin back, you can put two of my sons to death." 38But Jacob said, "Joseph is dead, and I can't let my other son Benjamin go with you. If something happened to him, I would die." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Genesis 43

Joseph's Brothers Decide to Return to Egypt

1The famine in Canaan was still bad. 2So when Jacob and his family had eaten all the grain they brought from Egypt, Jacob said, "Go buy some more food." 3Judah said, "But remember that Egypt's governor warned us that he wouldn't see us unless we bring our brother with us. 4So if you let Benjamin go with us, then we'll go buy food. 5We don't dare go without him."

6Israel asked, "Why did you even tell him you have a younger brother?" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 7They said, "He specifically asked us, 'Is your father

living? And do you have another brother?' So we had to tell him. How could we know he was going to insist we bring our brother along?" [8]Judah said, "If you don't let Benjamin go with us, we'll all die. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [9]I'll personally see that he gets back home safely. If I don't, you can place the blame on me forever. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [10]Actually we would have already been there and back home if we hadn't delayed." [11]So Israel said, "Okay. Take him some products from our country, including perfume, honey, spices, pistachio nuts, and almonds. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [12]And return twice the amount of money you took before. Maybe someone in Egypt made a mistake in putting your money in your sacks. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [13]Take Benjamin with you and be on your way. [14]I pray that El Shaddai will be merciful to you and that the man will let Simeon and Benjamin come home with you. If not, then I'll grieve, and so be it." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

When we give a gift, it is something that should have value to the one receiving it. A gift is usually not expected, nor is it something that does not have to be given. A gift should make the receiver happy and it should bind together the giver and the receiver. Jacob told his sons to take some gifts they didn't have in Egypt. Jacob prayed his gifts would reverse the attitude of the man. "May God Almighty give you mercy before the man" (43:14). Lord, help me know how to treat people and turn their attitude toward You. Teach me not to fight, but to be kind to people. Teach me how to get on the good side of others. Amen.

[15]So they took the gifts and money and Benjamin, hurried on their way, and went to see Joseph.
[16]When Joseph saw Benjamin, his younger brother, he told his house manager, "Take these men to my house, slay an animal, and prepare a big feast for me to have lunch with these men." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [17]And the man did as he was told. [18]But when the men saw they were being taken to Joseph's house, they were afraid. They thought, "This is because he thought we stole his money. He wants to make us slaves and take our donkeys." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}
[19]When they got near Joseph's house, they spoke to the house manager and said, [20]"When we first came to Egypt, [21]we stopped for the night and found money in our sacks. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [22]So we have returned it with additional money to buy more grain. We have no idea how the money got in our sacks. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} [23]The manager said, "It's okay. Don't be afraid. Your God must have put it there because I received your money." Then he released Simeon from prison and brought him to his brothers. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [24]The manager gave the men water to wash their feet, and he fed their donkeys. [25]Hearing that they

were to eat at Joseph's house, the brothers got out their presents to give to Joseph.
[26]When Joseph came home, they gave him the gifts, and they bowed before him. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [27]He asked how they were and then asked about their elderly father. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} [28]They replied, "He is doing well." And they bowed down again.
[29]Looking at Benjamin, he asked, "Is this your brother you told me about? May God bless you, my son." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [30]Joseph quickly left the room and went to his private room and cried because of his love for his brother. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}
[31]Then he washed his face, and controlling himself, he said, "Serve the meal." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [32]Joseph ate by himself and his brothers were served by themselves. The Egyptians sat at yet another table because they hated the idea of eating with Hebrews. [33]When Joseph seated them by their ages, from the oldest to the youngest, they were amazed. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [34]He served them from his own table, giving Benjamin five times as much as he gave anyone else. So Joseph's brothers enjoyed the meal very much.

Genesis 44

Joseph's Cup Found in Benjamin's Sack

[1]Joseph told his house manager, "Fill the men's sacks with as much grain as they will hold, and put their money back into each man's sack. [2]Also put my silver cup in the sack of the youngest." And he did as Joseph told him. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1}

Joseph had his silver cup and the money brought to buy grain put into Benjamin's sack. Joseph wanted to see if the 10 brothers would take this opportunity to get rid of Benjamin, as they had gotten rid of him. However, God was dealing with the 10 brothers for their great sin against Joseph (42:28; 43:23). Do you realize that some of the difficulties in your life are allowed by God to test the sincerity of Your love and obedience to Him? Lord, may I always respond correctly when tested. Use the test that comes in my life to reveal my devotion to You. Forgive me when I've failed Your test. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Deal with me in grace and let me draw near to You. Amen.

[3]At dawn the men were on their way. [4]Soon after that, Joseph told his house manager, "Go chase these men and say to them, 'Why are you doing this when Joseph has been so kind to you? [5]Why did you steal my master's silver drinking cup which he uses for fortune-telling? You have done a terrible thing.'"
[6]Catching up with them, the house manager told them what Joseph said. [7]They responded, "We don't know what you are talking about. We wouldn't do that. [8]We even brought back the money we found in our sacks. [9]Whoever has the cup will die, and the rest of us will be your master's slaves." [10]"Okay," he replied. "However, the

one who has the cup will be my slave and the rest of you can go on."
[11]They quickly put their sacks on the ground and opened them. [12]The manager searched each one, starting with the sack of the oldest brother and proceeding to the youngest. He found the cup in Benjamin's sack. [13]In grief the men tore their clothes, loaded the donkeys, and returned to the city. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}
[14]Again the brothers bowed to Joseph in his house. [15]Joseph asked, "What are you doing? Didn't you know I could find out who stole the cup?" [16]Judah replied, "What can we say? How can we prove we are innocent? We are now your slaves." {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} [17]But Joseph said, "No, only the one in whose sack the cup was found will be my slave. The rest of you can return home."
[18]Judah said, "Let me say a word. Please be patient and don't be angry with me. [19]You had asked us about our father and if we have another brother. [20]We said we have an elderly father and a younger brother. His brother is dead, and his brother is the only one of the two born to their mother, and of course his father loves him. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [21]You ordered us to bring him here so you could see him. [22]We told you our father would die if our youngest brother left him. [23]But you said we would never see you again if we didn't bring our youngest brother back. [24]So we told our father what you said. [25]Later our father told us to come get some more grain. [26]But we said we couldn't go without our youngest brother. Otherwise we would never see you.
[27]"My father said, 'My wife gave me two sons, [28]one of whom was probably killed by some wild animal. [29]If you take the other brother with you and he is injured in some way, I will die a miserable death.' {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [30]So the boy must go back home with us. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

After many years of separation and hardships Joseph laid eyes on Benjamin—his brother—and "his heart yearned for his brother" (43:30, KJV). So Joseph wept, but not before the 10 brothers. He went into his private room and wept there. When you shed tears, the depths of your emotions are reached. Weeping represents the real "you," the one we keep hidden from sight most of the time. When we cry, we are more sincere than any other time. God will hear and answer when we pray with tears, because we are more honest and genuine than at other times. Lord, forgive my hard heart that has not always wept before You. Break my heart over my sin. See the sincerity of my heart and answer me. Amen.

[31]If my father, who loves him very much, sees he is not with us, he will die. Then we will all cause our father's death. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [32]I promised my father that I would bring the boy back home safely. But if I don't, I would bear the blame for the rest of my life.
[33]"So let me stay here as your slave, and let the boy return home. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [34]How can I face my father if the boy is not with me? I can't

stand the thought of how this would affect him."

When the 11 brothers faced Joseph and realized Benjamin may end up a slave, Judah offered to stay there as a slave instead of the boy (44:33). Judah was willing to substitute himself for Benjamin's punishment. This is a picture of Christ's willingness to be a substitute to take our sin punishment, "For God made Christ, who never sinned, to be the offering for our sin" (2 Cor. 5:21). Lord, I deserve to die for my sins, but Jesus Christ became my substitute. He died for my sins, He was my substitute. I am thankful for Your love, and for Christ's willingness to die. I praise You for Your grace. Amen.

Genesis 45

Joseph Reveals Himself to His Brothers

[1]Joseph could no longer control himself. So he told all his servants to leave the room. He was there alone with his 11 brothers when he told them, "I am Joseph." {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [2]He wept so loudly {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} that the Egyptians and those in Pharaoh's palace heard his crying.

There's nothing wrong with weeping, whether for agony (John 11:36), or shedding tears for joy. We have the assurance that weeping in prayer leads to rejoicing. "He who continually goes forth weeping... shall doubtless come again with rejoicing" (Ps. 126:6). When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, "he wept so loudly that the Egyptians... heard his crying" (45:2). Lord, I will weep in agony over lost friends and relatives. Then when they are saved, I will weep with joy over their salvation. Amen.

[3]Joseph said, "I am Joseph. Is my father still living?" But they were so stunned and surprised they couldn't answer him. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [4]Joseph said, "Come closer to me." So they did. Then he said again, "I am your brother Joseph, whom you sold into Egypt. [5]Don't be angry with yourselves for what you did to me because God sent me here to help save lives. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [6]The famine has lasted for two years, and it will extend for another five years. [7]God sent me ahead of you to keep you alive. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

When Joseph revealed himself to his brothers, he recognized God's sovereignty, "God sent me here to help save lives" (45:5). Joseph was yielded to God for his suffering years, as well as his exaltation years. "God, not you, sent me here" (45:8). Lord, I praise You for Your sovereign leadership in my life, both for the hard days and the good days. I yield to Your plans for my life. Amen.

[8]So God, not you, sent me here. He made me like a father to Pharaoh, and governor of all of Egypt. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [9]So hurry back to our father and tell him what I told you, that God has

made me governor of all of Egypt. Then say, 'Move here to Egypt quickly and [10]live in the region of Goshen. That way you can be near me and with your children, grandchildren, flocks, herds, and everything you have. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} [11]I will take care of you {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} during the next five years of famine. If you don't, you and your family will starve.'

[12]"You and especially Benjamin can see from what I said that I really am Joseph. [13]Tell our father the honor I have here and bring him here quickly." [14]Then he and Benjamin hugged each other and cried. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [15]Then he hugged and kissed all his brothers, and they began talking with him freely.

[16]When Pharaoh heard that Joseph's brothers had come, he and his officials were pleased. {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} [17]So he said to Joseph, "Tell your brothers to load their donkeys and return to Canaan. [18]I will give them the best land in Egypt, and they can enjoy the food that is stored up here. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} [19]Also have them take some wagons from Egypt in which to bring back their wives and children, and bring their father too. [20]They can leave their belongings behind, because I will give them the best of everything in Egypt."

[21]So Joseph gave them wagons, as Pharaoh had ordered, and he gave them food for their trip home. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [22]He gave each of them some new clothes, but to Benjamin he gave five sets of clothes and 300 pieces of silver. [23]And to Jacob he sent 10 donkeys loaded with lots of good things from Egypt, along with 10 female donkeys loaded with grain and bread and food for their trip back to Egypt. [24]Joseph sent his brothers on their way and told them not to argue on the way home.

[25]So they left Egypt and arrived in Canaan. [26]They told their father, "Joseph is still alive. In fact, he is the governor of Egypt, second in command under Pharaoh." Jacob was so surprised he did not believe them. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [27]But when they told him everything Joseph said, and he saw the wagons Joseph had sent, he was relieved. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [28]And he said, "I am convinced. My son Joseph is alive. So I will get to see him before I die." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}

When the 10 brothers sold Joseph into Egypt, they took Joseph's coat smeared with blood to their father Jacob to get him to believe Joseph was killed by a wild animal (37:28-33). As a result, "Jacob mourned for his son for a long time" (37:34). Have you ever heard about someone who can't get over the death of a loved one and that person lets the death of another ruin his life? How do you break doubt or despondency? {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} Words usually won't do it. The brothers told Jacob his son was alive, but Jacob "did not believe them" (45:26). Usually it takes an unusual or tangible work of God to break doubt or dependency, "When he (Jacob) saw the wagons Joseph had sent, he was relieved...

and convinced" (45:27-28). Lord, I will tell others of Your answers to prayer to encourage them and motivate them to pray in faith. Amen.

Genesis 46

Jacob and His Family Go to Egypt

1Israel left for Egypt with all his belongings, and on the way he stopped in Beersheba and offered sacrifices in worship to the God of his father Isaac. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 2That night God spoke to him in a vision and said, "Jacob, Jacob." "I'm here," he answered. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 3"I am God, whom your father worshiped. Don't be afraid to go to Egypt because you will have many descendants there and they will become a great nation. 4I'll go with you and I will bring you back. Joseph will be with you when you die in Egypt." {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 5The next day Jacob left Beersheba, {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} and his sons put him and their wives and children in the wagons Pharaoh had given them. 6They brought their livestock and everything they owned. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} All their families went to Egypt, 7including Jacob's sons, grandsons, daughters, and granddaughters.

There are certain places where God likes to reveal Himself to His people. In the Old Testament it was Mount Sinai, Bethel, Jerusalem, and in this chapter it was Beersheba (21:22-34; 26:32-35). Jesus liked to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane (John 18:2). Jacob made his last sacrifice to God in the Holy Land at Beersheba. There in Beersheba God promised to bring His people back to the land of promise. "I will surely bring You back again" (46:4). Many believers like to pray at certain places, such as a prayer closet. "Pray to your Father secretly" (Matt. 6:6, NLT). This verse encourages us to go to our usual place to pray because the Father is there waiting for us. Lord, I will meet You at my special place of prayer. I will meet You there to have fellowship and worship You. Amen.

8The following are those who went with Jacob to Egypt: {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 9(a) Reuben and his sons Hanok, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi; 10(b) Simeon and his sons Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jakin, Zohar, and Shaul (whose mother was a Canaanite); 11(c) Levi and his sons Gershon, Kohath, and Merari; 12(d) Judah and his sons Er, Onan, Shelah, Perez, and Zerah (but Er and Onan had died in the land of Canaan), and Perez's sons were Hezron and Hamul; 13(e) Issachar and his sons Tola, Puah, Job, and Shimron; 14(f) Zebulun and his sons Sered, Elon, and Jahleel. 15These were the sons and grandsons of Jacob's wife Leah, along with their daughter Dinah. This was a total of 33, not counting Er and Onan. 16(g) Gad and his sons were Zephon, Haggi, Shuni, Ezbon, Eri, Arodi, and Areli; and 17(h) Asher and his sons were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah and their sister Serah, with Beriah's

sons Heber and Malkiel. [18]This was a total of 16 born to Zilpah.
[19](i) Jacob and his wife Rachel had Jacob and Benjamin. [20](Manasseh and Ephraim were born to Jacob and Asenath in Egypt.)
[21]Benjamin had 10 sons: Bela, Beker, Ashbel, Gera, Naaman, Ehi, Rosh, Muppim, Huppim and Ard. [22]All these totaled 14.
[23](j) Dan had one son Hushim, and [24](k) Naphtali had four sons: Jahziel, Guni, Jezer and Shillem. [25]These seven were the sons and grandsons of Bilhah.
[26]This was a total of 66 people, not counting Jacob's daughters-in-law. [27]But adding Joseph, Asenath, Manasseh, and Ephraim brought the total to 70.
[28]Jacob had sent Judah on ahead to ask him for directions to Goshen. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} So when they arrived there, [29]Joseph went in his chariot to meet them. Seeing his father, Joseph hugged him and wept for a long time. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}
[30]Jacob then said, "Now that I have seen you and I know you are alive, I am ready to die." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
[31]Joseph told his brothers and their families, "I'll go tell Pharaoh you shepherds have arrived, [32]along with your cattle, sheep, and goats, and everything you own.
[33]When he asks you what you do for a living, tell him, [34]'We are shepherds, just like our ancestors.' Then he will let you live in Goshen, away from the Egyptians because they don't like shepherds." {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Genesis 47

Pharaoh Welcomes Jacob

[1]Joseph told Pharaoh that his father and brothers with their flocks and herds and all they owned had arrived from Canaan and were in Goshen. [2]Joseph took five of his brothers with him to see Pharaoh. [3]When Pharaoh asked them what they do for a living, they said, "We are shepherds, as were our ancestors. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [4]The famine is so bad in Canaan that our flocks have nothing to eat so we have come here and we ask you to please let us live in Goshen." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
[5]Pharaoh turned to Joseph, "I'm glad your father and families are here. [6]Let them live anywhere in Egypt they choose, but I suggest Goshen. And I would like for some of them to care for my livestock too."
[7]Then Joseph brought his father Jacob to see Pharaoh. Jacob blessed Pharaoh, and {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [8]when Pharaoh asked him his age, [9]he said, "I am 130, and I've had some difficult times. But I'm not as old as my father and grandfather." {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [10]Then Jacob blessed Pharaoh again and left. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

When we bless another, we add value to that person. Blessing could be financial, physical, social, and in the case of Christians we add spiritual value when we bless them in prayer. While a blessing is not the same as a miracle, such as healing a physical infirmity;

when a miracle is done, it is a blessing. When "Jacob blessed Pharaoh" (47:7) fulfilling the Scripture, "The lesser person is blessed by the greater" (Heb. 7:7). Isn't this an indication that we who are strong (spiritually) should constantly make life easier for those weaker than us? Lord, I bow humbly to receive the blessings You've given to me. I'm grateful, I will bless others who have less than You've given me. I will pray for others in need and I'll share with them physically, financially, socially, and give them things to make them happier. Amen.

11So Jacob gave his relatives the best part
of the land, the district of Rameses. 12And
he gave them food for their families. {388
Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
13However, the famine was bad in both
Egypt and Canaan. 14Joseph sold grain and
brought the money into Pharaoh's trea-
sury. 15But the people ran out of money,
so they went to Joseph, asking that he give
them food so they wouldn't die. {23 Ask-
ing-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 16Joseph said, "Give
me your livestock and I will sell you food."
17So they did. They brought horses, sheep,
goats, cattle, and donkeys, and Joseph gave
them food. 18The next year the people
came to Joseph and said, "We don't have
any more money, and you have all our live-
stock. So the only thing to do is to sell our
land to you. 19We are about to die. So give
us grain to eat and seeds to plant, and we
will become Pharaoh's slaves and our land
will be his."
20That way Joseph acquired all the land
in Egypt for Pharaoh. The Egyptians
willingly sold their land because the fam-
ine was so bad. 21All across Egypt the
people were Pharaoh's slaves, 22except the
priests. Pharaoh gave them food so that
they didn't have to sell their land. 23Joseph
told the people, "Here is seed for you to
plant. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
24But when you harvest the grain, give a
fifth of the crop to Pharaoh. Keep the rest
as more seed and as food for your fam-
ilies." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
25The people exclaimed, "You have saved
our lives! Continue to favor us because
we will gladly be Pharaoh's slaves." 26So
Joseph made it a law, a law that still exists,
that one-fifth of every harvest is to go to
Pharaoh.
27The Israelites settled in Goshen, bought
property there, and their families had
many children. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph.
4:12-16} 28Jacob was in Egypt for 17 years
before he died at the age of 147. 29When
he was dying, he called for Joseph and told
him, "Please promise me that you won't
bury me here in Egypt. {99 Death-Facing
Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 30Take me out of Egypt
and bury me with my father and grand-
father." Joseph said, "Okay. I will." {160
Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Jacob was 130 years old when he appeared before Pharaoh (47:9) and 147 when he died (47:28). He told Pharaoh that he had not lived as long as his father and grandfather (47:9). Abraham died at 175 and Isaac died at 180. Jacob added his days were few and difficult. Jacob was suggesting he faced anger, disappointment, and pain, that is, his

life was not easy. Isn't that a picture of most people in life, even most believers? While we may have peace within, the world is a hostile place without. Lord, I live in a difficult world, nothing goes perfectly. Help me deal with a contentious world, and help me make it better when possible. Amen.

31"Promise me you'll do as I ask." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} "Yes, I will," Joseph said. Then Jacob worshiped the Lord as he leaned on his staff.

Jacob asked not to be buried in Egypt, but to be taken back to be buried with his father (47:30). Jacob believed that promise made to Abraham (15:13-21), that the family would stay temporarily in Egypt and that God would expand their numbers, redeem them, and return them to the land of Canaan. Lord, I believe You will one day return Israel to the land promised to them. I believe "All Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26), transformed and take possession of Palestine in the future. Amen.

Genesis 48

Jacob Blesses Ephraim and Manasseh

1Later Joseph heard that his father was very sick. So he went to see him, and he took his sons Manasseh and Ephraim with him. 2When someone told Jacob his son Joseph was there to see him, he gained some strength and sat up in bed. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 3He told Joseph, "As you know, El Shaddai appeared to me at Luz in Canaan and blessed me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 4He said to me, 'You will have many descendants who will become a great nation. And I am giving you this land for you and your descendants forever.' {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 5I am adopting your sons Ephraim and Manasseh, born here in Egypt, as my very own sons, just as Reuben and Simeon are mine. 6Any other children you have will be considered yours, of course, but any land they inherit is to be in the territories of Ephraim and Manasseh, not here in Egypt. 7When I was returning home from northern Syria, Rachel died as we were on the way to Bethlehem Ephrath. So with great sorrow I buried her there by the side of the road." {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}

8Seeing Joseph's two sons, Israel asked, "Who are they?" 9"They are the sons God has given me here in Egypt." Then Israel said, "Bring them closer so I can bless them." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 10He was almost blind because of his old age. So Joseph brought his sons closer to their grandfather, and he hugged and kissed them. 11Jacob said, "I never thought I would see you again. But now God has let me see not only you but also your children."

12Joseph then removed them from Jacob's knees (where they were positioned as a sign of being accepted as his sons), and Joseph bowed to Jacob. 13Joseph placed Ephraim, the younger, by Jacob's left hand and Manasseh, the older, by Jacob's right

hand. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [14]But crossing his arms, Jacob put his right hand on Ephraim's head and his left hand on Manasseh's head.

[15]Then Jacob blessed Joseph with these words, "May the God of whom my grandfather Abraham and my father Isaac worshiped, the God who has been my shepherd all my life, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [16]and the Angel who has kept me safe, may He bless these boys. May they honor my name and the names of Abraham and Isaac, and may they have many descendants." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

When Jacob came to die, he recognized God had provided for him throughout his life. God "has been my shepherd all my life to this day" (48:15). Of course, Jacob worked as a shepherd and did most things for himself, but he recognized God was behind the provision. How can we praise God in a greater way than to praise Him for our daily provision? We can invoke God's promises, "As your days, so shall your strength be" (Deut. 33:25). Lord, I realize my strength and health come from You. I could have been disabled or handicapped. I realize food and provisions come from You; I could have starved in a famine, or died for lack of provisions in a depression. Thank You for all things; I receive them from Your hand. Amen.

[17]Joseph didn't like Jacob switching his arms and placing his right hand on the head of Ephraim, the younger of the two. So he started to move Jacob's hand from Ephraim's head to Manasseh's head. [18]Joseph said, "You should put your right hand on the head of the firstborn." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [19]But Jacob refused. He said, "I know what I am doing. True, Manasseh will become a great nation. But Ephraim, the younger, will be greater, and his descendants will become many nations." [20]Then Jacob kissed them and said, "People will say, 'May God make you like Ephraim and Manasseh.'" {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} He mentioned Ephraim first even though he was the younger of the two.

It is the duty and privilege of the older to bless the young children (48:9, 15, 20). "To bless is to add value to the lives of the children we are blessing." First, we bless them spiritually so they will have God's abundant prosperity. When God pours spiritual blessings on a child, they work out in physical, financial and social enlargements. Lord, I will bless children for Your glory. May You make their lives bigger and larger in every area of life. Give them a good life and much enjoyment in serving You. Amen.

[21]Then Israel said to Joseph, "I will soon die, but God will be with you and bring you back to Canaan, the land of your ancestors. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [22]I am giving you a portion of land greater than what I give to your brothers, land that I captured from the Amorites with my sword and my bow and arrows."

Genesis 49

Jacob Blesses His 12 Sons

[1]Jacob asked his 12 sons to meet with him. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

The phrase "last days" (49:1, KJV) deals with Israel's future. Because God promised future blessings to Abraham, Isaac, and now Jacob; the religion of the Jews, and ultimately Christianity is an unfolding plan that is guided by God Himself. It deals with their occupation of Canaan, the coming Messiah, His redemption of those who trust in Him, and the ultimate judgment of mankind, plus the believer's ultimate abode with God in heaven. Lord, I know You have a grand plan for mankind, but You also have a personal plan for me. Help me see Your plan clearly and give me strength to do it; and give me an obedient spirit to follow it. Amen.

[2]He said, "You sons of Jacob, listen to what I have to say." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [3]Reuben, you are my oldest son, born when I was young and strong. You are first in honor and power. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [4]But because you are unruly like waves of the sea, you will no longer be first in rank. Why? Because you slept with one of my wives, thus defiling my bed. [5]Simeon and Levi, though brothers, you are men of violence. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [6]I don't want to have any part in your plans, because in anger you killed people and you cut the leg muscles of oxen for no reason. [7]Cursed be your fierce, cruel anger. Your descendants will be scattered throughout Israel.

[8]"Judah, your brothers will praise you (your name means 'Praise'), you will defeat your enemies, and your relatives will bow down to honor you. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [9]You are like a lion lying down to rest, and no one dares arouse you, a lioness. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]You will rule others with a scepter and a staff, until nations come bringing you gifts.

Here is another prediction of the coming Messiah (49:8-12). Israel's Savior will come from the line of Judah. Messiah will rule with His "scepter" (49:10). God's principles for living well will come from the Messiah (49:10). Lord, thank You for the predictions of Jesus Christ coming into the world. I look forward in confidence to His second coming, which was predicted hundreds of years before He was born. Amen.

[11]"You will tie your donkey to a grapevine, and the donkey's colt to a choice branch of the vine. You will wash your clothes in wine and your robes in grape juice. [12]Your eyes are darker than wine, and your teeth are whiter than milk.

[13]"Zebulun, you will live by the coastline and be a harbor for ships extending up to Sidon. [14]Issachar, you are a strong donkey resting by two saddle bags. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [15]When you see how good the countryside is, you will put your shoulder to the task and work hard like a slave.

16"Dan, you will bring justice to your people. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 17You will be a snake by the side of the road, a viper on the path that will bite a horse's heel, making its rider fall backward.
18"O Lord, please deliver us. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
19"Gad, you will be attacked by raiders, but you will attack them. 20Asher, you will provide rich food, even delicacies for a king. 21Naphtali, you are a wild deer bearing beautiful fawns. 22Joseph, you are like a vine with lots of grapes near a spring and with branches extending over a wall. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 23Archers attacked you and shot at you. 24But you shot back, with your arms remaining strong because of God the Mighty One of Jacob, who is our Shepherd and Rock. 25He is my God, Shaddai, who blesses you with blessings from heaven {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and from the earth beneath, and blesses you with children. 26May the blessings I give you be greater than the blessings of the mountains or old hills. May these blessings come to you, Joseph, as the leader over your brothers. 27Benjamin, you are like a hungry wolf, devouring your enemies in the morning and dividing the loot in the evening." {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} 28These are the 12 tribes of Israel and what Jacob said to them in giving them appropriate blessings. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

Jacob's pronouncement to his sons contains blessings, curses, judgments, and promises—it predicts things in poetic language that will happen to each son. His speech contains rhythmical emotions, a parallelism of thought, an abundance of figures of speech, and intricate meanings hidden in the names and words. And when you are awed by its beauty, don't miss Jacob's warmth for each son. Lord, there is a future for each of us, and You know what it is. I yield to Your daily leading so I can fulfill Your plan for my life. Don't let me miss Your prosperity by my disobedience or carnal lifestyle. Amen.

29Then Jacob said, "I will soon die. So please bury me with my father and grandfather 30in the cave in the field with Machpelah that Abraham bought from Ephron the Hittite. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 31Abraham and Sarah and Isaac and Rebekah are buried there, along with Leah whom I buried there. 32Abraham bought both the field and the cave in it from the Hittites." 33When Jacob finished these words about his sons, he lay back in his bed and died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Genesis 50

Joseph's Death

1Joseph leaned over his father and cried and hugged him. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 2Then he had physicians embalm Jacob's body, 3a process that took 40 days. And Egyptians mourned for Jacob 70 days.
4After that, Joseph said to Pharaoh's advisers, "If you consider me a friend, tell Pharaoh 5that my father made me promise to

bury him in a cave in Canaan. Then I will return." [6]Pharaoh said, "Sure, go bury your father as you promised."
[7]So when Joseph went to bury his father, all Pharaoh's officials and dignitaries went with him. [8]Also on the trip were Joseph's family, his brothers, and Joseph's household. But they left their children and livestock in Goshen. [9]Even many men driving chariots went with Joseph. This was a large entourage of people in this funeral procession.
[10]When they arrived at the threshing floor of Atad, near the Jordan River, the people wept loudly, and Joseph had them observe a week-long period of mourning for Jacob. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [11]When the Canaanites saw this mourning ceremony, they thought they were all Egyptians. So they named the place Abel Mizraim (meaning "Mourning of the Egyptian"). {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [12]Jacob's sons did as he had told them. [13]They buried him in the cave in the field of Machpelah, near Mamre, which Abraham had purchased from Ephron the Hittite. [14]After the burial Joseph and everyone with him returned to Egypt. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}
[15]Joseph's brothers got to thinking, "What if Joseph still holds a grudge against us and tries to get even with us for what we did to him?" [16]So they sent him this message: "Before Jacob died, [17]he told us to tell you to forgive us for treating you so terribly. So please forgive us." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} When Joseph heard this, he started crying. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [18]In fact his brothers bowed down in front of him and said, "We are your slaves."

The 10 brothers were afraid that Joseph would turn against them after their father Jacob died. So they told Joseph something Jacob probably never said {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}. Interestingly the 10 brothers finally recognized their action was "sin." They were motivated by the guilt of their deed. While Joseph's actions revealed his forgiveness, and they could have had God's forgiveness if they had asked, the important thing is they hadn't forgiven themselves. Since guilt poisons all we do, these 10 brothers couldn't enjoy the spiritual benefits from Joseph when they enjoyed living in the lush land of Goshen. Lord, I know in my head You have forgiven my sin. Help me to live in forgiveness, and to talk freely before You and all mankind. Take away the shadows and the reality of guilt. While I can't be sinless, I at least can be guiltless. Amen.

[19]But Joseph responded, "Don't be afraid. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} I am not God. [20]You meant to harm me, but God turned it out for the best, to use me to save many lives. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [21]Again, as I said, don't be afraid. Because God has placed me in this position as governor of Egypt, I will take care of you and your families." He spoke very kindly to them, putting them at ease.

Joseph realized God worked His sovereign plan through the evil of the 10 brothers. "You meant to harm me, but God turned it out for the best" (50:20). We need to see that God directs us with a compass, not a road map. When we sin and get off God's perfect road (Prov. 4:18), we don't have God's secondary road for the rest of our lives. No. God forgives us our sins when we confess them, and God uses the compass of the Bible to point us to His perfect will. Lord, thank You for Your forgiveness when I've sinned in the past. Thank You for restoring me each time to Your perfect will. I will follow You in the future, I will not intentionally sin, but I surrender to do Your will always. Amen.

[22]Joseph stayed on in Egypt and then died at the age of 110. [23]He lived long enough to see Ephraim's children and grandchildren. Also the children of Makir, Manasseh's son, were treated as Joseph's own. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [24]Then Joseph told his brothers, "I am about to die. But God will help you and lead you out of this land {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} to the land he promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

[25]Joseph made his brothers promise {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} that they would take his body back to Canaan. [26]Joseph died at the age of 110, and the Egyptians embalmed his body and placed it in a coffin in Egypt.

Joseph had the same type of faith as his father Jacob, {155 Faithful-Request Prayer, Heb. 3:2} because he asked that his bones also be buried in the Promised Land (50:25). Joseph believed God's people would return to the land of promise. Lord, help me see Your plan for my life that extends beyond my death. Give me faith to trust Your plan for my family, church, and nation beyond my death. Amen.

NOTES

1. See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/William_Norman_Ewer, accessed 18 January 2010.
2. Attributed to H. L. Willmington, Dean, Willmington School of the Bible, Liberty University, Lynchburg, VA.

Exodus

Ch 1: Israel in Egypt 105
Ch 2: The Birth of Moses 106
Ch 3: God Calls Moses 107
Ch 4: God Sends Moses to Egypt 109
Ch 5: Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh 110
Ch 6: Promise of Deliverance 111
Ch 7: The Rod Becomes a Snake and the First Plague 113
Ch 8: The Second, Third, and Fourth Plagues 114
Ch 9: The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Plagues 116
Ch 10: The Eighth, and Ninth Plagues 117
Ch 11: The Tenth Plague-Death of the Firstborn 118
Ch 12: The First Passover 119
Ch 13: Remembering the Passover 122
Ch 14: Crossing the Red Sea 123
Ch 15: A Song of Deliverance 125
Ch 16: Bread of Heaven 127
Ch 17: The Battle over Water 128
Ch 18: A Lesson in Leadership 129
Ch 19: God Visits His People 131
Ch 20: The Ten Commands 132
Ch 21: Consequences of Actions 134

Ch 22: Protection of Property 135
Ch 23: Justice 137
Ch 24: Moses and the Elders Worship God 138
Ch 25: Furniture in the Tabernacle 139
Ch 26: Preparing the Tabernacle 141
Ch 27: The Bronze Altar and Courtyard 142
Ch 28: Clothes for the Priests 143
Ch 29: Dedication of Aaron and His Sons 145
Ch 30: The Altar for Burning Incense 147
Ch 31: Workers Chosen to Make the Tabernacle 149
Ch 32: The Golden Calf 150
Ch 33: Moses Asks to See God 152
Ch 34: Moses' Face Shining 153
Ch 35: Gathering Materials to Construct the Tabernacle 155
Ch 36: Beginning Construction of the Tabernacle 156
Ch 37: Constructing the Sacred Cheset 157
Ch 38: Constructing the Bronze Altar 159
Ch 39: Making the Priests' Clothes 160
Ch 40: Putting the Tabernacle Together 161

EXODUS

Key Word: *Deliverance* (Exodus 18:9, 10)

Key Verse: "I am come down to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey" (3:8).

Theme: The name Exodus means "way out" and it tells the story of God sending 10 plagues on Egypt that motivated the Egyptians to release God's people from bondage. It tells of the march through the wilderness to Mount Sinai and how God revealed Himself to them in the Ten Commands. Also included is the introduction of the rules of worship, fellowship, and service, and a narrative blueprint for the construction of the tabernacle.

Exodus is a picture of our *deliverance* and *redemption* from sin's bondage, which is essential for a relationship with a holy God. The book ends with God's presence filling the tabernacle and His people worshiping Him, which also is a picture of God's purpose for us. *Lord, thank You for my deliverance and redemption from sin. I worship You for all the ways You lead me through the desert of this life. I worship You for manifesting Your presence to me. Amen.*

Exodus 1

Israel in Egypt

1 Eleven sons of Jacob had moved with him and their families to Egypt. They
were 2 Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, 3 Issachar, Zebulun, Benjamin,
4 Dan, Naphtali, Gad, and Asher. 5 There were 70 altogether, counting Jacob, his sons,
grandchildren, and great-grandchildren (Joseph was already in Egypt.)
6 Joseph and his brothers and their families all died. 7 But they had so many descendants
that Goshen was filled with Israelites. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
8 Later a new pharaoh, who didn't know about Joseph, said, 9 "There are so many Israelites
in Egypt. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 10 We must do something about it, because if we
have a war, they may side with our enemy and then escape." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
11 So the Egyptians made the Israelites their slaves, and forced them to build the cities
of Pithom and Rameses as supply centers. 12 But the more the Egyptians abused them,

the more the Israelite families grew. So the Egyptians were alarmed {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [13]and forced them to work even harder. [14]They forced them to make bricks and mix mortar and work in the fields. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

[15]Pharaoh ordered Shiphrah and Puah, Hebrew midwives, [16]to kill Hebrew boys when they were born but to keep the girls alive. [17]But because they worshiped God, the midwives kept all the babies alive. [18]Pharaoh heard about this and asked them why they let the boys live. [19]They answered and said, "Hebrew women are so strong that they delivered their babies before we even got there." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [20]So God blessed the midwives, and the Israelites kept growing in number. [21]In fact even the midwives had their own babies. [22]Then Pharaoh told everyone, "When a Hebrew boy is born, throw him into the Nile River, but keep the baby girls alive."

Lord, satan has always hated little children; when he can't enslave their minds, he slaughters them. The abortion industry is evil and does satan's work; I pray for children—born and unborn—to live and come to know You, and serve You. Amen.

Exodus 2

The Birth of Moses

[1]A man and woman of the tribe of Levi got married. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [2]She became pregnant and had a boy, whom she hid for three months. [3]Knowing she couldn't keep him hidden, she made a little boat out of papyrus reeds, coating it with tar. Then she put her son in it and put it by the bank of the Nile River. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [4]His sister kept an eye on him to see what would happen.

[5]One of Pharaoh's daughters went to the Nile to take a bath, and her maids were strolling along the river bank. When she spied the basket in the river, she asked one of her maids to get it. [6]Then when she opened it, she was surprised to see a baby crying. She felt sorry for him; she saw that he was a Hebrew baby. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [7]The baby's sister, who was nearby, came up and asked if she should get a Hebrew woman to nurse the baby. [8]The king's daughter answered, "Yes, please do." So the girl went and brought the baby's mother. [9]Pharaoh's daughter told the mother to nurse the baby and she would pay her for doing it! So the mother did. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

[10]When he was older, the mother took him to the princess, and she adopted him. She named him Moses (meaning "Draw Out"), because she said, "I drew him out of the water."{387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[11]When Moses had become a man, one day he went to watch his people at work. He saw an Egyptian beating one of his people. [12]Looking to be sure no one was watching, he killed the Egyptian and covered his body with sand. {240 Injustice-Prayer,

Isa. 1:17} [13]The very next day he saw two Hebrews fighting, and he asked one of them, "Why are you hitting him?" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [14]He answered, "Who are you to judge us? Are you planning to kill me as you killed the Egyptian?" Moses then realized people knew what he had done the day before. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

[15]Word about this got back to Pharaoh, and so he planned to kill Moses. But Moses skipped town and went miles away to Midian. As he was sitting by a well, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [16]seven daughters of a priest came to draw water for their father's sheep. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [17]Some shepherds chased off the sheep, but Moses rescued them and watered the flocks.

[18]When the girls went home, their father Reuel (also known as Jethro) asked why they were back so early. [19]They said, "An Egyptian ran off some shepherds who were chasing us and he even drew water for our sheep." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [20]"Where is he? Don't just leave him there. Invite him for supper." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [21]So they did, and Moses was pleased to stay overnight. In fact Reuel gave his daughter Zipporah as Moses' wife. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [22]She had a son, and Moses named him Gershom (sounds like the word "Foreigner") "because I am a foreigner here." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [23]After Pharaoh died, the Israelites still groaned because they were treated harshly as slaves. They prayed to God for help. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [24]God heard them and remembered His promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. [25]God looked down on His people with sympathy. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

Lord, You equip Your servants differently. You prepared Moses with a secular Egyptian training and with a biblical foundation from his mother. Thank You for my past that equipped me for service, now I want to serve You as best I can, with the training that equipped me for service. Amen.

Exodus 3

God Calls Moses

[1]When Moses was taking care of the sheep of his father-in-law, the priest of Midian, he took the flock all the way over to Mount Horeb. {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4} [2]The angel of the Lord suddenly appeared in a bush that was on fire but that wasn't burning up. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [3]Wondering why it didn't burn up, Moses went to look at it. [4]God then called Moses by name, {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} and Moses said, "Yes, I'm here." {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} [5]God then said, "Stand where you are and take off your sandals, because this is holy ground. {400 Reserved-Prayer, John 11:33} [6]I am the God of Abraham, Isaac,

and Jacob." Moses didn't want to look at God, and so he hid his face.
7God said, "I know your people are miserable, working hard as slaves. I've heard their prayers for relief, and I am concerned. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 8So I have decided to get them out of Egypt and into a good land, where there is a lot of milk from cows and a lot of honey from bees. This is where the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites live. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 9I've heard the wailing of the Israelites, and I have seen how the Egyptians have been treating them. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} 10So I have decided to send you to Pharaoh to tell him to let My people leave Egypt." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}
11But Moses objected. "Who am I to go up against Pharaoh?" {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} 12God responded, "Don't worry. I will go with you. And here is how you will know: When you and the Israelites leave Egypt, you and they will worship Me right here on this mountain." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}
13Moses said, "But when I tell them You sent me, they will ask, 'What is His name?' What shall I tell them?" 14God said, "You are to tell them, 'I am who I am.' {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Lord, when Moses gave excuses to escape serving You; You told him to use the power of Your name. Lord, may I never give excuses to not follow You; may I pray in the power of Your name that is available to me. Amen.

15"Tell them, 'The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, has sent me.' This is My name forever, the name by which people are to know Me from now on.
16"Go tell Israel's elders that I spoke to you and that I have noticed what the Egyptians have done to you. 17So I promise to get you out of your misery and to bring you to the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, where there is a lot of milk from cows and a lot of honey from bees. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 18The elders will listen to you, and then you and they are to go to Pharaoh and say, 'LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has met with us. We ask your permission to take a three-day journey into the desert to offer sacrifices to Him.' {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} 19He won't let you go unless something forces him to. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}
20"So I will perform a number of miracles to strike down the Egyptians, and then he will let you go. {360 Power-Seeking Prayer, Matt. 9:8}
21"I will see that the Egyptians will give you a number of gifts so that you won't go away empty-handed. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 22Every Israelite woman will ask her Egyptian neighbor or any Egyptian women in her house for gold and silver jewelry and clothes for your children. These will be yours when you leave Egypt." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Exodus 4

God Sends Moses to Egypt

[1]Moses said, "What if they don't believe me? What if they say, 'The LORD didn't appear to you'?" {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [2]The LORD answered, "What is that in your hand?" Moses replied, "My shepherd's rod." [3]"Throw it on the ground," God said. So Moses did and it immediately turned into a snake, and Moses jumped away. [4]Then the LORD said, "Grab it by the tail." Moses did, and the snake turned back into his rod. [5]"Do this before the Israelites," the Lord said, "and they will realize that the LORD, the God of their ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, did appear to you." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

[6]Then God told Moses to put his hand inside his clothes. Moses did and when he took it out, his hand looked as if he had leprosy. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [7]God told him to put his hand inside his clothes again, and when Moses did and took it out again, it was normal. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [8]God then said, "Suppose someone isn't convinced by either of these miracles." {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [9]If they refuse to believe, then scoop up some water from the Nile and when you pour it on the ground, it will turn to blood."

[10]Moses then voiced this excuse: "I'm not a good speaker. I never have been, and I'm not now. My words come slowly; I often don't know what to say." {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [11]God asked him, "Who makes people's mouths, and who makes a person able to hear or not, or see or not? [12]I will help you speak well, and I will give you the words to say." {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11}

[13]Moses had another excuse. "Lord, please get someone else." {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [14]This made the LORD angry. So He said, "Your brother Aaron the Levite, is a good speaker. In fact, he's coming now to meet you, and he'll be glad to see you. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [15]He will speak for you, and I will tell you both what to do and say. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [16]He will speak for you to the people, and you will tell him what to say. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [17]So take your shepherd's rod with you so you can do those miracles I showed you." {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}

Lord, may I never offer excuses to You so that You get angry at me. Lord, I yield to Your will for my life; I will wholeheartedly do what You command. Amen.

[18]Moses went back to Jethro, his father-in-law, and said, "I would like to go to Egypt to see my family, if they are alive. Is that okay with you?" {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [19]God had told Moses it was okay to return to Egypt because the people who had wanted to kill him were now dead. [20]So Moses and his family rode on a donkey to Egypt, and he had his shepherd's rod in his hand. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5}

[21]The LORD said to Moses, "When you get back to Egypt, go to Pharaoh and perform the miracles I have shown you. However, I will make him so stubborn that he won't let your people leave Egypt. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} [22]So tell him, 'God says Israel is precious to Me like a firstborn son {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [23]and I command you to let him go so he can worship Me. But since you refuse, I will kill your firstborn son.'" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}
[24]One time when Moses and his family stopped for the night, the LORD was about to kill Moses. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [25]Then his wife circumcised her son, and threw the foreskin at Moses' feet, and said, "You are a man of blood." [26]So the Lord let him alone. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}
[27]God told Aaron to go meet Moses at Mount Horeb (Sinai). So he did and greeted him. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} [28]Moses told Aaron what God said they are to do and say, and he told him about the miracles he was to perform. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [29]So they brought the leaders in Israel to a meeting, [30]and Aaron told them what God had said to Moses. When Moses performed the miracles of the snake and leprosy and blood, [31]the people were convinced God had sent them. When Moses and Aaron told the people God knew about their misery, they all bowed their heads and worshiped. {322 New-Day Praise, Ps. 98:1}

Lord, I worship You for Your help in my life, just as the Israelite leaders worshiped You. May I always be grateful for Your presence in my life; Lord God, thank You for delivering me. Amen.

Exodus 5

Moses and Aaron Speak to Pharaoh

[1]Moses and Aaron then went to Pharaoh and said, "The LORD God of Israel has said for you to let the Israelites go into the desert and have a religious festival there." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, the bottom line is always worship; You want to free us from any habits and sins, so we have a new freedom to worship You. Lord, I pray for people in slavery everywhere and for all reasons, that they may be free from their bondage so they can worship You freely. Amen.

[2]Pharaoh responded, "Why should I do that? Who is this LORD? I don't know Him. So I see no reason I should release the Israelites." {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [3]Moses and Aaron explained, "God has met with us. That's why we want to go into the desert for three days to offer Him sacrifices. Otherwise we will die of diseases and warfare." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
[4]Pharaoh said, "Why do you want to keep the people from their work? They need to

get back to their jobs. 5These many people need to keep working."
6That day Pharaoh ordered his slave drivers and officers, 7"Don't give the Israelites any more straw for making bricks. They can find it themselves. 8Have them make the same number of bricks as before. Obviously they don't have enough to do; that's why they want to take off for three days. 9Make them work harder so they won't listen to Moses' and Aaron's lies." {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2}
10The slave drivers told the people to get their own straw. 11They were to find it wherever they could and to keep on making the same number of bricks. 12So they went everywhere looking for straw, 13and the slave drivers kept hounding them to keep making the same number of bricks. 14The slave drivers whipped the Israelite foremen and asked, "Why haven't you met your quota of bricks?" {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 15The Israelite foremen complained to Pharaoh, "Why are you treating us like this? 16We have no straw, and we are told to make the same number of bricks as before. Our people are being beaten, but your own people are the problem."
17Pharaoh replied, "You are lazy. That's why you want to go offer sacrifices to the LORD. 18Get to work. Go find your own straw and make the same required number of bricks." 19The Israelite foremen knew they were in trouble. 20As they left, they saw Moses and Aaron, 21and said to them, "May the Lord punish you for this. Pharaoh hates us, and now they may want to kill us."
22Moses prayed, "LORD, why have You brought this problem on Your people? Why did You send me here? 23Ever since I spoke to Pharaoh, he has caused nothing but trouble. And You haven't rescued them at all." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}

Lord, may I never blame You for evil that befalls me, nor for the bondage of satan, nor for the adverse circumstances of my life. Lord, help me see Your divine hand working in the circumstances of my life. Amen.

Exodus 6

Promise of Deliverance

1The LORD told Moses, "Don't be discouraged. You'll see what I will do to Pharaoh. I will pressure him, and he will let your people leave. In fact he will even insist they leave." {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}
2God continued, "I am the LORD, 3the Almighty God who appeared to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, though I didn't reveal My name LORD to them. 4I promised to give them the land of Canaan, where they were living. 5I know the people are suffering under the Egyptians, and I will keep My promise to them. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
6"So tell the Israelites, 'I am the LORD and I will free you from slavery in Egypt, and I will free you from Egypt with great power. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 7You will be My special people, and I

will be your God. You will know that I am the One who got you out of Egypt. [8]I will bring you to the land I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. It will be your very own land. I am the LORD.'" {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [9]When Moses told the people what God had said, they were so discouraged by their slavery that they didn't believe him. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}

Lord, teach me the power of Your personal name; I know You are the great I AM. You are God. I worship You for Your greatness and power. I cling to You for Your love and compassion when I hurt. Amen.

[10]Then the LORD told [11]Moses to go tell Pharaoh to let the people leave. [12]Moses objected, saying, "If they won't listen to me, I doubt that Pharaoh would listen, especially since I'm not a good speaker." {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} [13]God spoke again to Moses and Aaron and told them to insist that Pharaoh let the Israelites leave Egypt.

[14]The heads of various clans in Israel were there: Reuben's sons were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. [15]Simeon's sons were: Jemuel, Jamin, Ohad, Jachin, Zohar, and Shaul (whose mother was a Canaanite). [16]Levi's sons were: Gershon, Kohath, and Merari. (Levi lived to be 137 years old.) [17]Gershon's sons were Libni and Shimi. [18]Kohath's sons were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. (Kohath lived to be 133 years old.) [19]Merari's sons were Mahali and Mushi. These were the clans of the Levites.

[20]Amram, Levi's grandson, married his aunt Jochebed, and they had Aaron and Moses. (Amram lived to be 137 years old.) [21]Izhar's sons were Korah, Nepheg, and Zicri. [22]Uzziel's sons were Mishael, Elzaphan, and Zithri. [23]Aaron married Elisheba, daughter of Amminadab and sister of Nahshon. Aaron and Elisheba had four sons: Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [24]Korah's sons were Assir, Elkanah, and Abiasaph. These were the clans of Korah, Levi's great-grandson. [25]Aaron's son Eleazar married a daughter of Putiel, and they had Phinehas. These are the ancestors of the Levite clans. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[26]The LORD had told Aaron and Moses to lead the Israelites out of Egypt by their clans. [27]This same Moses and Aaron were the ones who asked Pharaoh to let the Egyptians leave. [28]When the LORD spoke to Moses, [29]He said, "Remember who I am. And don't be afraid to tell Pharaoh everything I've told you." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [30]Then Moses asked, as he had done before, "Since I'm not a good speaker, why would Pharaoh listen to me?" {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7}

Lord, just as Moses hesitated to do Your will, sometimes I am confused and fearful to obey You and do what is right. Forgive my disobedience and use me; I want to be Your servant. Amen.

Exodus 7

The Rod Becomes a Snake and the First Plague

1 God told Moses, "You will be like God
speaking to Pharaoh, and Aaron will be
your prophet, speaking for you. {461 Stir
Up Your Spiritual Gift-Prayer, 2 Tim.
1:6} 2 Tell Aaron everything I tell you, and
Aaron will speak to Pharaoh, telling him
to let My people leave the country. {489
Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 3 I
will make Pharaoh stubborn, and in spite
of My many miracles, 4 he won't listen to
you. But I will bring a series of terrible
calamities on Egypt and then I will lead
My people out. {312 Mountain-Moving
Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} 5 When these
disasters come, the Egyptians will finally
realize who I am." {516 Victory over Tri-
als-Prayer, James 1:12}
6 So Moses and Aaron did what the LORD
told them to do. At that time, when they
spoke to Pharaoh, {312 Mountain-Mov-
ing Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} 7 Moses was
80 years old, and Aaron was 83. {8 Aged-
Prayer, Ps. 90:10} 8 The Lord said, 9 "Pha-
raoh may ask you to perform a miracle. So
Aaron, throw your shepherd's rod in front
of Pharaoh and it will turn into a snake."
{466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
10 Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and
his officials, Aaron threw down his rod,
and it turned into a snake, just as God had
said. {329 Obstinate-Prayer, 2 Cor. 11:4}
11 Pharaoh called in his wise men, sorcer-
ers, and magicians, and they did the same
thing. {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13}
12 Each one threw down his stick and it
turned into a snake. But Aaron's snake
swallowed up their snakes. {466 Supernat-
ural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 13 Yet Pharaoh
remained stubborn, refusing to listen, just
as the LORD had said. {25 Atheist-Prayer,
Ps. 14:1, 2}

Lord, I know satan has supernatural power, but greater is Christ in me than satan, who is the god of this world. Amen.

14 The LORD said to Moses, "Since Pha-
raoh refuses to let the people leave, {504
Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
15 in the morning take your rod and wait
for him by the Nile River." 16 Say to him,
'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, has
sent me to tell you to release His people
so they can worship Him in the desert.
But you haven't obeyed His command.
17 So here is how you will know that He is
really the LORD: when I will strike the
Nile with my shepherd's rod, the water will
be turned into blood immediately. 18 This
will cause the fish to die and the river to
stink, and no one will be able to drink
the water.'" {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying,
John 8:44} 19 Then the LORD told Moses
to tell Aaron to point his rod toward the
streams, canals, ponds, and reservoirs, and
all the water will turn to blood. Even water
in buckets and jars will turn to blood. {75
Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}
20 Moses and Aaron did what the Lord
told them to do. When Pharaoh arrived
at the Nile, Aaron struck the Nile with
his rod, and the water turned into
blood. Just as God had predicted, {253

Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} 21the fish died, the water smelled, and the people could not drink it. Blood was everywhere in Egypt. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
22The Egyptian magicians also turned water into blood. So Pharaoh became even more stubborn, and he would not listen to Moses' and Aaron's request to let the Israelites leave. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 23He went into his palace and thought nothing more of the incident. 24To get drinking water the Egyptians dug wells along the banks of the Nile.
25God spoke to Moses a week later. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7}

Lord, the Egyptians worshiped the Nile as a god, but You were victorious over their god. Lord, I worship You for Your judgmental power; be merciful to me and protect me by Your love. Amen.

Exodus 8

The Second, Third, and Fourth Plagues

1The LORD said to Moses, "Go tell Pharaoh, 'Let the Lord's people leave so they can worship Him. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 2If you refuse, then He will send countless frogs all across Egypt. 3The Nile will be filled with frogs. Frogs will be in your palace and on your bed, in the houses of all the Egyptians, and even in their ovens and cooking dishes. 4Frogs will crawl over you, your officials, and everyone in Egypt. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
5'Tell Aaron to point his rod toward all the rivers, canals, and reservoirs so there will be frogs everywhere.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6When Aaron did this, frogs covered the whole nation. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 7But Pharaoh's magicians did the same thing. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 8Then Pharaoh contacted Moses and Aaron and begged them to take the frogs away, and if they did he would let the Israelites leave to offer sacrifices to the LORD. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
9Moses said, "Okay. Tell me when you want me to pray that they will be gone, and I will. Then the frogs will be gone except in the Nile." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 10Pharaoh said, "Do it tomorrow." "All right," Moses replied. "Then you will know that there is no one like the LORD our God. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 11All the frogs will die except those in the Nile."

Lord, the world is so quick to seek physical relief from sufferings, but I am slow to seek relief for spiritual sufferings. Teach me to be quick in confessing my sin, and be just as swift to seek Your presence. Amen.

12Moses and Aaron left Pharaoh's palace, and then Moses prayed earnestly about the frogs. 13And the LORD kept His word. Frogs died everywhere—in people's houses, yards, and fields. 14People gathered up the dead frogs into big piles, and the

stench was awful. {131 Effective-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} 15Did Pharaoh let the Israelites leave? No. When he saw the frogs were gone, he again was stubborn and would not let the people go, just as God had predicted. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

16Then God told Moses to tell Aaron to hit the ground with his rod so that gnats would be everywhere. 17As soon as he did this, gnats started crawling on people and animals. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18Like before, Pharaoh's magicians tried to copy Aaron, but this time they couldn't. 19They told Pharaoh God had done this. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} But again Pharaoh remained stubborn and wouldn't listen to Moses and Aaron's request that he let the people leave. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, the work of Your finger is so obviously apparent that the world realizes that only You do miracles. Lord, help me clearly see Your work in my life, and praise You for its power. Amen.

20Then God said to Moses that tomorrow morning when Pharaoh goes to the Nile, he should meet him there and say, "The LORD says to let His people leave so they can worship Him. 21But if you don't, I will send flies everywhere—in all your houses and even on the ground. 22But they won't be in Goshen, where My people are. This way you will know that I am the LORD. 23This miraculous difference between the Israelites and the Egyptians will occur tomorrow." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 24The LORD did as He said, and swarms of flies were in Pharaoh's palace and his officials' houses, and they were a terrible nuisance everywhere. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

25So Pharaoh called in Moses and Aaron and said, "You win. Your people can sacrifice to your God, but you have to stay here in Egypt." 26Moses said, "We can't do that. Your people wouldn't like that, and they would start stoning us to death. 27We have to take off for three days into the desert, as our God told us." {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} 28Pharaoh responded, "Well, okay. But don't go very far away. And pray for me." {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}

29Moses replied, "Yes, Pharaoh, I will pray for you right away, and the flies will leave tomorrow. But don't lie to us again by saying you'll let the people leave, and then change your mind." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Lord, I thank You that Moses didn't compromise what You ordered. May I always worship You in the way You order. Amen.

30Then Moses left and prayed, 31and God caused every last fly to go away. 32But once more Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let the people leave. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Exodus 9

The Fifth, Sixth, and Seventh Plagues

1"Go back to Pharaoh," God told Moses, "and tell him, 'The LORD, the God of the Hebrews, says to let His people leave so they can worship Him. 2If you continue to refuse, 3He will send a terrible disease on all your animals, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 4but not on the Israelites' animals.'"

5The LORD said He would do this the next day. 6And He did. All the Egyptians' animals died, but not one of the Israelites' animals died. 7Pharaoh checked on this and found it was true. But he remained unchanged and still would not release God's people. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

8God told Moses and Aaron to take some ashes and have Moses toss them into the sky while Pharaoh was watching. 9God said these ashes will blow over all of Egypt and cause terrible boils to break out on people and animals. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10So they took some ashes, went to see Pharaoh, and tossed up the ashes. Immediately terrible boils broke out on people and animals. 11The magicians couldn't repeat this miracle because they had boils too. 12Did Pharaoh release the Israelites? No. Again he was stubborn. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, Your hand of judgment never completely destroys us; You allow pain to push us to the point of desperation. Lord, You want to reveal Your glory through our sufferings because one utterance of praise while we suffer is greater than a thousand words of praise when we are well. Amen.

13Then the LORD again told Moses to go to Pharaoh early the next morning and demand that the Israelites be freed. 14"Then say, 'But if you don't, I will send the worst-yet plagues against you, your officials, and your people. This will show you that I am the only true God. 15I could have already killed you all by now. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 16But I have kept you alive to show My power to you and everyone. 17Since you are still determined not to let My people leave, 18tomorrow I will send the worst hailstorm Egypt has ever seen. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 19Bring all your livestock into barns. Any person or animal still in the fields will die.'"

20Some of the Egyptians were terrified by this, and so they brought their animals and their slaves safely inside. 21But others paid no attention, and left their flocks and slaves in the fields. 22God then told Moses, "Point toward the sky and hail will fall on all Egypt—on people, animals, and crops." 23When Moses did this, God sent thunder, lightning, and hail. 24This was the worst storm in all of Egypt's history. 25Everything in the fields—people, animals, crops—was struck. Even bark was stripped from trees. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 26But no hail fell in Goshen. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[27]Pharaoh called in Moses and Aaron and admitted, "I have sinned. The LORD is right, and I and my people are wrong. [28]Ask God to end this terrible thunder and hail, and I will let you and your people leave." [29]Moses replied, "Okay. I will leave town and ask God to stop the thunder and hail. The moment they stop you will know that the LORD is in charge. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [30]But I doubt that you and your officials really fear the LORD God."

[31]Flax and barley crops were destroyed just as they were ripening. [32]But wheat was not damaged because it ripened later. [33]Moses left the palace and prayed, and the thunder, hail, and rain stopped. [34]When the storm was over, Pharaoh sinned by again [35]refusing to let the Israelites go, just as God had said would happen. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, You send rain into our lives to make us appreciate sunny days; we consider rain oppressive and restrictive but rain gives life to the food we eat. You send us rain within Your plan and providence; help me see Your purpose and submit to Your will. Amen.

Exodus 10

The Eighth, and Ninth Plagues

[1]God told Moses, "Go back to Pharaoh, because I have made his heart stubborn so that I can work more miracles. [2]You can tell your children and grandchildren how I dealt with the Egyptians to show that I am the LORD." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [3]So Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said, "The LORD, our God, is asking, 'How long will you refuse to obey Me? Release My people so they can worship Me. [4]If you don't, then tomorrow I will cover Egypt with locusts. [5]There will be so many of them that you won't be able to see the ground. They will destroy anything left from the hailstorm, including trees. [6]They will fill your palace, your officials' homes, and every house in Egypt. More locusts will appear than your ancestors ever saw in Egypt.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} After Moses walked out, [7]Pharaoh's officials said, "How long will you let these problems continue? Why not just let the people leave so they can worship their God? Just think: Egypt is in ruins."

Lord, help me see that sin destroys the good things of life; help me look beyond Your arm of judgment to see the reason for the bad things that happen. Amen.

[8]Pharaoh had Moses and Aaron brought to him. He said, "Okay, you may go worship your God. But who will be going?" {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} [9]Moses answered, "All of us because we want to celebrate together. And we'll take all our flocks." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [10]Pharaoh replied, "I now see what you are up to. [11]No, only your men may go." Then Moses and Aaron were chased out of the palace. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

12 God told Moses to lift his hand out
over Egypt so that locusts would come
and eat everything left by the hailstorm.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
13 When Moses did that, the Lord sent a
strong wind from the east that blew over
Egypt that day and all night. By morning
14 locusts were everywhere. It was the worst
locust plague in Egyptian history, never to
be that bad again. 15 The countless locusts
even blotted out the sun so that the sky
was dark. They ate everything left after the
hailstorm, including every plant and all
the fruit on trees. {268 Judgmental-Pray-
ing, Acts 5:4, 9}
16 Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and
again he admitted, "I have sinned. 17 Please
forgive me and ask God to get rid of these
locusts." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt.
6:5} 18 So Moses left Pharaoh and prayed.
19 Then the LORD sent a strong wind from
the Mediterranean Sea, which pushed the
locusts east into the Red Sea. Not one
locust was left. {110 Deliverance-Thanks-
giving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 20 Again the LORD
made Pharaoh so stubborn that he refused
to let the Israelites go.

Lord, You are the God of the winds, You allow the winds to blow good things to me; thank You God for all the blessings of life. You allow the winds to blow evil across my path; help me see Your plan in all things. Amen.

21 The LORD told Moses, "Point toward
the sky, and a thick darkness will cover
Egypt." 22 So Moses did, and Egypt was
in total darkness for three days. {268
Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23 The
Egyptians couldn't see each other and
they couldn't go anywhere. But no day-
time darkness fell in all of Goshen. 24 Pha-
raoh again sent for Moses. He said, "Go
worship your God. You may take your
women and children, but leave your ani-
mals here." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer,
Matt. 6:5} 25 Moses replied, "No. We need
our animals for sacrifices to the LORD,
our God. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb.
13:15} 26 We won't know which ones we
will need till we get there." 27 Once more
the LORD made Pharaoh stubborn. 28 In
fact, he was so disgusted he said to Moses,
"Get out of here. If I ever see you again, I
will kill you." 29 Moses replied, "That's fine
with me. And I don't ever want to see you
again."

Lord, there are many people today who are like Pharaoh, they know the truth of Your word, but they will not obey You or believe in You. I pray for those I know who are like Pharaoh; convict them of their sin, and bring them to saving faith. Amen.

Exodus 11

The Tenth Plague–Death of the Firstborn

1 The Lord said to Moses, "I will bring one
more disaster on Pharaoh and his people.
Then he will let you leave. In fact he will be
so glad for you to go that he will practically

push you out. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8}

Lord, most of the time I don't see the contest between You and satan in this world. Give me faith to trust You in good days and bad; give me faith to change the things I can change; give me patience to endure the things I can't change. Amen.

2"Tell your people that they are to ask
their neighbors for jewelry made of gold
and silver." 3So God made the Egyptians
respect the Israelites, and Pharaoh and his
officials and all the people had high regard
for Moses. {363 Praise for God's Provision,
Ps. 23:1}
4Moses conveyed this word to Pharaoh:
"About midnight God will go throughout
Egypt, 5and the firstborn son in every fam-
ily, from your son to the son of the lowest
slave, will die. Also the firstborn male of
every cow will die. 6People will cry in ter-
rible sorrow—worse than any crying ever
before or since. 7But among the Israelites
things will be so quiet that not even a dog
will bark. Then you Egyptians will know
that the LORD has made a distinction
between you and the Israelites. 8All your
officials will ask me to leave with my peo-
ple. Then we will leave." In his anger Moses
turned and left. {163 Fear of God-Praying,
Heb. 5:7}
9God had earlier told Moses that Pha-
raoh would not listen to him, and that
that would give the Lord opportunity to
perform more miracles. 10So as Pharaoh
saw these miracles, the LORD made him
increasingly stubborn, refusing to let the
Israelites leave. {189 God-Haters' Prayer,
Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, taking the life of the firstborn seems cruel, but not when I consider the greatness of evil that pushed You to that judgment. Lord, You gave the life of Your Firstborn—Jesus Christ. His suffering seemed so severe for the Sinless One, but not when I consider the greatness of evil. Amen.

Exodus 12

The First Passover

1Later the LORD said to Moses and Aaron,
2"This month is to be the first month of
each year for you. 3Tell your people that
each year on the tenth day of this month
each family is to pick out a lamb or goat
for them to eat. 4If a family is too small to
eat the whole animal, they should share it
with their neighbors. 5The animals are to
be a one-year-old male, with no defects.
6At evening on the 14th day of this first
month, the families are to kill their ani-
mals. 7Some of the animals' blood is to be
put on the top and sides of the door frame
of each house. {394 Redemption-Worship,
Rev. 5:12} 8That night they are to roast the
animal and eat it with bitter herbs and
bread made without yeast. 9They are not
to eat the meat raw or boiled; they are to
roast it, including the head, legs, and inter-
nal organs. 10Don't eat any of it the next
day. If some of it is left the next morning,
then burn it.

[11]"When you eat the meal, be ready to travel with your sandals on and your walking sticks handy. Eat the meal quickly. I am calling this event the Passover. [12]That night I will kill the firstborn son in every family and the firstborn male of every animal. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} In this way I will show that I am superior to all the Egyptian gods. [13]The blood on your door posts will show me you are Israelites. So when I see the blood, I will pass over you. You will be safe while I kill the Egyptian firstborns." {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, You spoke in pictures through the Passover lamb; always help me see the LAMB who takes away my sin. Lord, when I celebrate the Communion table, help me look beyond the bread and cup to see Jesus. Amen.

[14]"Celebrate this event every year from now on as a reminder of this night. {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} [15]For seven days afterward eat only bread without yeast, being sure on the first of these days to throw away any yeast in your homes. If you eat anything that week with yeast, you will be excluded from the nation. [16]On the first and seventh days of that week, meet together for worship. And during that week don't do any work except to cook meals. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}
[17]"Celebrate this Festival of Bread without Yeast as a way of remembering that I brought you out of Egypt. This is to be done annually from now on. [18]In this festival eat bread without yeast starting on the evening of the 14th of the first month and continuing till the evening of the 21st. [19]During this week don't have any yeast at all in your homes; if you do, you will be excluded from the nation. [20]Avoid yeast altogether; all your bread is to be without yeast." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
[21]Moses called the leaders of Israel together and said, "Have each family get a lamb to slaughter for the Passover meal. [22]Then have them use a branch from a hyssop plant as a brush to put some blood on the top and sides of your door frame, and stay in your house that evening. [23]In the night the Lord will kill the firstborn sons in every Egyptian family. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Then when He sees the blood on your doorposts, He will pass over your house and the Destroying Angel will not enter. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[24]"Obey these instructions, [25]and then when we enter the land the Lord promised us, celebrate the Passover. [26]When your children ask, 'What are we celebrating?' {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [27]tell them, 'This is the Passover,'" recognizing the fact that the LORD passed over our houses when He killed the firstborn of the Egyptians. Then people bowed down and worshiped the LORD, {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [28]and they did what Moses and Aaron told them to do. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}
[29]At midnight the LORD killed the firstborn son in every Egyptian family, from Pharaoh's son to the prisoners' sons and

also the firstborn animals. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [30]Pharaoh, his officials, and everyone in Egypt got up that night and started weeping terribly. Someone was dead in every home. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}

Lord, those who died were not covered with the blood; I know my sins are covered by the blood of Christ, I pray for those reading this book whose sins are not covered. Amen.

[31]Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron and said, "Get out of Egypt! Go worship your God. [32]Take your animals and be on your way. But ask your God to bless me." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[33]The Egyptians urged the people to get out quickly, because they thought, "If they don't, we will all be dead." [34]So the Israelites took their bread dough without yeast, put it in pans wrapped in cloths and placed it on their shoulders. [35]They had asked Egyptians for jewelry and clothes. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [36]And the Egyptians were friendly to the Israelites, and gave them whatever they asked for. In this way they carried away much of Egypt's wealth. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
[37]The Israelites went from Rameses to Succoth. There were about 600,000 men, not counting women and children, [38]and many other people who went with them, along with many sheep, goats, and cattle. [39]When they stopped to eat, their bread was without yeast because they had to hurry to get out of Egypt.
[40]The Israelites had lived in Egypt 430 years. [41]In fact they left exactly 430 years to the very day after they had arrived. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

Lord, freedom is a wonderful experience; I want to be free from all bondage in the victory that Jesus gives. Lord, I know I won't be completely free until heaven; help me see in small victories on this earth the greatness of freedom I'll see in heaven. Amen.

[42]Because the LORD watched over them that night, they were to remember that night for generations to come. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
[43]Then the LORD gave Moses and Aaron instructions for celebrating the Passover. "For one thing, only Israelites are to take part. [44]You may include your slaves if they have been circumcised. [45]But temporary residents or foreign workers are excluded. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [46]Eat the entire meal inside; don't go outside. And no bones of the lamb are to be broken. [47]Every Israelite must participate.
[48]"If someone who is not an Israelite wants to celebrate the Passover with you, then he and every male in his family must first be circumcised. Then they can eat the meal with you. [49]This applies to Israelites and foreigners who are with you." {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} [50]The Israelites followed these instructions from the Lord. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [51]That very day the LORD began to lead His people out of Egypt by their tribes. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, Your victory always comes. Help me to be patient in times of persecution, knowing You will eventually reward Your servants. Lord, You love to reward Your servants with good things; help me look beyond my difficulties to see the good days You've prepared for me on earth or heaven. Amen.

Exodus 13

Remembering the Passover

1The LORD said to Moses, 2"Dedicate to
me the firstborn son in each of your families and the firstborn males of each of your flocks." {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 3Moses told the people, "Remember this day when the Lord helped you leave Egypt and your slavery there. Eat nothing on this day with yeast. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 4Mark this day in April when you are leaving and 5celebrate it when you arrive in the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Hivites, and Jebusites, the land I promised to your ancestors. It is a land with lots of milk from cows and lots of honey from bees. {369 Prayer-Journey Prayer, Ps. 126:5-6}

6"Each spring celebrate the Festival of Bread without Yeast for seven days. Then on the seventh day have a great feast. 7During those days eat nothing with yeast in it. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 8Tell your children that you are doing this because God helped you leave Egypt."

Lord, I pray for my children and grandchildren that they may follow Christ in every way. Help them know You as I know You. Lord, may my children stand on my shoulders and reach higher for greater spiritual blessings. Amen.

9"This annual celebration will remind you that you are a unique people, and this will be like having a sign on your hand and your forehead. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 10Be sure to celebrate this event every year in April. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

11"The Lord will give you the land of the Canaanites as He promised. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 12So in return you are to give Him the firstborn of every son and every male animal because they are His. 13You may purchase back from the Lord a firstborn donkey by giving Him a lamb. But if you don't, then kill the donkey. But be sure to save every firstborn son.

14"When your children ask what the Passover means, explain that God brought you out of slavery in Egypt by His great power. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 15Pharaoh stubbornly refused to let us leave, so the LORD killed the firstborn son in every family in Egypt and every firstborn male animal. These are why we keep every firstborn son alive but sacrifice to the LORD every firstborn male animal. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 16This ceremony, as I said

before, will be like a sign on your hand and your forehead to remind you that the LORD brought you out of Egypt by His great power." {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
17When Pharaoh let the people leave, they didn't go through Philistine territory by the coast, though that was the shortest route. God said, "If the Philistines attack them, they might want to retreat back to Egypt." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 18That's why God led them through the desert toward the Red Sea. Yet when the Israelites left Egypt, they were ready to go to war, if necessary. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

Lord, I like it when You lead me on smooth highways. I don't understand why You lead into the desert. Deserts are dangerous, lonely, and I can get lost in the wilderness. Be with me when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death. Amen.

19Moses took the bones of Joseph with them, because years before, Joseph had asked that they take his bones to Canaan and bury him there. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 20Leaving Succoth, the Israelites camped at Etham near the desert. 21The LORD guided them in the daytime by a thick cloud and at nighttime by a fire that gave them light in the dark desert. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} That way they could travel during either the day or the night. 22And the pillar remained. {124 Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen. 32:30}

Lord, it was easy for the Israelites to follow a cloud that could be seen up ahead. Today, I can't see a cloud, but I see something better. I see Your direction for my life and Your will for my life. Lord, when You unexpectedly turn a right angle in my life, help me accept Your will and follow Your leading. Amen.

Exodus 14

Crossing the Red Sea

1At Etham the LORD said to Moses, 2"Tell the Israelites to turn back and camp near Pi Hahiroth, between Migdol and the Red Sea. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 3This will make Pharaoh think you don't know where to go or that you are trapped between the desert and the sea. 4I will make him stubborn again, and he will pursue you. But I will receive glory over Pharaoh, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} and the Egyptians will know that I am the true God." So the Israelites camped where God told them to. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
5Hearing that all the Israelites left, Pharaoh was alarmed. He said, "We have let them get away. So we'll miss having them as our slaves." 6So he got in his chariot and 7went after the Israelites with 600 of his best charioteers and some others. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} 8Again the LORD had made Pharaoh stubborn so that he chased the Israelites even though they were on the way with self-confidence. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

9Pharaoh's entire cavalry of horses, chariots, chariot drivers, and soldiers caught up with the Israelites at their camp by the sea near Pi Hahiroth across from Baal-Zephon. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}
10As the Israelites saw Pharaoh's army coming, they were scared stiff and prayed to the LORD. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 11They said to Moses, "Why did you bring us out here to die? Why not let us die in Egypt and have decent burials? 12We told you to let us alone. We would rather be slaves there than die here in the desert." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

Lord, You lead Your people into danger so they will trust You for deliverance. Lead me every day of my life; I can't ask You not to lead me into danger because then I wouldn't experience Your deliverance. Wherever You lead me I will follow. Teach me to trust You every day of my life. Amen.

13Moses answered, "Don't be afraid. You'll see the LORD save you today, and this is the last time you will ever see the Egyptians. 14The LORD will fight for you without you doing a thing." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}
15The LORD said to Moses, "Why do you keep praying to Me? Have the people keep moving. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 16Hold your shepherd's rod over the Red Sea, and a path in the water will open up for you to walk on dry ground. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 17I will make the Egyptian cavalrymen and soldiers so stubborn that they will follow you into the sea. Then I will be honored in defeating Pharaoh and his army. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} 18Then all of Egypt will know that I am LORD." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
19The angel of God, who had gone ahead of the Israelites, moved behind them, as did the large cloud. 20That way the cloud was between the Israelites and the Egyptians. At night the cloud gave light to the Israelites, but darkness to the Egyptians, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} so that they couldn't see the Israelites. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 21Moses held his rod over the sea, and all night long a strong wind from the east blew and made a dry path in the sea. 22The people walked through on dry land with a wall of water on each side of the path. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}
23The Egyptian chariots and horsemen followed right after the Israelites. 24Before dawn the Lord looked down at the Egyptians and made them panic. 25He made their chariot wheels come off so that they couldn't move. The Egyptians shouted, "Let's get out of here. The LORD is fighting for them and is against us." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
26When the Israelites got to the other side, the LORD told Moses to hold his rod over the sea to make the water flow over the Egyptians and drown them. 27Moses did that just as the sun was coming up, and the water rushed over the Egyptians so that {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 28Pharaoh's entire army drowned. Not one

of them survived. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
29The Israelites had walked across on dry ground at the sea bottom with a wall of water on each side of them. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 30The LORD had rescued His people that day, and looking back, the Israelites saw many Egyptian bodies washed up on the shore. 31Seeing this remarkable display of God's great power, the Israelites worshiped Him and trusted Him and Moses. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}

Lord, I know the challenge of danger does not build character, it reveals character. Give me character to face the dangers of life with faith so I can grow in my trust in You. Lord, the people of Israel should have become spiritual giants because they walked through the Red Sea while their enemies, Pharaoh and his army, drowned. But Israel later grumbled in the wilderness and doubted You; help me learn from every difficulty and grow a strong, trusting faith to walk with You. Amen.

Exodus 15

A Song of Deliverance

1Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the LORD: {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} "I will sing to the LORD because of His great victory in throwing horses and their riders into the sea. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}
2"The LORD gives me strength and helps me sing; He has saved me. He is my God, and my father's God, and so I will praise Him.

Moses recognized God's initiative in victory because "He has triumphed gloriously!" (15:1, NLT). In victory God glorified Himself. His triumph was unaided by human help; its success was greater than anything conceived today. Today we treat God like a server who brings us a hamburger. We've got God where we use Him to answer our prayers, or at least we know where He is if we need Him. Our "seeker" attitude has reduced God into One who we think can be manipulated when we need Him. Lord, forgive me when I've sought You to manage You for my business or success. Help me reverse the priority; I seek You for who You are, and for Yourself alone. Amen.

3"He is like a warrior, and the LORD is His name. 4He threw Pharaoh's chariots and soldiers into the Red Sea, and drowned them there. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 5They were covered with water, and they sank to the bottom like stones.
6"With Your strong right hand, You crushed them to pieces. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 7In your majesty You defeated Your enemies. You were so angry, You got rid of them like straw on fire. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} 8You merely breathed, and the waters piled up and the walls were solid as ice.

9"Our enemy said, 'I will pursue them, capture them, and destroy them. I will share the spoils and then kill them with my sword.' 10But the sea covered them, and they sank into the sea like lead." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Moses prayed magnificently, "Who is like You, glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders?" (Exod. 15:11). Moses asked a rhetorical question that has no answer because no earthly god compares to the LORD. He is incomparable and He is incomprehensible. Lord, You are more beautiful than any beauty I can see on earth. You are greater than any power or might I can describe. You are more glorious than any glory I can conceive. My greatest praise is to call You Creator God, Omnipotent Lord, the Almighty One, the Source of my life, and My Hope for eternity in heaven. Amen.

11"No one is like You, LORD. You are so majestic and holy, awesome, and working miracles. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 12When You simply raised Your hand, the earth swallowed them up.
13"You lead Your people with great love, and You guide them to Your holy land. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} 14When nations heard of this, they were terrified; the Philistines were horrified. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 15The leaders of Edom and Moab were afraid too, and the Canaanites melted with dread. 16Your powerful arm silenced them, causing Your people to march on by. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
17"You will bring the people You have inherited to settle on Your mountain. This is the special place You built for them by Your own hands. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 18You, LORD, will be King forever." {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}
19When Pharaoh with his cavalry and chariots rushed into the sea, the LORD brought the walls of water down on them. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
20Then Miriam, a prophetess and Aaron's sister, played a tambourine and led the women in playing and dancing to the Lord. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 21She sang this song: "Sing praises to the LORD for His victory is great. He has thrown horses and riders into the sea." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
22Then Moses led the Israelites into the Shur Desert where they had no water for three days. 23Finally they found water, but it was bitter. So they named the place Marah (meaning "Bitter"). 24The people complained, "Moses, without water we will die." {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}
25So when Moses told the Lord about this problem, God told him to throw a tree branch into the water. Moses did that, and immediately the water was okay to drink. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}
At Marah the Lord gave His people some commands to check out their level of commitment. 26"If you will do what is right and obey Me, you won't get any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

[27]Later the Israelites came to an oasis at Elim, where there were 12 springs and 70 palm trees, and they camped there.

Lord, why is it we forget the miracles You do for us and complain and doubt You? Teach me to trust You when all my needs are met as well as times when my pocketbook is empty. Lord, why do so many Christians see only one day at a time? Give me faith for the long haul. Lord, when times are difficult, teach me to go to You in prayer, just as Moses prayed when there was bitter water. Amen.

Exodus 16

Bread of Heaven

[1]They went into the desert, arriving there one month after leaving Egypt. [2]Again everyone complained against Moses and Aaron. [3]"We wish we were back in Egypt, which was far better than here. There we had plenty to eat, but here we will starve to death." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

[4]God told Moses, "Here is what I will do. I will cause food to come down out of the sky. Each day the people can pick up food for that day. I'll see if they can obey Me. [5]Then each week on the sixth day they can pick up twice as much food, so they will have some for the Sabbath." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

[6]Calling the people together, Moses and Aaron said, "This evening you will know that the LORD is the One who brought you out of Egypt. [7]Then in the morning you will see His power [8]because He has heard your complaints, which were really against Him, not us." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

[9]Then Moses told Aaron to tell the people that the LORD heard their concerns. [10]When Aaron was speaking to them, they looked toward the desert and in the cloud appeared God's glory. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [11]Moses said, [12]"I have heard the people's complaints. So tell them that every evening they will have meat to eat and every morning they will have plenty of bread. This will remind them that I am the LORD." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[13]That evening quail were everywhere. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Lord, You were gracious to give Israel food to eat after they wanted the food of Egypt. Lord, You've been good to me, even when I'm unappreciative of Your goodness; thank You for grace and not judgment. Amen.

[14]Then the next morning everything was wet with dew. When the dew left, thin flakes were there. [15]This was something new to the people, so they said, "Manna" (meaning "What Is It?"). Moses answered, "This bread is from the LORD. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} [16]Get about two quarts for each person." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

[17]The Israelites gathered the flakes, [18]and two quarts per person was about right for each family. [19]Moses told them not to keep the flakes overnight, [20]but some people

did. Then the next morning it was full of maggots and smelled terrible. This made Moses very angry. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
21Each morning the people picked up the manna, but when the sun grew hot, what was left melted. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 22On the sixth day of the week, the people took four quarts for each person. When the people asked about this, Moses explained, 23"The seventh day is to be a day of rest in honor of the LORD. So on the sixth day you should bake or boil some for the next day."
24The people did as Moses told them to do, and on the seventh morning the food smelled fine and had no maggots. 25Moses said again, "Since the seventh day is the Sabbath for the LORD, no food will be on the ground that day. 26Each week the food will be there for six days but not on the Sabbath." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
27Some people looked for the flakes on the seventh day, but none was there. 28This displeased the LORD. So He said to Moses, "Why do these people keep disobeying Me? 29I gave them the seventh day as a day of rest. So they should stay home on the Sabbath." 30So they did. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
31The people called the bread Manna (meaning "What Is It?"). It was white and flat and tasted like honey wafers. 32Moses told the people to set aside two quarts of manna as a kind of memorial so that future generations could see what God provided for them in the desert when they escaped from Egypt. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 33So Moses told Aaron to put some in a jar for future generations to see. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 34Aaron did this, and later the jar was kept in the sacred chest in the tabernacle. 35The Israelites ate manna for 40 years while they were in the desert. 36The manna jar held about two quarts, about a tenth of a bushel.

Lord, thank You for daily feeding my soul on Scripture much as You daily fed Your people with manna in the wilderness. I need Your daily strength from the Bible just as Israel needed daily physical strength from manna. Teach me again that I can't live on yesterday's blessings, just as Israel couldn't keep manna from one day until the next. Yet every day You give me what I need for that day, just as each Israelite had all they needed each day. Amen.

Exodus 17

The Battle over Water

1After moving from place to place, as the LORD directed them, the Israelites finally camped at Rephidim, near Mount Sinai, but no water was there. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} 2Again the people complained to Moses that they needed water. Moses asked, "Why complain to me? And why are you trying the LORD patience?" {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 3But the thirsty people kept on complaining, "Why did you bring us here to die of thirst

with our children and animals?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord, You had miraculously led Israel through the Red Sea and You had miraculously provided water at Marah; why couldn't they trust You to do the miraculous again? Lord, sometimes I'm just like the people of Israel in the desert; I doubt Your leading even when You've provided in the past. I believe; help Thou my unbelief. Give me more faith. Amen.

4Moses turned to the Lord, "What shall I do with these people? They are about to stone me." {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7}
5The LORD said, "Here's what you are to do. Take some of the leaders with you to Mount Sinai and 6strike a rock there with your shepherd's rod, and water will come gushing out for the people to drink." Moses did this. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
7Because the people had quarreled and had complained the Lord was impatient, Moses named the place Massah (meaning "Tasting" and Meribah (meaning "Complaining"). {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31}

Lord, it's amazing how unbelievers turn against You and refuse to follow Your servants. Keep my ear tuned to Your voice so I'll obey both You and the leaders You put over me. Amen.

8At Rephidim the Amalikites attacked Israel. 9"Get men ready to fight," Moses told Joshua. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 10So as Joshua was leading men into battle, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} Moses, Aaron and Hur went to a hilltop. 11When Moses held up his hands, the Israelites were winning, but when he dropped his hands, they started losing. 12Moses got tired, {222 Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer)} so Aaron and Hur found a rock for him to sit on. And Aaron and Hur held up his arms till sunset. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 13That enabled Joshua to defeat the Amalekites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
14The LORD told Moses to record this victory for Joshua and to tell him, "I will eventually get rid of the Amalekites completely." {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11}
15Moses built an altar and named it "Yahweh-Nissi" (meaning "The LORD Is My Banner.") {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 16But Israel was at war with the Amalekites for years to come. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, Your banner is waving over me in all my trials and tribulations that declares, "There is victory" to those who trust in You. I will rally to Your banner when difficulties come. Amen.

Exodus 18

A Lesson in Leadership

1Jethro, Moses' father-in-law, heard that God had helped His people leave Egypt.

[2]Moses had sent his Egyptian wife Zipporah and [3]their two sons to be with Jethro. One was Gershom (meaning "Foreigner"), because Moses was like a foreigner, and [4]the other was Eliezer (meaning "God Is My Helper"), because God saved Moses from Pharaoh. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

[5-6]Jethro heard that Moses was near Mount Sinai, so he took Moses' wife and sons to meet him. [7]Moses welcomed Jethro warmly. When they went into Moses' tent, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} he told Jethro what the LORD had done [8]to Pharaoh and the Egyptians and how He helped the Israelites along the way. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[9]Excited to hear how the LORD had rescued them from the Egyptians, Jethro said, "[10]Praise the LORD for saving you from the Egyptians. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [11]This shows that the LORD is greater than all the gods in delivering you from your proud enemies." {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [12]Then Jethro offered a burnt offering and other sacrifices to God, and he and Aaron and Israel's leaders ate a meal together in God's presence. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

[13]The next day Moses heard the people's legal cases against each other all day long. [14]Seeing this, Jethro said, "Why are you doing this all alone, with people standing here all day?" [15]Moses answered, "Because the people want to know God's will. [16]So they bring their problems to me, and I decide their cases based on God's laws." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [17]Jethro said, "This is not wise [18]because you and these people will soon wear yourselves out. This job is too much for you to handle by yourself. [19]Here's what I suggest. Continue to take their problems to God as His representative. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [20]Tell them God's laws and show them what to do. [21]But also choose some well-qualified men, who are godly, trustworthy, and honest. Put them as judges over groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. [22]As judges they can decide easier cases themselves and bring difficult cases to you. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} By sharing with you in this way your load will be much lighter. [23]If you do this, the pressure won't be so great, and everyone will be pleased." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

[24]Moses followed his father-in-law's advice, [25]choosing capable men and putting them over groups of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. [26]They served as judges, deciding easier cases themselves and taking more difficult cases to Moses. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [27]Then Moses said goodbye to Jethro, who returned home into Midian. {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49}

Lord, sometimes You speak through older, wiser counselors. Help me listen and learn Your principles from them. Lord, You used Jethro to give some common sense to a younger family member. Help me use the wisdom You've given me when I give counsel

to younger people. Lord, help me see what You're doing in my life today so I'll understand what You're preparing me to do. Amen.

Exodus 19

God Visits His People

1-2Leaving Rephidim, the Israelites arrived in the Sinai Desert. This was two months to the day after the Israelites left Egypt. They set up camp by Mount Sinai. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20}
3Moses climbed the mountain to meet God, who said to him, "Say this to the people, {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} 4"You saw what I did to the Egyptians, and that I brought you here like an eagle carries its young on its wings. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 5Now if you obey Me, you will be My special treasure among all nations. {496 True-Worshippers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} 6You will be a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.' This is what you are to say to the people." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}
7When Moses went back and told the leaders what God had said, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} 8the people said, "We will do whatever the LORD has commanded." And Moses told the LORD their answer.

Lord, today I can be what You promised Israel; I want to be a priest who intercedes to You, I want to be holy as a sacrifice to You. Lord, You want Your people to be different from the world; so I will live a life separated from the world, a life separated to You. Amen.

9Then the LORD told Moses, "I will come to you in a dark cloud. The people will hear Me and will trust you." {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} Then Moses reported to the people what God said.
10Again the Lord spoke, "Have the people prepare today and tomorrow for My appearance. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} Have them wash their clothes 11because on the third day I will come down on Mount Sinai where everyone can see. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} 12Put boundary markers around the mountain, and tell the people not to touch the mountain. If anyone does, he will die {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 13by being stoned or shot with arrows. No one is to touch it. Also no animal is to touch the mountain. The people can approach the mountain only when they hear a long blast from a ram's-horn trumpet." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
14Moses went down the mountain and told the people to wash their clothes and get ready to worship God. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 15He told them, "Get ready for God's appearance in three days, and meanwhile do not have sex." {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}
16On the morning of the third day a thunder and lightning storm occurred, a thick cloud covered Mount Sinai, a loud blast of a trumpet was heard, and everyone

was afraid. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [17]Moses led the people out of the camp to meet God, and they all stood at the foot of the mountain. {336 Organized-Corporate Prayer, Luke 19:46}

Lord, I expect smoke when You appear because the Bible says You are a consuming fire. I will never see You with my eyes; help me see You in my heart. Amen.

[18]Smoke covered the mountain because the LORD descended on the mountain in the form of fire. Smoke swirled up like a furnace, the mountain shook, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [19]and the trumpet blast sounded louder and louder. Moses spoke, and God answered him with thunder. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[20]The LORD went down to the mountaintop and called Moses, {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [21]and said to him, "Warn the people not to cross the boundary markers to try to see Me. If they do that, many of them will die. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [22]Even the priests who approach Me, are to be dedicated to Me. If they aren't, I will oppose them." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [23]Moses replied, "I know they won't go up on the mountain, because You told us to put boundary markers around it and to consider it holy." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}

[24]Then the LORD told Moses, "Go get Aaron and bring him here. But don't let the people break through the boundary markers to come to Me. Otherwise I will be against them." {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31}

Lord, You want those who come to worship You to be clean on the inside and outside. I ask You to cleanse my heart by the blood of Christ; I will clean up my speech, thoughts, and life, I will also clean up my outward person. Amen.

[25]So Moses went down and told the people what God said. {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27}

Exodus 20

The Ten Commands

[1]God said to the Israelites, {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27} [2]"I am the LORD, your God, who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [3]Do not worship any God except Me. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [4]Do not make idols of anything shaped like birds, animals, or fish. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [5]Never bow down to them or worship them. Why? Because I am the LORD your God and I want your complete worship. If you hate Me, I will punish the sins of future generations. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [6]But I will always love those who love and obey Me. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[7]"Don't use My name disrespectfully. If you do, I will punish you. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [8]Observe the Sabbath

day, keeping it holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 9You have six days each week in which to do your work, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 10but on the seventh day you are to honor Me. No one is to work on that day, including your family members and slaves, and even animals and foreigners living in your cities. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 11This is because I made the heavens, the earth, the seas, and everything in them and rested on the seventh day. Then I blessed the Sabbath and set it apart for Me. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
12"Respect your parents. If you do, you will have a long life in the land I am giving you. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 13Don't murder. {326 Non-Violence Prayer, Luke 6:28} 14Don't commit adultery. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 15Don't take what doesn't belong to you. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 16Don't tell lies in court. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 17Don't desire to have what belongs to someone else, including someone's wife, slaves, animals, or anything else." {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

Lord, help me keep all Your commands and to please You in all I do. Your commands show Your desire for holiness; I cannot be holy in myself. I need imputed righteousness to be holy; I can only be perfect in Christ's righteousness. Amen.

18When the people heard the thunder and trumpet blast and saw the lightning and the smoke that covered the mountain, they were afraid and stood away from the mountain. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 19They said to Moses, "Tell us what God says, and we will listen. But if God speaks to us directly, we will die." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 20Moses assured them, "You need not be afraid. God has come to check you out and see that you worship Him. He wants to keep you from sinning." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 21The people kept back while Moses went near the thick cloud. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}
22The LORD told Moses to say this to the Israelites: "You know that I spoke to you from heaven, {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} 23telling you not to worship any gods except Me, including idols made of silver or gold. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14} 24Make an altar from the earth, and sacrifice on it your burnt offerings and fellowship offerings of sheep, goats, and cows. When you respect Me, I will bless you. 25You may also make an altar out of stones, but don't chisel it because that will make it useless. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} 26And don't build an altar with steps because that will expose yourself." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}

Lord, I know I can't see Your face and live. All I can see are the clouds of glory. Lord, when I see the glory of Your majesty, I bow my heart to worship You. Amen.

Exodus 21

Consequences of Actions

1"These are additional laws to give to the
people. 2If you buy a Hebrew slave, he is
to work for you for six years. Then in the
seventh year you are to set him free, and
he is to pay you nothing for his freedom.
3If he was unmarried when he became
your slave, he alone is to be freed. But if he
was married before becoming your slave,
then his wife is to be freed with him. 4But
if he married when he was your slave and
had sons and daughters, then his wife and
children will not be freed. {431 Servant-
hood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}
5"But if the slave doesn't want to leave
his wife and children, 6then his master
shall take him to the place of worship
and punch his ear with a sharp tool." {292
Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Lord, You are the source of all true justice. When I appear before a local judge, remind me that true justice comes from You. Lord, just as piercing an ear lobe was a sign of submission, remind me of my submission to You. I love You and want to be Your slave. Amen.

7"If a man sells his daughter as a slave, she
is not to be freed at the end of six years.
8If she doesn't please her master, she is to
be bought back. He must not sell her to
foreigners because that would break their
contract. 9If the slave owner selects her as
a wife for his son, he must treat her not as
a slave but as his daughter. 10If the slave
owner marries her and then takes another
wife, he must continue to give her food
and clothing and living quarters. 11If he
doesn't do any of these three, then she is
free to leave without making any payment.
{27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6}
12"Anyone who hits someone so hard that
he dies must himself be put to death. {99
Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 13But if it
was an accident that God allowed to hap-
pen, he may run to a safe place which I will
designate. {182 Geographical-Praying,
Matt. 6:6} 14But if someone kills a per-
son on purpose, he must be put to death,
even if he must be dragged from My altar.
{235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
15If someone attacks his own parents, he is
to be put to death. 16To kidnap someone
must result in death, whether the kidnap-
per sells him as a slave or still has him.
17Cursing one's parents must be punished
by death.
18"Suppose two men argue and one hits the
other with a stone or his fist, injuring him
but not killing him. 19If the victim later
can walk with a crutch, the man who hit
him must pay for the victim's loss of time
and his medical expenses. {402 Responsi-
bility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} 20If a man beats his
slave, he must be punished, 21but not if the
slave recovers in a couple of days, because
the slave is his property. {402 Responsibil-
ity-Praying, Ps. 5:7}
22"Suppose two men are fighting and they
accidentally hit a pregnant woman so that
she has a miscarriage. If she lives, the one
who hit her must pay her husband what-
ever amount he demands and the judges
approve. 23But if she dies, the offender

is to be killed. [24]If her eye is injured, the offender must have his eye injured. Or if a tooth of hers gets knocked out, one of his teeth must be knocked out. [25]The same holds true for her hand or foot, or burn, wound, or bruise. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7}

[26]"If a slave owner hits one of his slaves in the eye, causing him to be blind, the owner must free the slave. [27]The same is true if the owner knocks out a slave's tooth; the slave must be freed. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[28]"A bull that gores someone to death must be killed and its meat not eaten. The bull's owner is not responsible for the death. [29]But suppose the owner knew that the bull had been attacking people but didn't keep it in a pen. Then if the bull kills someone, it and its owner must be stoned to death. [30]However, the dead man's relatives may choose to accept payment from the bull's owner. [31]The same law is to be applied if the bull gores a child. [32]If the bull gores a slave, the bull's owner must pay the slave owner 30 pieces of silver and the bull must be stoned to death. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[33]"If someone's ox or donkey falls into an uncovered well and dies, [34]the owner of the well must pay for it, and the dead animal will be his. [35]Suppose a man's bull injures someone else's bull and it dies. The two owners must sell the live bull and split the money between them. [36]But if the owner of the bull knew the bull attacked people and didn't keep it penned in, the owner of the live bull must pay for the dead bull, and the dead animal will be his." {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

Lord, Your law protects the life and property of individuals; thank You for guidance on how I should treat others, and how they must treat me. May I learn to live within the constraints of law, and may I serve You within that freedom. Amen.

Exodus 22

Protection of Property

[1]"If someone steals an ox or a sheep and slaughters it or sells it, he must pay five cows for the one ox or four sheep for the one sheep. [2]If a thief is killed breaking into someone's house, the homeowner is not guilty. [3]But if this occurs in the daytime, he is guilty. If a thief is caught, he must pay for everything he stole. But if he can't he must be sold as a slave to pay what he owes. [4]If a man steals an animal and it is found alive, the thief must pay double. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[5]"If a man lets his animals graze in someone else's field or vineyard, he must make up for the loss from his own field or vineyard. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [6]If someone starts a fire and it spreads to a neighbor's field of grain, he must pay for the lost crops. [7]Suppose someone asks his neighbor to keep some silver or other valuable items for him, and they are stolen. Then the thief must pay back double the value of the goods. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [8]But if the thief is not caught,

then judges should decide if the neighbor himself stole them. [9]Suppose two people each claim that a lost ox, donkey, sheep, clothing, or any other property is his. The judges will decide who is guilty and will require him to pay the owner double. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[10]"Suppose someone asks his neighbor to care for an animal of his and it dies or is injured or is stolen. [11]The neighbor is to affirm before the Lord that he did not injure or steal the animal. The owner must accept his word. [12]But if the neighbor stole the animal, he must pay for it. [13]If the animal was attacked by a wild animal, the neighbor is to bring the carcass as evidence, and he need not pay for the animal. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[14]"Suppose someone borrows an animal from his neighbor and it is injured or dies when the owner isn't there. Then the neighbor must replace the animal. [15]But if the owner is there when something happens to the animals, the neighbor need not pay for the loss. If the neighbor had rented the animal, then the rental fee will cover the cost of the loss. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[16]"If a man has sex with an unmarried woman, he must marry her and pay the dowry. [17]But if her father does not let her marry him, he must still pay the dowry. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [18]A person practicing witchcraft must die. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [19]Also death is to be the penalty for anyone having sex with an animal. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [20]And the same is true for anyone offering a sacrifice to any god besides Me. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [21]Do not mistreat foreigners; remember that you were foreigners in Egypt. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [22]Don't take advantage of widowers or orphans. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [23]If you do, I will hear their prayers and will help them. [24]But I will be so angry that I will kill you, and your own wives will become widows and your children orphans. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[25]"Don't charge interest on a loan you make to a fellow Israelite. [26]If you accept someone's coat as security for a loan, return the coat before sunset. [27]He will need it to keep warm at night. If you don't return it, he will pray for help, and I will hear him because I am compassionate. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

[28]"Don't blaspheme Me or curse your rulers. {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27} [29]Don't hold back from Me your offerings of grain and wine. And pay the redemption money for your firstborn sons. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [30]Also give Me the firstborn of your cows and sheep after they have been with their mothers for their first seven days. [31]As My special people, don't eat the meat of any of your animals that were killed by a wild animal. Give the meat to your dogs." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

Lord, this chapter teaches me much about personal property; thank You for allowing me to own things. Lord, I dedicate all my

"things" to You; I don't want "things" owning me. Amen.

Exodus 23

Justice

1"Don't spread false reports or help a guilty person by giving false evidence in court. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 2Don't join a crowd of people who insist on sinning. And don't follow the opinions of the crowd when you are in court. 3And don't favor a poor person in court simply because he is poor. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

4"If you come across your enemy's ox or donkey that has strayed, take it back to its owner. 5And if you see our enemy's donkey struggling under a heavy load, go offer help. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 6Be fair to poor people in court. 7Don't falsely charge anyone, and don't put an innocent or honest person to death. I won't allow people who are guilty of this to go unpunished. 8Don't take any bribes, because a bribe blinds you and it hurts the people who are innocent. {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} 9Don't mistreat foreigners. Because of your experience in Egypt you know what it is like to be foreigners. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

10"Plant and harvest crops for six years, 11and then let the land rest on the seventh year. Let the poor eat any crops that may spring up in that seventh year, and let animals eat what the poor don't eat. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 12Work for six days each week, and rest on the seventh day. This way your animals, slaves, and foreigners will all be refreshed. 13Obey all these instructions. And as I mentioned before, do not worship other gods or even say their names. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

14"Each year celebrate three festivals in My honor. 15Celebrate the Feast of Bread without Yeast for seven days, just as I told you. Do this each year in April, the month you left Egypt. And be sure everyone brings a sacrifice to Me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 16Celebrate the Harvest Festival (also called the Festival of Weeks) each spring by bringing Me the first of your crops. Then celebrate the Festival of Shelters each fall when you gather in your crops. 17Each year every man is to appear before Me these three times. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

18"When you offer a sacrificial animal to Me, never include with it bread made with yeast. And be sure the fat of the sacrificial animals is discarded that day. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 19Bring the best of your first crops into the house of the LORD, your God. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} Do not boil a young goat in its mother's milk.

20"I am sending an angel to protect you and lead you into the land I have prepared for you. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 21Listen to what he says, and don't rebel against what he says. He won't tolerate rebellion because he is my representative, bearing My name. 22If you follow him carefully, I will destroy your enemies.

[23]My angel will bring you into the land of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and I will destroy them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [24]Don't worship their gods or follow their evil ways. Destroy their idols and break their sacred stones. [25]Worship only the LORD your God, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and then I will give you food and water and take away your sicknesses. [26]And your women will not have miscarriages or be barren, and you will live long lives. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[27]"I will make your enemies afraid of you, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and they will be so panic-stricken they will run. [28]I will even send hornets to drive them out. [29]But this will not all happen in a year. If it did, the land would become a desert and wild animals would be numerous. [30]I will destroy your enemies a little at a time until you have enough people to occupy the land. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[31]"I will extend your land from the Red Sea to the Mediterranean Sea, and from the desert to the Euphrates River. I will help you defeat the people there, and you will drive them out. [32]Don't make any treaties with them or have anything to do with their gods. [33]Don't let them live in your land, because if you do they will snare you into worshiping their gods." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, You wanted Your people to separate themselves from the sins and evil of worldly people. That is still Your standard for me today. I will live among evil people, but I'll not live like pagan people, nor worship their gods. Amen.

Exodus 24

Moses and the Elders Worship God

[1]Then the LORD told Moses, "Come up to Me with Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and 70 elders. They are to worship Me at a distance, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [2]but you may come near Me. Also no one else is to come to the mountain." [3]Moses reported to the people all the regulations the LORD had given and they promised together, "We will do everything the LORD said to do." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [4]Then Moses wrote down all the Lord's instructions.

Early the next morning he built an altar at the base of the mountain and piled up 12 stones, representing the 12 tribes of Israel. [5]Then he had some young men offer burnt offerings and young bulls as fellowship offerings. [6]Moses put half of the blood from these animals into bowls, and the other half he sprinkled on the altar. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]He read to the people the Lord's instructions in the Book of the Covenant, and the people responded again, "We will do everything God has commanded." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [8]Then Moses sprinkled blood from the bowls on the people and said, "This blood confirms

the agreement the LORD made with you."{394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

Lord, the shed blood is always the beginning place. I again ask You to forgive me by the blood of Christ. I praise You for the blood of Jesus shed for me. From it I get cleansing, strength, power, and life. Amen.

9Moses, Aaron, Nadab, Abihu, and the 70
elders went into the mountain 10and saw a
vision of the God of Israel. {377 Presence
of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Under his feet
was a pavement of sapphire, bright as the
sky. 11Though they saw God, He did not
destroy them. So they had a meal together.
{166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
12Then the LORD said to Moses, "Come
up on the mountain and stay awhile. {377
Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} And
I will give you the flat stones on which I
have written some commands." 13Moses
and Joshua climbed up on the mountain.
14Moses told the 70 elders, "Wait here till
we come back. If any problems arise while
we are away, Aaron and Hur can help you."
15Then Moses went up on the moun-
tain, and a cloud covered him, 16and the
LORD's glory settled on the mountain for
six days. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps.
96:8} Then on the seventh day He called
Moses from the cloud. 17God's glory on
the mountain looked to the Israelites
below like a terrible fire. {377 Presence of
God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 18Then he entered
the cloud and stayed on the mountain 40
days and nights.

Exodus 25

Furniture in the Tabernacle

1The LORD told Moses, 2"Tell the Isra-
elites that whoever wants to bring Me an
offering may bring something from this
list: 3gold, silver, bronze, 4blue, purple,
and red yarn; fine linen; goat's hair; 5ram
skins dyed red; leather; acacia wood; 6olive
oil for lamps; spices for the anointing oil
and for fragrant incense; 7and onyx stones
and other stones for the high priest's vest
and chest piece. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts
2:44}
8"Then have the people build a sacred
place where I will dwell among them. {377
Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 9Make
the tabernacle and its furnishings like the
pattern I will show you. 10First, make a
chest of acacia wood, {306 Mercy-Seat
Praying, Heb. 9:5} 45 inches long, 27
inches wide, and 27 inches high. 11Overlay
it with gold inside and out, and put a gold
molding around it." {389 Purity-Praying, 2
Peter 3:1}

Lord, you want the best—pure gold—for Your seat on earth; this means I must give my best to You, every day, everything. I give You all that I have. Lord, only pure gold is good enough for You, not 14-karat, or even 22-karat, but pure gold. May I never offer you second best or half-hearted service; I give the best of all I have to You. Amen.

12"Make four gold rings and attach them
to the four legs. 13Make two poles of aca-
cia wood and cover them with gold, 14and

insert them through the rings of the sacred chest. That way the chest can be carried by the poles. [15]Always keep the poles in the rings of the chest. [16]Put inside the chest the Ten Commands on stones that I will give you.

[17]"Cover the sacred chest with a gold lid 45 inches long and 27 inches wide." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

Lord, this is the most holy place in all Israel, for the Shekinah glory cloud will sit here; this is where your presence sits among Your people. Lord, I come symbolically to the most holy place to bow in Your presence and worship Your majesty. Amen.

[18]"Carve two winged creatures out of gold, and attach them at the ends of the chest. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [19]Attach them permanently to the lid of the chest so that they are part of the lid itself. [20]They are to face each other with their wings spread upward." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

The two winged creatures were to be made from beaten gold; blows from hammers made them what they are. Lord, You, the divine Sculptor, have used hammers on me to fashion in me discipline and character. May I learn from trials and tribulation in this life so I can draw near to You. Amen.

[21]"Place inside the sacred chest the Ten Commands on flat stones, and put the lid on top of the chest. [22]I will meet with you {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} between the winged creatures and give My people additional commands. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10}

[23]"Make a table of acacia wood 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. [24]Cover it with gold, and put a gold molding around it. [25]Put around it a rim of about three inches wide with a gold molding on the rim. [26]Make four gold rings and attach one to each leg close to the rim. [27]The rings are to hold the poles that are to be used in carrying the table. [28]The poles are to be made of acacia wood and covered with gold. [29]Make gold dishes, spoons, pitchers, and bowls for pouring out drink offerings. [30]Keep special loaves of bread (called "Bread of My Presence") on this table all the time." {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8}

Lord, bread stands for strength, growth, energy, and life. Thank You for daily bread that gives me all of the above. The bread was symbolic of your presence; I draw strength from You. Amen.

[31]"Make a lampstand of pure gold. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} Hammer all of it—its base, shaft, lamp cups, and blossoms—from one piece of gold. [32]It is to have six branches, three extending from each side of the center shaft. [33]On each of the six branches make a cup shaped like almond blossoms. [34]And on the shaft make four cups shaped like almond blossoms. [35]Position one cup or bud under the first pair of branches extending from the

shaft, place a second cup or bud under the second pair of branches, and a third cup or bud under the third pair. [36]Make from a single piece of pure gold the entire lampstand, including the buds and branches. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [37]Position the seven lamps—the one at the top and the ones at the ends of the six branches—so that the light shines in front of the lampstand. [38]The snuffers and tongs are to be made of pure gold. [39]About 75 pounds of gold will be needed to make the lampstand and equipment. [40]Be sure you follow the pattern I have shown you here on the mountain." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, You didn't ask us to worship You in the dark, but You put light in the tabernacle for sight. In the same way You never ask us to worship You in ignorance. You have shown us how to believe, live, and worship; I worship You according to Your light. Lord, there were three lights on each side of the lampstand, and one light on the center pole making seven lights that gave one illumination. Lord, I am just one light among many lights. Teach me, to shine with other lights so we can worship You and be a testimony to the world. Amen.

Exodus 26

Preparing the Tabernacle

[1]"For the tabernacle make ten curtains of the best linen and blue, purple, and red yarn, with figures of winged creatures embroidered into them. [2]Each curtain is to be 42 feet long and 6 feet wide. [3]Sew five of them together, and another five together. [4-5]Put 50 loops of blue on the longer side of each curtain. [6]Then fasten the curtains together at the loops, using 50 gold hooks. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

[7]"Cover the tabernacle with 11 curtains of goat hair. [8]Each curtain is to be 45 feet long by 6 feet wide. [9]Sew five of them together and then another five together. Fold the 11th curtain over at the front of the tabernacle. [10]Put 50 loops along the wider side of one set [11]and fasten them together with 50 bronze hooks. [12]The extra half curtain of 18 inches is to hang over the back of the tabernacle, [13]and each curtain is to hang over the tabernacle an extra 18 inches on each side. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [14]Then make two more coverings to go over the tabernacle, one with ram skins dyed red and the other with goatskin leather.

[15]"Make upright frames for the tabernacle walls from acacia wood. [16]Each frame is to be 15 feet high and 27 inches wide. [17]Have two tenons or pegs near the bottom of each frame. [18]Make 20 frames for the south side of the tabernacle [19]and fit them into 40 silver bases. [20]Make 20 frames for the north side, [21]fitting their tenons into the 40 grooved silver bases or sockets. [22]Make six frames for the west side of the tabernacle [23]and two additional frames at the corners for extra strength. [24]These corner frames are to be connected at the top and bottom. [25]Thus there will be eight frames for the back end of the tabernacle set in 16 silver bases or sockets.

[26]"Make 15 crossbars of acacia wood with five for each of the three sides of the tabernacle, [27]the south, north, and west. [28]The center crossbar is to extend the full length of each side. [29]Cover the frames with gold, and make gold rings to hold the frames, and cover the crossbars with gold too. [30]Set up the tabernacle according to the plan I've shown you on the mountain. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[31]"Make a curtain from blue, purple, and red yarn and the finest linen, with winged creatures, embroidered into it by a talented craftsman. [32]Hang the curtain with gold hooks on four posts of gold-covered acacia wood, and set each post in a silver base. [33]Place the sacred chest behind the curtain, which will separate the holy place from the most holy place. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [34]Put the lid on the chest. [35]Place the table of acacia wood outside the curtain on the north side of the tabernacle and the lampstand opposite it on the south side.

[36]"Make another curtain of blue, purple, and red yarn and the best linen for the entrance to the tabernacle, and embroider special designs in it. [37]Hang this curtain on five acacia-wood posts overlaid with gold and set them on bronze stands."

Lord, You consented to come dwell among Your people; You didn't dwell among the world, nor did the world recognize Your condescension. Thank You for coming to live in my heart; may I carefully prepare a place for You as the Israelites carefully prepared the tabernacle. Amen.

Exodus 27

The Bronze Altar and Courtyard

[1]"Make an altar seven and a half feet square and four and a half feet high. [2]Make a horn at each of the top corners and cover the altar and horns with bronze. [3]From bronze make buckets for the ashes, shovels, bowls, new hooks, and fire pans. [4]Make a bronze lattice with a bronze ring at each corner, [5]and attach the lattice into the altar by resting it on a ledge built on each side. [6]Make acacia-wood poles overlaid with bronze, [7]and to carry the altar insert the poles into the rings on two sides of the altar. [8]The altar must be hollow like an open box. Build it just as I have shown you on the mountain. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[9]"Then make a courtyard around the tabernacle and enclose it with curtains made from the best linen. On the south side the curtain is to extend 150 feet, [10]and the curtain is to be held up by 20 posts set into bronze sockets, and hung with silver hooks and rods attached to the posts. [11]Do the same for the 150 feet of the curtain on the north side of the courtyard, with the 20 posts set into bronze sockets and the curtain hung with silver hooks and rods. [12]The curtain on the west side of the courtyard is to be 75 feet long, also held up by ten posts set into sockets. [13]The east side is to be 75 feet long too. [14]The entrance is

to be on the east end [15]with two curtains each seven and a half yards long, and each supported by three posts set into a socket.
[16]"Have a 30-foot-wide curtain at the east entrance to the courtyard, made with the finest linen and embroidered in blue, purple, and red yarn, and attached to four posts set in bronze sockets.
[17]"All the posts around the courtyard are to be seven and a half feet high, and all the posts are to be connected by silver rods and hooks and set in bronze sockets. [18]The courtyard is to be 150 feet long and 75 feet wide, with linen curtains seven and a half feet high and set in bronze sockets. [19]Also the utensils in the tabernacle and the pegs for the curtains around it are to be of bronze. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[20]"Tell the people to bring you olive oil to keep the lampstand burning, {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [21]the lampstand that is to be placed in front of the curtain that separated the holy place from the most holy placed. Aaron and his sons are to keep the lampstand burning day and night. All future generations are to see that this command is obeyed."

Lord, the Menorah is seven lights that make up "one" light; this speaks to me of unity. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} I will add my testimony to other believers so we can be "one" light to unsaved people. Lord, just as the Menorah was kept burning constantly, may I be a continuous testimony burning constantly before You. Amen.

Exodus 28

Clothes for the Priests

[1]"Set apart as My priests, your brother Aaron and his four sons Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [2]Make some special clothes for Aaron, which will show he is separated to Me. They should be beautiful to show his special role as high priest. [3]People with special skills as tailors are to make these clothes to set him apart to serve as My priest. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [4]These garments are to include a chest piece, a priestly vest, a robe, an embroidered tunic, a turban, and a sash. The tailors are to make special clothes for Aaron's sons too. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [5]Make these items from the finest linen, embroidered with gold thread and blue, purple, and red yarn.
[6]"Skilled tailors are to make the priestly vest from the finest linen and to embroider it with gold thread and blue, purple, and red yarn. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [7]The vest is to consist of two parts, front and back, joined with two shoulder straps. [8]A sash around the waist is to be made of the same materials. [9]Then engrave on two onyx stones the names of the 12 tribes of Israel–[10]six names on each stone, listed in order of the births of Jacobs' sons. [11]Engrave these stones the same way a jeweler engraves a seal, and mount the two stones in gold. [12]Attach the stones to the vest's shoulder straps as if they were memorial stones. These will be constant reminders of the Lord as Aaron wears the

vest. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}
13Make two fine wires of gold 14and two
braided chains of gold, and attach them by
gold clasps to the vest's shoulders.
15"Make a chest piece that will be used
to determine God's will. {536 Work-
er's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Use the same
materials you will use for the vest: the
finest linen embroidered with gold thread
and blue, purple, and red yarn. 16Make
it nine inches square and folded over to
make a pouch. 17Attach to it four rows of
three precious stones each. In the first row
have a carnelian, a chrysolite, and an emer-
ald. 18In the second row have a turquoise,
a sapphire, and a diamond. 19In the third
row place a jacinth, an agate, and an ame-
thyst. 20In the fourth row have a beryl, and
onyx, and a jasper. Mount the stones in
gold settings. 21Engrave on each stone the
name of one of the tribes of Israel, to be
engraved like a seal.
22"Attach the chest piece to the priestly
vest with two twisted cords of gold. 23At
the top corners of the chest piece attach
two gold rings, 24and tie the cords of gold
to the gold clasps at the vest's shoulders.
25-26Do the same for the two lower corners
of the vest. 27Then make two more gold
rings and attach them to the priestly vest
near the sash. 28Use blue cords to attach
the bottom gold rings of the chest piece to
the rings on the vest. 29In this way Aaron
will have near his heart {456 Spiritual-Un-
derstanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} the names
of each of Israel's tribes when he enters the
holy place and this will also continually
remind the Lord of Israel. 30Insert into the
chest piece the Urim and Thummim (two
small objects) {533 Will of God-Prayer,
Eph. 5:17} to be used in determining
God's will.
31"Under his vest Aaron is to wear a robe
of blue wool 32with an opening for his
head. Sew a collar around the opening so
it will not tear. 33Along the bottom edge
of the robe sew pomegranates of blue, pur-
ple, and red yarn 34with gold bells between
each pomegranate. 35When Aaron wears
this robe when he goes into the holy place
to serve the LORD, the bells will ring and
he will not die. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer,
Rom. 8:34}
36"On a strip of pure gold engrave the
words 'Set Apart to the LORD.' {223
Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 37Attach
this with a blue cord to the front of Aaron's
turban. 38As he wears this, this will show
that he is carrying the guilt for any sins the
Israelites committed when giving offerings
to the Lord. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter
1:16} Then the people will be accepted by
the LORD. {377 Presence of God-Prayer,
Ps. 16:11} 39Make Aaron's tunic and tur-
ban from the finest linen, and embroider
his sash.
40"Make tunics, sashes, and robes for Aar-
on's sons. This will show their dignity as
priests. 41After you clothe Aaron and his
sons with these garments, dedicate them
to the Lord by anointing their heads with
olive oil. This act will set them apart as
My priests. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech.
12:10} 42Make linen underclothes to be
worn beneath their robes, reaching from
their hips to their knees. 43These are to be
worn whenever they enter the tabernacle
to serve at the altar in the holy place. {387

Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} If they don't, they will die. This rule applies to all Aaron's descendants."

Lord, I'm amazed how carefully You planned the clothes of those priests who came into Your presence. Cover me with a robe or righteousness when I enter Your Presence to worship or intercede for others. Without the righteousness of Jesus Christ, I can't enter Your presence. Amen.

Exodus 29

Dedication of Aaron and His Sons

[1]"In dedicating Aaron and his sons as priests, here is what you are to do: Get a young bull and two rams with no physical defects. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [2]Then make several bread loaves without yeast, thin cakes mixed with olive oil, and wafers topped with oil. [3]Place them in a basket and bring it to the tabernacle with the bull and two rams. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}

[4]"At the entrance to the tabernacle wash Aaron and his sons. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [5]Then on Aaron put his tunic, the robe under the vest, the chest piece, and the sash. {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1} [6]Put on his head the turban with the gold strip, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [7]and anoint him by pouring oil on his head."

Lord, the word "anointed" means "Christ," this is why the high priest is a type of Jesus Christ. Jesus fulfilled the threefold anointed office. Jesus was anointed to high priestly intercession. Jesus was anointed as King to rule our lives. Jesus was anointed as prophet to deliver Your message to me. Lord, thank You for Jesus, "the Anointed One," who is the Christ. Anoint me to be holy and to serve You continually. Amen.

[8]"Then dress Aaron's sons in their tunics, [9]and sashes and headdresses. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[10]"Bring the bull to the tabernacle entrance, and have Aaron and his sons place their hands on its head. [11]Then kill the bull near the tabernacle entrance, {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} [12]and smear some of its blood on the horns of the altar and pour the rest of the blood on the ground by the altar. {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} [13]Take the fat from the bull's insides, and the liver and the two kidneys, and burn them on the altar. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [14]Then take the rest of the carcass outside the camp as an offering for forgiveness of sins. {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2}

[15]"Next Aaron and his sons are to place their hands on the head of one of the rams {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [16]as it is being slaughtered. Sprinkle its blood on the sides of the altar."

Lord, when anyone laid their hands on the head of an animal to confess their sins, they were transferring their guilt onto the animal. When the animal was put to death

that was a symbolic act that their sins were judged instead of them. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} Lord, I know my sins were transferred to Jesus Christ, and He died for forgiveness of my sins. Amen.

17"Then cut up the ram and wash its internal organs and legs, and put all its parts on the altar, 18and burn them as a burnt offering to the LORD. This will be pleasing to Him. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

19"Aaron and his sons are to place their hands on the head of the other ram 20as it is being slaughtered. Put some of its blood on Aaron's right ear lobe, right thumb, and big toe of his right foot. Do the same for Aaron's sons, and then sprinkle the rest of the blood on the four sides of the altar. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 21Then take some of the blood that is dripping from the altar and mix it with olive oil and sprinkle it on Aaron and his sons and their clothes. This will show that they are set apart to the Lord. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}

22"Take the fat of this second ram from its tail, internal organs, liver, two kidneys, and right thigh, 23Then take one of each of the bread cakes and wafers, 24and have Aaron and his sons lift them up as a gift to Me. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 25Then burn the bread on the altar as a burnt offering to the LORD. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 26Offer the breast of the ram to Me as a special gift and then keep it for yourself." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, just as the priests waved their offerings in Your presence, symbolic of giving it to You, so I offer to You my whole body, including my hands, feet, eyes, ears, mouth, and nose; accept them and use me. Amen.

27"Give the breasts and thigh of this ram 28to Aaron and his sons. Then when the people give peace offerings or thanksgiving offerings to the LORD, the breast and thigh are to be given to Aaron and future priests. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

29"Aaron's garments must be kept for future priests after him when they are set apart as priests. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 30The priest is to wear them seven days before serving in the tabernacle. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}

31"Boil the meat of the ram in a sacred place, 32and Aaron and his sons are to eat the meat and the bread in the basket at the tabernacle entrance. 33Only Aaron and his sons, not ordinary people, are to eat the meat and bread because this food is considered holy. 34If any of it is left over till morning, it must be burned and not eaten. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

35"The ordination ceremony for Aaron and his sons is to last seven days. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 36On each of those days offer a young bull as a sacrifice for sin. Then purify the altar by pouring oil on it. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 37Dedicate the altar to God each of the seven days; it will be so holy

that whoever touches it will be holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
38"Each of the seven days offer two one-year-old rams, 39one in the morning and one in the evening. {97 Daily-Prayer, Acts 2:42} 40-41With each of them offer two quarts of flour mixed with a quart of olive oil, and also offer a quart of wine as an offering to the Lord. This offering will be pleasing to Me. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 42Each day offer a burnt offering before Me at the entrance to the tabernacle where I will speak with you. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} 43I will meet with you there, and the tabernacle will be made holy by My presence. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} 44I will make the tabernacle and the altar holy, and I will set apart Aaron and his sons to serve as My priests. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} 45I will live among you as your God, 46and you will know that I am the LORD your God. I brought you out of Egypt so I could live with you." {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, Your presence comes to dwell with us only after the blood cleanses us from sin and makes us holy in Your sight. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} Thank You for the inestimable privilege of knowing You and having Your protective presence in my life. Amen.

Exodus 30

The Altar for Burning Incense

1"Make an altar of acacia wood for burning incense. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 2It is to be 18 inches square and 36 inches high with a "horn" at each corner carved from the same piece of wood as the altar. 3Cover it with gold, and put a gold molding around it. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} 4Below the molding on two opposite sides attach two gold rings to hold poles to carry it. 5The poles are to be made of acacia wood too and covered with gold. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} 6Put the incense altar in front of the curtain that separates the most holy place from the holy place. I will meet you there. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}
7-8"Every morning and evening when Aaron (and all future priests after him) trims the wicks, he is to burn sweet-smelling incense to Me on the altar." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Lord, may my prayers please You, just as sweet incense pleases a person's smell. Lord, the altar for burning incense stands for our prayers that must continually be offered to You. You said the sweet-smelling incense will please You. May my prayers be precious to You. Amen.

9"Don't offer any other incense on this altar, and don't offer on it with any burnt offerings, grain offerings, or drink offerings. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb.

10:22} [10]Once a year Aaron must purify the altar by putting blood of an animal on the altar's four horns as a sacrifice for sin. Do this from now on, because this altar is holy to Me." {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

[11]Then the LORD said to Moses, [12]"Take a census of all adult male Israelites, and have each one make a payment to Me so no harm will come to them when you are taking the census, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [13]The payments is to be one-fifth of an ounce of silver. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [14-15]This is required of every male 20 years old and up, whether rich or poor, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [16]and the money is to be used for the upkeep of the tabernacle. Because of this I will always keep you, My people, in mind, and this will be like covering of your sins." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[17]Then the LORD told Moses, [18]"Make a large bronze tank and a stand for it. Position it in the courtyard between the altar of burnt offering and the tabernacle. [19]Aaron and his sons are to wash their hands and feet with water from the tank. [20]If they don't, they will die right on the spot. Also when they present an offering at the altar of burnt offering, [21]they are first to wash their hands and feet so they won't die. This is to be followed by Aaron and all his descendants." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Lord, the large tank was made from the women's mirrors. Just as a woman uses a mirror to prepare herself, may I be cleansed and see myself pure and holy for You. Amen.

[22]Next the Lord commanded Moses, [23]"In a gallon of olive oil mix these spices: 12 pounds of myrrh, 6 pounds of cinnamon, 6 pounds of cane, and [24]12 pounds of cassia from a tree bark. [25]Use this nice-smelling mixture {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [26]to dedicate the tabernacle and the chest, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [27]the table with bread, lampstand, incense altar, [28]altar of burnt offering, and large bronze tank. [29]Use this olive-oil mixture to make them holy; and whatever touches this will be holy.

[30]"When you dedicate Aaron and his sons to serve as My priests, sprinkle this oil on them. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [31]Tell the Israelites that they are always to use this olive-oil mixture in ordaining priests. [32]It is not to be used for everyday purposes because it is holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [33]Anyone who uses this mixture like an ordinary perfume or puts it on anyone who is not a priest will no longer be one of My people." {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}

[34-35]The Lord told Moses, "Make a nice-smelling incense with equal amounts of spices; grain resin, onycha, galbanum, and frankincense. Add some salt to make it pure. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [36]Pound it into powder and place it in front of the chest where I will meet with you. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [37]Don't use this for yourself; it is holy to the Lord. [38]Whoever makes

it for himself will no longer be one of My people." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Exodus 31

Workers Chosen to Make the Tabernacle

[1]Then the Lord told Moses, [2]"I have chosen Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah, {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [3]and have filled him with My Spirit, and I have given him wisdom and skill for making the tabernacle and everything in it. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [4]He is good at working with gold, silver, and bronze, [5]at cutting and setting stones, at woodworking, and in all other kinds of crafts.

[6]"Also I have chosen Oholiab of the tribe of Dan to assist Bezaleel. And I have given special skills to other craftsmen to help make the tabernacle as I have instructed you. {384 Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Rom. 12:3-8} [7]They are to make the tent itself, the chest with the lid on it and all the furniture" [8]the table for bread, the gold lampstand, the incense altar, {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [9]the altar of burnt offering, the wash tank, {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [10]the garments for Aaron and his sons, {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} [11]the anointing oil, and the incense for the holy place. They are to follow all the instructions I gave you." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[12]The Lord then told Moses to say to the people, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [13]"Be sure to keep the Sabbath day each week because it is a sign of the agreement between Me and you. This will help you remember that I am the Lord, the one who makes you holy. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [14]Keep the Sabbath holy. If you don't obey this command, you will die, and anyone who works on that day will no longer be one of My people. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} [15]Work six days, and rest on the seventh. Again, if anyone works on that day, he will be put to death. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [16]This day is to be observed for generations to come. [17]It will be a sign between Me and the Israelites because I created the universe in six days and rested on the seventh." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

[18]The Lord finished speaking to Moses on Mount Sinai and then gave him the flat stones with the commands He wrote with His own hand. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

Lord, You gave the Sabbath to Israel as a gift of rest and as a covenant between You and them. When they broke the Sabbath, they disobeyed You; Jesus came and kept the law with His perfect life. In His death He fulfilled the law and justified every lawbreaker who repented and believed in Him. Lord, I believe in Your Son and trust Him for salvation; now I will live holy to please You and serve You. Amen.

Exodus 32

The Golden Calf

[1]Realizing that Moses had not come down from the mountain after a long time, the people said to Aaron, "We don't know what has happened to Moses, who brought us here from Egypt. So we suggest you make us a god to lead us." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [2]Aaron replied, "Okay, give me all your gold earrings." [3]The people did that [4]and Aaron melted the gold {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} and shaped it into the image of a calf. The people said, "This is the god who brought us out of Egypt." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}

[5]Aaron then built an altar in front of the calf, and he announced, "Tomorrow let's celebrate a feast to the LORD." [6]The next day everyone got up early and offered burnt offerings and peace offering to the idol, and then ate and drank and carried on wildly. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

Lord, I can't imagine anyone worshiping a golden calf; but I wasn't raised a pagan. They will do anything to satisfy their lustful imaginations. I will not worship any gods or have them in my life; I worship You, the only living and true God. Amen.

[7]The LORD said to Moses, "Go down off the mountain. The people you brought from Egypt are acting terribly. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} [8]They have already disobeyed My commands. They have made an idol shaped like a calf and are worshiping it, sacrificing to it, and saying, 'This is the God who brought us out of Egypt.' {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} [9]I have seen how rebellious they are. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [10]Now I am so angry. I will destroy them. But I will make a great nation of your descendants." {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14}

[11]Moses pleaded, "O LORD, why be so angry with Your people whom You brought out of Egypt in a marvelous way? {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [12]This will make the Egyptians think that you got them here just so you could kill them. Please change Your mind, and don't destroy them. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} [13]Remember that You promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob that You would give them as many descendants as the stars and would give them the land You promised." [14]So the LORD decided not to destroy them. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

[15]Moses went down from the mountain with the two flat stones on which God had written His commands on both sides. [16]God Himself had written the commands on the stones. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [17]When Joshua, who was with Moses, heard the people shouting to their idol, he said to Moses, 'That sounds like they are fighting a war.' {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [18]Moses replied, 'No, they are singing, not shouting victory or defeat.'" {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

19When Moses got near the people, he saw the people dancing in front of a calf idol. In anger he threw down his flat stones, {398 Reluctant Answers to Prayer, Gen. 6:6} 20and grabbed the calf, burned it, ground it to powder, mixed it with water, and forced the people to drink it. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14}

21Moses asked Aaron, "What led you to do such a terrible thing?" {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} 22Aaron responded, "Don't be mad at me. You know how wicked these people are. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 23They suggested I make an idol for them because they assumed something had happened to you on the mountain. 24So I told them to give me their gold earrings. When they did, I threw the gold into a fire and out came this calf."

25When Moses saw that the people were running around wildly and that their enemies were making fun of them, {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} 26he said, "Whoever is on the LORD's side come join me," and all the Levites did. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 27Then Moses told them, "Get swords and go through the camp and kill your relatives, friends, and neighbors." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 28They did as he said, and about 3,000 people died that day. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 29Then Moses said to the Levites, "You obeyed the LORD, even though it was difficult to do. So dedicate yourselves to the Lord, and He will bless you." {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}

30"The next day Moses told the people they had done a terrible thing. "But," he said, "I will see if the LORD will forgive you." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 31So Moses admitted to the LORD that the people had committed an awful sin in making an idol of gold; 32and he asked the Lord to forgive them. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} "Otherwise," he said, "remove my name from your book." {339 Overcoming-God's Inertia Prayer, Exod. 32:30-32} 33The LORD said, "I will remove from My book the name of anyone who has sinned against Me. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 34Go, lead the people to the place I told you about. My angel will go ahead of you. But when the right time comes, I will punish them for their sins." {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} 35Then God sent a terrible disease on the people because they had worshiped the calf Aaron made. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

Lord, give me a holy fear of sinning against You; I see what the sin of Israel did to them. You punished Israel for her sin, so I know You will punish me. Forgive me of all my sin—ignorant or presumptuous sins—cleanse me with the blood of Christ. Moses was an effective intercessor for those who sinned against You. Help me be an effective intercessor who prays for my family and lost friends. Amen.

Exodus 33

Moses Asks to See God

[1]The LORD instructed Moses, "Get ready to lead the people you brought from Egypt to the land I promised Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob for their descendants. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [2]I will send an angel to drive out the Canaanites, Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [3]It is a land with lots of milk from cows and lots of honey from bees. I won't be traveling with you because your people are so stubborn I might destroy them before they get there." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[4]Hearing these discouraging words, the people started mourning, and they stopped wearing jewelry. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [5]That is because God had said to Moses, "Tell the Israelites, 'You are so stubborn. So if I went with you I might be inclined to destroy you. So don't wear any jewelry.'" {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [6]So the Israelites wore no jewelry from then on.

[7]Moses set up the tabernacle outside the camp and told the people to go there if they wanted to contact the Lord. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [8]Whenever Moses went there, the people stood at their tent entrances and watched him enter the tabernacle. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [9]So when he entered, the thick cloud would settle at the tabernacle entrance, and the Lord would speak to Moses. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} [10]Seeing this cloud, the people would stand up and worship God. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [11]Then the LORD spoke to Moses face to face, like speaking to a friend. When Moses left the tabernacle, Joshua, his young assistant, stayed there. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[12]Moses said to the LORD, "You have told me to lead these people, but you haven't told me who will be with me. You have told me you know me and are pleased with me. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [13]So let me know Your plans so that I can know You. And remember that these people are Yours." {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [14]God responded, "I will be with you, and I will give you rest." {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [15]Moses replied, "If You don't go with us, then don't let us leave here. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [16]And if You don't go with us, how will anyone know that You are pleased with me and with these people? Only in this way will people know we are uniquely different from other people." {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}

[17]The LORD said, "I will do what you asked because I am pleased with you and I know you intimately." {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [18]Moses responded, "Then please let me see Your glory." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I'm like Moses. I want to see Your glory. Manifest Yourself to my heart so I can know You better. Lord, I want to see You

glorified in my life, so manifest Yourself in my life for others to see You. Amen

[19]God replied, "I will display My goodness in front of you, and I will tell you the meaning of My name the Lord. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} And I will show mercy and compassion on whomever I wish. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} [20]But you cannot see My face, because no one can see Me and live. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [21]Not far from Me is a rock; stand on it. [22]When My glory passes by, I will put you in a crack in the rock and cover you with My hand until I have passed by. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [23]Then when I take My hand away, you will see My back, but not My face." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, Your glory is awesome. I worship Your majesty. You are a holy God who is powerful to do all You want to do. Moses saw Your glory in a cloud on Mount Sinai; I see Your glory in Jesus Christ in the pages of the New Testament. I have met You in the secret place; now help me tell others about Your saving grace. Thank You for protecting Moses in the cleft of the rock. I too hide for protection in the cleft of the Rock, who is Jesus Christ. Amen.

Exodus 34

Moses' Face Shining

[1]The LORD said to Moses, "Get two flat stones like the ones I gave you before, and I will write on them the same commands that were on the stones you broke. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} [2]In the morning come meet Me on the top of Mount Sinai. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [3]Don't allow anyone to come with you or be anywhere on the mountain. And don't let flocks and herds graze by the mountain." {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}

[4]So Moses took two flat stones like the first ones, and early the next morning he climbed up Mount Sinai. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [5]The LORD descended in a thick cloud and was there with Moses as He passed in front of him and as Moses proclaimed the Lord's name. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [6]As the LORD passed in front of Moses, He said, "I am the LORD your God, compassionate and gracious, slow to get angry, and full of steadfast love and truth. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [7]I show My steadfast love to thousands of people. I forgive all kinds of sins. Yet I will punish sins, even those committed by future generations." {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [8]Moses quickly bowed down and worshiped the Lord. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [9]He said, "If I please You, then go with us. True, the people are stubborn, but please forgive our sins and

accept us as Your own people." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

Lord, the prayer of Moses is my prayer for grace. Forgive my sin, both willful and ignorant; meet with me daily and lead me to do Your will. Amen.

10God said, "Okay. I will make an agreement with you. I will perform miracles never before seen anywhere on the earth. People around you will be amazed by what I will do for you. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 11If you obey Me, I will force out the Amorites, Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12But don't make a treaty with any of them, because they will set a trap for you. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} 13Instead break down their altars, smash their sacred poles, and cut down their idols. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 14Don't worship any other god; I want your full loyalty. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} 15If you make any agreement with them, you will be influenced to worship their gods and to eat their sacrificial meals. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 16And don't take their daughters as wives for your sons because those wives will influence your sons to worship their idols. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 17Don't make idols from any metals. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

18"As I mentioned before, observe the Festival of Bread without Yeast for seven days each year in April, the month you left Egypt. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 19Every firstborn male belongs to me, including your sons, cattle, sheep, and goats. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 20You may keep firstborn donkeys by giving Me a lamb. But if you don't, then break the donkey's neck. Redeem every firstborn son. And bring Me an offering every time you appear before Me. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

21"After working six days, rest on the seventh even when plowing and harvesting. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 22Celebrate the Festival of Harvest when the first wheat crop appears and the Festival of Shelters each fall at the end of the harvest. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 23Every male is to appear before Me three times a year. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 24I will force the nations out of your land and extend your boundaries. No one will conquer your land when your males appear before Me three times a year. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

25"With your sacrifices do not include any bread with yeast. And don't keep any meat of the Passover lamb overnight. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 26Bring the first part of every crop to the tabernacle. And do not boil a young goat in its mother's milk. 27Write down these words, the terms of My agreement with you and Israel." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 28So Moses was on Mount Sinai for 40 days, with nothing to eat or drink. And he wrote down the Ten Commands on the flat stones. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[29]When Moses descended from the mountain with the flat stones in his hand, his face was shining because he had been speaking with the Lord. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, may my life shine with Your radiance when I've spent time talking to You in Your presence. May others see Jesus in my life and may they want to worship You, as I worship You. Amen.

[30]When Aaron and the Israelites saw that his face was shining, they were afraid to go near him. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [31]Moses asked Aaron and the leaders to approach him, and he spoke to them. [32]Then all the people came and Aaron told them everything the LORD had told him. {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} [33]He covered his face with a veil, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [34]but he took it off whenever the LORD spoke with him. Then when he spoke to people, [35]they could see again that his face was shining. So he put the veil back on until he spoke with the Lord again. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Lord, I'm changed when I enter Your presence. I see Your glory and it transforms me. May others see what change You make in me. May Your glory shine through me. Lord, there is an appropriate time to leave Your presence and go live my life in the world. Go with me and help others see Your glory in my life. Amen.

Exodus 35

Gathering Materials to Construct the Tabernacle

[1]Moses called a meeting of the people and told them what God had said. [2]"Work six days each week and dedicate the seventh to Me as a day of rest. Anyone who works on that day must die. [3]Don't even light a fire in your homes on that day." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[4]Moses then told the assembly some other things God said: [5]"If you wish, willingly bring Me offerings from these items: gold, silver, bronze; [6]blue, purple, or red wool; fine linen; goat hair; [7]ram's skin dyed red; leather; acacia wood; [8]olive oil for the lampstand; sweet-smelling spices for the anointing oil and for incense; [9]and onyx stones and other gems for the priestly vest and chest piece. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

[10]"Skilled craftsmen are to construct what I have commanded: [11]the tabernacle and its coverings, hooks, framework and bars, posts and sockets; [12]the chest and its poles, the lid on the chest, and the curtain in front of it; {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [13]the table of bread without yeast and its poles; [14]the lampstand with its equipment and oil; [15]the incense altar and its poles, the anointing oil; the curtain for the tabernacle; [16]the altar of burnt offering with its bronze grating and poles and utensils; the wash bowl and its stand; [17]the curtains for the courtyard and its poles and sockets, and the curtain for the entrance to the courtyard; [18]the posts of the tabernacle and courtyard and ropes;

[19]and the beautiful garments for Aaron and his sons." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
[20]The people left [21]and everyone whose heart was stirred brought gifts to be used in constructing the tabernacle and its equipment, and the garments for the priests. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [22]Others whose hearts moved them brought all kinds of gold jewelry including pins, earrings, rings, and bracelets. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [23]Others brought blue, purple, and scarlet wool, fine linen, goats' hair, rams' skins dyed red, and leather. [24]Others brought items of silver and bronze, and others gave acacia wool. [25]Skilled women spun blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen. [26]Other skilled women wove goats' hair into cloth. [27]Leaders brought onyx and other gems for the vest and chest piece. [28]They also brought sweet-smelling spices to be mixed with incense and olive oil for the lampstand and for anointing the priests. [29]Everyone who wanted to help in the tabernacle project brought their offerings to the Lord. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
[30]Moses told the people, "God has chosen Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah, {384 Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Rom. 12:3-8} [31]filled him with His Spirit, and given him wisdom and skill in many crafts. [32]He can make beautiful objects from gold, silver, and bronze. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} [33]And he can cut and set gems and work with wood. He has every skill needed. [34]He and Oholiab of the tribe of Dan can teach these skills to others. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [35]They have abilities as jewelers, designers, and embroiderers in blue, purple, and red wool, and in fine linen. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} They are to use every skill needed for constructing the tabernacle."

Lord, You give different talents—spiritual gifts—to different people; thank You for the gifts you've given me. I yield them to You just as those who constructed the tabernacle. Use me to glorify Yourself, as You used them. Amen.

Exodus 36

Beginning Construction of the Tabernacle

[1]"Bezaleel, Oholiab, and the other workers to whom God has given skill and knowledge for building the tabernacle are to do the work as God has commanded." {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [2]Then Moses brought these workers together, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [3]and he gave them all the items the people had donated for building the tabernacle, and the people kept bringing more every morning. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
[4]The workers went to Moses [5]and said, "We now have more than enough materials to do what the Lord told us to do." [6]So Moses sent word throughout the camp that no more materials were needed. So the people stopped bringing materials, [7]because they had already donated more

than was needed. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

Lord, I'm amazed the people gave so much in offerings that You restrained them from giving more. Let them be an example to me to give to You abundantly. Amen.

[8]The skilled workers made ten sheets of fine linen, blue, purple, and red yarn, and embroidered winged creatures in them. [9]Each sheet was 42 feet long and 6 feet wide. [10]Five were sewn together end to end, as were the other five. [11]The workers made loops of blue cloth on the edge of the last sheet in each set, [12]and they fastened the two sets of sheets at the loops with solid gold hooks. [13]Fifty gold hooks connected the loops so that the two long sheets draped the sides of the tabernacle. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[14]For another covering over the tabernacle they sewed together 11 sheets of goat hair, [15]each 45 feet long and 6 feet wide. [16]Five of these were sewn together end to end, as were the other six. [17-18]Then the two sets were fastened together by bronze hooks in 50 loops. [19]Another covering over the roof was made of rams' skin dyed red, and another of leather–four coverings in all. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[20]They made the framework of the tabernacle from acacia wood, [21]with each frame being 15 feet high and 28 inches wide, [22]and wooden tenons or wooden pegs on each frame. [23]They made 20 frames for the south side, with the tenons or pegs fitting into 40 silver sockets, [24]two tenons for every two sockets. [25]Also they made 20 frames for the north side, [26]with 40 silver sockets, and two for every frame. [27]Six frames were made for the back west wall, [28]and two additional frames to reinforce the rear corners. [29]These corner frames were joined at the top by a single ring. [30]There were eight frames for the west side with 16 silver sockets. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[31]Then they made acacia-wood crossbars to tie the frames together, [32]five for each of the three sides of the tabernacle. [33]The bars were half way up the frames and ran the full length of each side. [34]The frames, crossbars, and rings to hold the bars, were all overlaid with gold. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[35]They made the curtain that separated the holy place from the most holy place of linen and blue, purple, and red thread, and embroidered it with winged creatures. [36]They made four acacia-wood posts, overlaid them with gold, and attached the curtain to the posts by four gold hooks set into silver sockets.

[37]Then they made a curtain for the entrance to the tabernacle, using fine linen and blue, purple, and red thread. [38]The curtain was connected by five hooks to five gold-covered posts, set into bronze sockets. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Exodus 37

Constructing the Sacred Chest

[1]Bezaleel made the sacred chest out of acacia wood, 45 inches long, 27 inches wide, and 27 inches high. [2]He covered it with

gold both inside and out, {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} and made a gold molding all around it. [3]To carry the chest, he made two poles, [4]covered them with gold, [5]and set them through four gold rings, two near the bottom of each side.

[6]He then made a gold lid for the chest, {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [7]and hammered it from one gold piece, [8]with the winged creatures made of one piece of gold. [9]Their wings covered the lid, and they faced each other. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [10]Then he made a table 36 inches long, 18 inches wide, and 27 inches high. [11]He covered it with gold and made a gold molding all around the edge. [12]Also a three-inch-wide rim was attached to the table with gold on the rim. [13]He made four gold rings, one for each leg. [14]The rings were close to the rim to hold the carrying poles. [15]The poles were made of acacia wood covered with gold. [16]Then he made the utensils for the chest, including plates, dishes, bowls, and pitchers, for use in the drink offerings. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[17]Bezaleel made a lampstand, and its base, stem, cups, buds, and blossoms were all made of one piece of gold. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [18]It had three branches on each side. [19]On each branch he made three cups in the shape of almond blossoms with bulbs and flowers. [20]The stem of the lampstand was decorated with four almond blossoms. [21]One blossom was beneath each pair of branches. [22]He made the lampstand with its branches, and blossoms all from one piece of gold. [23]The seven lamps, the wick trimmers, and lamp snuffers were made of gold. [24]The lampstand and its utensils were made from 75 pounds of gold. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[25]The acacia-wood incense altar was 18 inches square and 36 inches high. Its corner horns were made of the same piece of wood as the altar itself.

Lord, may my life be a sweet-smelling fragrance to You and be pleased with the offerings I give You. Help me learn from the tabernacle how to properly approach You. May I serve You with the spiritual gifts You've given me, just as Bezaleel and Oholiab used their abilities to build the tabernacle. Amen.

[26]Bezaleel covered it with gold, and made a gold molding around the edge. [27]Beneath the molding he added two gold rings to hold carrying poles, [28]which were covered with gold. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [29]He then mixed the ingredients in oil for anointing the priests and he made the sweet-smelling incense. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}

Lord, the workmen followed Your instructions exactly when making the tabernacle because it's imperative to worship You according to Your prescribed way. Today I approach You to worship You as You instruct. Amen.

Exodus 38

Constructing the Bronze Altar

[1]Moses then made the altar of burnt offering from acacia wood. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} It was 90 inches square and 54 inches high. [2]A horn extended from each of the four corners, and they were carved out of the same piece of wood as the altar itself, which was overlaid with bronze. [3]Bezaleel made bronze utensils to be used with the altar, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} including pans, shovels, meat hooks, and fire pans. [4]He made a bronze grating resting on a ledge halfway up the altar. [5]Bronze rings were placed on the altar into which were inserted poles for carrying the altar. [6]These poles were made of acacia wood and covered with bronze. [7]The altar was empty like a box. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[8]Next Bezaleel made a large tank and its stand from mirrors donated by women who served near the tabernacle entrance.

[9]The south and north walls of the courtyard were each 150 feet long, where curtains of fine linen {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [10]were held up by 20 posts, each set in a bronze rocket, with silver hooks and rods. [11]The north wall was the same. [12]The west side was 75 feet and it was held up by 10 posts, each set in a bronze socket, with silver hooks and rods. [13]The east side was 75 feet wide.

[14-15]The curtains on each side of the entrance were 22 ½ feet wide, supported by three posts set in three sockets. [16]The curtains all around the courtyard were made of fine linen. [17]And each post had a bronze socket and silver hooks and rods. The post tops were covered with silver. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

[18]The curtain at the courtyard entrance was made of fine linen and embroidered with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. It was 30 feet long and 7 ½ feet wide, the same as the curtains of the courtyard walls. [19]It hung on four posts set into bronze sockets. The post tops were covered with silver, and the hooks and rods were silver. [20]Every nail used in making the tabernacle was bronze. [21]Moses had the Levites under Ithamar's leadership record the materials. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

Lord, Ithamar had an extremely responsible job to keep count of the precious things that were used to construct the furniture and the tabernacle itself. You must have trusted him to be careful that nothing was lost, wasted, or stolen. Lord, find me responsible to take care of things given to You. I will be honest and diligent, even with the smallest items. Amen.

[22]Bezaleel of the tribe of Judah made sure everything was done just as God had told Moses. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [23]Oholiab, who assisted Bezaleel, was expert in engraving, weaving, and embroidering with blue, purple, and scarlet yarn and fine linen.

[24]The gold the people brought weighed a little over a ton, {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [25]and about four tons of silver were given. [26]These amounts were

collected from the census of all the males 20 years of age and older, of which there were 603, 550 in all. [27]The 100 bases for the framework for the walls and for the posts that supported the inner curtain required about four tons of silver. [28]Silver that was not used for the posts was used to overlap their tops and for the rods and hooks.

[29]The people also brought almost four tons of bronze, [30]which was used for the sport sockets at the tabernacle's entrance, the bronze altar, and its grating and utensils. [31]Bronze was also used for sockets for posts around the courtyard and the tabernacle entrance and for tenons or pegs for the tabernacle and the courtyard. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

Exodus 39

Making the Priests' Clothes

[1]For the priests, including Aaron, the workers made garments of blue, purple, and scarlet material to be worn when the priests served in the holy place. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [2]The priestly vest was made of gold, fine linen, and blue, purple, and scarlet yarn. [3]Gold was bent into thin plates and cut into threads, which were worked into the blue, purple, and red yard and linen. [4]Two shoulder straps were made to hold up the vest, [5]and the sash was made of the same material. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]Two onyx stones were attached to the shoulder straps and were set in gold, and on them they engraved the names of the tribes of Israel, like initials engraved on a seal. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [7]These stones reminded the Lord of Israel of the people. Everything was done just as the Lord had commanded. [8]Like the vest, the chest piece was made of fine gold, blue, purple, and red yarn, and fine linen. [9]It was nine inches square and folded over to form a pouch. [10]It had four rows of stones. In the first row were a carnelian, a chrysolite, and an emerald; [11]in the second row were a turquoise, a sapphire, and a diamond; [12]in the third row were a jacinth, an agate, and an amethyst; [13]and in the fourth row were a beryl, an onyx, and jasper. All were set in gold, [14]and on each was engraved a name of one of the 12 tribes. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[15]To attach the chest piece to the priestly vest, they made two twisted cords of gold. [16]Then at the top corners of the chest piece they [17]attached two gold rings [18]and tied the cords of gold to the gold clasps at the vest's shoulders. [19]They made two gold rings and attached them to the other corners of the chest piece on the inside next to the priestly vest. [20]Then they made two more gold rings and attached them to the vest near the bottom of the shoulder straps right above the sash. [21]To hold the chest piece secure, they tied the bottom rings of the chest piece to the vest with a blue cord. All this was done as the LORD had commanded. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[22]The robe for the priest was made from blue wool {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [23]with an opening for his head and a collar around the opening so it would not tear. [24]Along the bottom edge of the robe

they sewed pomegranates of blue, purple, and red yarn and fine linen. [25-26]They made gold bells and attached them around the hem between each of the pomegranates. Aaron was to wear this robe when he ministered in the tabernacle. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[27]They made robes for Aaron and his sons from fine linen with blue, purple, and red wool. [28]The turban, caps, and underclothes were made of fine linen, [29]and their linen sashes were embroidered with blue, purple, and red threads, all as God had commanded. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [30]On a strip of pure gold the workers engraved the words "Set apart to the Lord," {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [31]and they attached this with a blue cord to the front of Aaron's turban, just as God had told them to do.

[32]At last the tabernacle was built, with the Israelites following the Lord's instructions in every detail. [33]The people brought to Moses everything pertaining to the tabernacle: the tent with its equipment including the hooks, framework, crossbars, posts, and sockets; [34]coverings for the roof, and sides including rams' skins dyed red, the goatskin covering; the curtain between the holy place and the most holy place; [35]the sacred chest with its carrying poles and lid; {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [36]the table and its utensils for the bread; [37]the gold lampstand with its lamps, utensil, and oil; [38]the gold-covered incense altar; the anointing oil, the sweet-smelling incense, the curtain for the entrance to the tabernacle; [39]the bronze altar with its bronze grating, poles, and utensils; the large tank, and its stand; [40]the curtains for the walls of the courtyard with their posts and sockets; the tenons or pegs—everything for the tabernacle; [41]and the garments for Aaron and his sons to wear when serving in the tabernacle. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23}

[42]The Israelites followed all the LORD's instructions to Moses. [43]Then when Moses inspected their work and saw that they did as the LORD told them to do, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} he blessed them.

Lord, just as each item was important in Your service, so no item was omitted from mention in the final summary. You are interested in both the quality of the work of our hands and the things we do for You. Lord, I offer all to You. Amen.

Exodus 40

Putting the Tabernacle Together

[1]The LORD told Moses, [2]"Set up the tabernacle the first day of the year, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [3]and place the sacred chest behind the curtain that sets off the most holy place. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [4]Put the table for the bread and its utensils and the lampstand in the holy place. [5]Place the gold incense altar in front of the chest, and hang the curtain at the entrance to the tabernacle. [6]Place the altar of burnt offering in front of the tabernacle entrance. [7]Set the large tank in the courtyard between the

tabernacle and the altar of burnt offering, and fill the tank with water. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [8]Set up the walls of the courtyard, and hang the curtain at the courtyard entrance.

[9]"Sprinkle the anointing oil on the tabernacle and everything in it to dedicate it all to Me. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [10]Sprinkle the oil on the altar of burnt offering and its utensils to dedicate them to Me, [11]and sprinkle oil on the tank and its stand to dedicate it too.

[12]"Bring Aaron and his sons to the tabernacle entrance and wash them with water. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [13]Then clothe him in the special garments and anoint him with oil to dedicate him to Me to serve as My priest. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [14]Then put the robes on Aaron's sons, [15]and anoint them, dedicating them to serve as My priests. They and their descendants will be dedicated in this way to be My priests."

[16]Moses then did everything the LORD told him to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [17]The tabernacle was set up on the first day of the first month, exactly one year after the Israelites left Egypt. [18]Moses erected the tabernacle by setting its frames into their sockets, attaching the crossbars, and erecting the posts. [19]Then he spread the two curtains over the framework and on the roof, just as the LORD had said to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[20]He placed the flat stones with the Ten Commands on them in the sacred chest, attached the carrying poles to the two sides of the chest, and placed the gold lid on the chest. [21]He brought the chest into the tabernacle and set it in the most holy place behind the curtain, just as the LORD had said to do, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [22]Then Moses placed the table for bread on the north side of the tabernacle outside the curtain [23]and set the bread on the table, just as the LORD had told him to do. [24]Placing the lampstand next to the table on the south side of the tabernacle, [25]Moses lit the lamps in God's presence. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [26]Next Moses put the gold incense altar in front of the curtain [27]and burned incense on it. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

[28]Moses then hung the curtain at the tabernacle entrance on the east side, [29]he placed the altar of burnt offering just inside the entrance, and offered a burnt offering and a meal offering to the Lord. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [30]Then Moses put the large tank in the courtyard between the altar of burnt offering and the tabernacle. He filled it with water so the priests could wash themselves. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [31]Moses, Aaron, and Aaron's sons washed their hands and feet in the tank. [32]Whenever they walked past the altar of burnt offering toward the tabernacle, they would stop and wash at the tank as the LORD had told them to do. [33]Moses then erected the curtains around the courtyard and set up the curtains at the east end of the courtyard. This completed the work Moses did in setting up the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[34]A thick cloud covered the tabernacle, and the tabernacle was filled with God's glory.

Lord, Your presence filled the tabernacle because Moses obeyed; may I be just as obedient to prepare my life for Your presence. Fill me with Your glory, as You filled the tabernacle. Lord, You settled among Your people and You led Your people. Come settle in my life with Your presence; come lead me daily as You led Israel. Amen.

[35]This prevented Moses from entering the tabernacle. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} [36]Whenever the cloud lifted, the Israelites would move on. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [37]But if the cloud settled again over the tabernacle, the people would stay until the cloud moved again. [38]During the day the cloud was over the tabernacle, and at night a fire appeared in the cloud. This occurrence continued throughout all the years the Israelites traveled in the desert. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Leviticus

Ch 1: The Burnt Offering 167
Ch 2: The Meal Offering 168
Ch 3: The Peace Offering 169
Ch 4: The Sin Offering 170
Ch 5: Sin Requiring a Sin Offering 172
Ch 6: Sin Requiring Sacrifices 173
Ch 7: The Guilt Offering 174
Ch 8: Aaron and His Sons are Anointed 176
Ch 9: Aaron Offers Sacrifices 178
Ch 10: Nadab and Abihu Were Killed 179
Ch 11: Clean and Unclean Foods 180
Ch 12: Cleansing after Childbirth 183
Ch 13: The Rules about Skin Diseases 183
Ch 14: Cleansing from Skin Disease 185
Ch 15: Rules about Unclean Discharges 188
Ch 16: The Day of Atonement 189
Ch 17: The Importance of Blood 191
Ch 18: Laws about Sexual Practices 192
Ch 19: Obey God's Laws 194
Ch 20: Punishment for Disobeying God's Laws .. 196
Ch 21: Rules for the Priests 197
Ch 22: Be Holy 198
Ch 23: The Festivals 199

Ch 24: Care of the Lamps..... 202
Ch 25: The Year of Solemn Rest 203
Ch 26: Blessings of Obedience and Curses of Disobedience 205
Ch 27: Laws about Gifts Offered to the Lord... 207

LEVITICUS

Key Word: *Holiness* (Leviticus 11:44)

Key Verse: "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy" (11:44)

Theme: Exodus ends with God's presence filling the tabernacle, now Leviticus tells how His people must worship Him. The major theme is that God is holy and His people must be holy to worship Him, have fellowship with Him, and obey Him. God's people are to be separate from the world, even though they live in the world. Therefore they must bring a blood sacrifice at the beginning of worship and constant cleansing is necessary for their continued walk with God (Israel's five essential sacrifices are in chapters 1-6).

Just as the Mosaic law made Israel distinct from other tribes and nations, (that is, holiness to the LORD), so the believer must be separate today from sin and separated to God. Lord, I will follow close to You and will keep myself separate from sin. Amen.

Leviticus 1

The Burnt Offering

1 The LORD called Moses from the tabernacle 2 and gave him these instructions to give to the Israelites. "Bring sacrifices to Me from your own flocks and herds. {412 Sacrificial Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 3 If you bring a burnt offering, bring a bull with no physical defects, and bring it to the tabernacle entrance so that it will be accepted by the Lord. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John1:3} 4 Lay your hand on its head, and I will accept it as a substitute payment for your sins." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4}

Lord, just as the worshiper identified his sin with the animal, so I confess I am a sinner and identify with Jesus Christ, the Lamb of God, who died for my sins so I could be forgiven and cleansed. Thank You for salvation. Lord, by faith I accept Christ's substitution for me; by faith I am justified by Christ's righteousness. Amen.

5 "The man bringing it will then kill it, and Aaron's sons will sprinkle its blood on each side of the altar. 6 Aaron's sons will then skin the animal and cut it into pieces, 7 and build

a fire on the altar. [8]They will then place the animal's head and fat on the fire, and [9]wash the internal organs and legs, and burn the entire animal. I will be well pleased with the offering." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Lord, the bull symbolizes Christ the Servant who was patient and enduring. I accept the burnt offering of Christ as my substitute for my sin. Amen.

[10]"If you offer a sheep or a goat, it must be a male and with no defects. [11]The man who brings it is to kill it on the north side of the altar, and Aaron's sons will sprinkle its blood on each side of the altar. [12]The man will cut it, and the priests will lay the pieces including the head and fat on the fire on the altar. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [13]The offerer is to wash the internal organs and legs, and the priests are to burn the entire animal. I will be pleased with the sacrifice." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Lord, the sheep signifies Christ the Innocent Lamb who became poor and obedient for my sake. Lord, may I learn from Christ's example that the pathway of poverty leads to Your riches. Amen.

[14]"If you bring a bird as a burnt offering, it may be a dove or a pigeon. [15]The priest will take it to the altar, wring its neck, and burn the head on the altar. [16]He will then drain its blood out on each side of the altar, and remove the crop and throw it on the ash pile on the east side of the altar. [17]The priest will then tear the bird almost completely apart by pulling on its wings, and then burn the bird on the altar. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} This too will be pleasing to Me." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Lord, the burnt offering typifies Christ offering Himself without blemish or spot—perfect—for me. The burnt offering seeks to worship You and praise You for Your blessings to the worshiper. The thought of penalty is not prominent, but it does atone for the sinner and gives Him a perfect standing before God. So Lord, I come to You, bringing the sacrifices of praise for all You've done for me. Amen.

Leviticus 2

The Meal Offering

[1]"A grain offering is to consist of fine flour, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} olive oil, and incense. [2]One of Aaron's sons will take a handful of this mixture and burn it on the altar, and I will be pleased with this offering." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, fine flour typified the evenness and balance of Christ, I worship Him from my heart. Lord, fire typified the testing of Christ, demonstrating that He was perfect in every way; I place myself on the altar to You, praying You will be pleased with my sacrifice and worship of You. Amen.

3"Give the rest of the offering to the priests, but all of it is a burnt offering to Me. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
4"If you bring baked food as a grain offering, it must consist of fine flour and olive oil but with no yeast. On it may be wafers without yeast and with olive oil spread on it. 5If you cook a grain offering on a grill, it too must be made of fine flour and olive oil but with no yeast. 6Break it into pieces and pour oil on it. 7If you cook a grain offering in a pan, it too must be made of fine flour mixed with olive oil.
8"Bring your grain offering to the priest who will take it to the bronze altar and present it to the LORD. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 9He is to burn part of it as an offering to Me, and I will be pleased. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 10Give the rest to the priests, though I will view all of it as a holy offering to Me." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Lord, the absence of leaven typified no sin in Christ, the oil typified Christ's perfection anointed with the Holy Spirit in life; the oven typified Christ's temptation and suffering; I accept all Christ did for me, I worship Christ for all He is. Amen.

11"Never include yeast or honey in any of your grain offerings. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 12You may include yeast or honey in the first offerings you bring at harvesttime, but never with burnt offerings. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 13Include salt in every grain offering, because salt will remind you of God's faithfulness." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

Lord, salt typified the enduring quality of Christ, that He will present me to the Father and keep me secure. I rejoice in this confidence. Lord, the absence of honey typified the greatness of salvation; I am serious in my worship to You. Amen.

14"If you offer a grain offering to the Lord from the first crops of your harvest, roast kernels in a fire, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 15and put olive oil and incense on it. 16Then the priests are to burn part of the grain with olive oil and all the incense as an offering to the Lord." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Leviticus 3

The Peace Offering

1"For a fellowship offering, offer a bull or a cow with no physical defects. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 2The man offering the animal must lay his hand on the animal's head and kill it at the tabernacle entrance. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} Then Aaron's sons are to sprinkle its blood on each side of the altar. 3-4All the fat on the animal's insides, the kidneys, and the liver is to be removed, 5and burned on the altar by Aaron's sons, and I will be pleased with the offering." {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1}

Lord, the fellowship offering (also known as the peace offering) typified the whole sacrifice of Christ; He made peace between me and God, satisfying the judgment of God against my sin. Then Christ gives me the indwelling peace of God in my heart as a result of salvation; thank You, Lord, for peace. Lord, the fellowship offering pleased You; be pleased with my worship of You. Amen.

6"If you offer a goat or sheep as a fellowship offering, it may be a male or female, but must have no physical defects. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} 7If you offer a sheep, present it to Me by 8placing your hand on its head and killing it at the tabernacle entrance. Then Aaron's sons are to sprinkle its blood on each side of the altar. 9Cut out the fat of the animal's tail, the fat around the internal organs, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 10two kidneys, and liver, and 11burn them on the altar as an offering to Me." {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

Lord, burning fat has a pleasant aroma; the fellowship offering was pleasing to You. Lord, I praise You for the inner peace; may my inner character be pleasing to You. Amen.

12"If you offer a goat, {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 13lay your hand on its head, and kill it at the tabernacle entrance. Then Aaron's sons are to sprinkle its blood on each side of the altar. 14-15The fat around the internal organs, the two kidneys, and the fat around them, and the liver and kidneys 16all this is to be burned on the altar to the Lord. I will be pleased with this offering because the fat belongs to Me. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

17"Never eat any fat or blood. This law is for you and all your descendants for generations to come." {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

Leviticus 4

The Sin Offering

1Then the LORD gave Moses additional instructions for Israel. 2"Tell the people what to do if they sin unintentionally by doing something I told them not to do. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 3If a priest sins, he makes everyone guilty. So he must offer a bull with no physical defects. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 4He must bring it to the tabernacle entrance, place his hand on the bull's head and kill it. 5He must then take the animal's blood into the tabernacle, 6and sprinkle the blood seven times in front of the curtain that separates the holy place from the most holy place. 7Then the priest is to put blood on the horns of the incense altar, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the bronze altar of burnt offering near the tabernacle entrance." {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Lord, Christ typifies the sin offering because His death covers any and all sins I committed ignorantly; You have said, "If I walk in

the light...the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses [me] from all sin" (1 John 1:7). Thank You for forgiving my ignorant sin even when I don't know that I should confess it; You are a merciful God and I worship you. Amen.

8"The priest must remove the fat around the internal organs, 9the two kidneys, and the liver, 10and burn them on the altar of burnt offering: just as is done with the bull or cow sacrificed as a fellowship offering. 11The bull's skin, flesh, legs, and internal organs must be taken outside the camp and 12burned." {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1}

Lord, the sin offering typified the work of Christ as my advocate who intercedes to You on behalf of my sin (1 John 2:1). Because Jesus is righteous (perfect), He is my propitiation (satisfaction) to forgive my sin; Lord, You are a merciful God, I worship You. Amen.

13"If the entire nation sins and doesn't realize it, everyone is guilty. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 14So the leaders are to bring a bull to the tabernacle entrance, 15place their hands on the bull's head and kill it in My presence. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 16Then the priest is to take some of the bull's head into the tabernacle, 17and then he is to sprinkle its blood seven times in front of the curtain that separates the holy place from the most holy place. 18Then he is to put blood on the four horns on the incense altar, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of the bronze altar of burnt offering near the tabernacle entrance. 19Then the priest is to remove all the fat and burn it on the altar. 20This is the same procedure as with the sin offering. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} In this way the animal is a substitute payment for sin. 21The priest will burn the bull outside the camp. This will pay for the sin of the nation. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

22"Suppose one of the leaders sins and doesn't realize it. He will be guilty. 23As soon as he realizes it, he is to take a male goat with no defects, 24place his hand on its head {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and kill it as a sin offering. 25Then the priest is to sprinkle blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of that altar. 26The priest is to burn all the fat on the altar, in this way paying for the leader's sin. And the leader will be forgiven. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

27"Or suppose an ordinary Israelite sins without realizing it. He will be guilty. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 28As soon as he realizes what he has done, he is to take a female goat with no defects. 29He is to place his hand on its head and kill it by the altar of burnt offering. 30Then the priest is to sprinkle the blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. 31The priest is to burn all the fat of the goat. This will please the Lord for the goat will be a substitute payment for sin. {247 Intention-Praying, Rom. 15:24, 25}

32"If the man prefers to offer a lamb instead of a goat, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer,

Heb. 13:15} it must be a female with no physical defects. 33Bringing it to the altar of burnt offering, he is to place his hand on its head and kill it. 34Then the priest is to sprinkle blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering, and pour out the rest of the blood at the base of that altar. 35As with a fellowship offering, the priest is to burn the animal fat on that altar as a substitute payment for sin, and the man's sin will be forgiven." {247 Intention-Praying, Rom. 15:24, 25}

Lord, these animal sacrifices had no intrinsic value in themselves; they prefigured the value in the sacrifice of Christ for me. Thank You, Christ, for suffering for me. Thank You, Father, for forgiving me all my sin. Amen.

Leviticus 5

Sin Requiring a Sin Offering

1"If you refuse to testify in court about something you know about, you are responsible. 2You are guilty if you accidentally touch a dead unclean animal or insect. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 3Or you are guilty if you accidentally touch human waste. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21}

4"If you make a promise and then realize that it was foolish, {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} you will be guilty."

Lord, this sacrifice deals with the consequences of sin; when a person is guilty of injuring another, they must bring a sacrifice that deals with injury. The person must first get forgiveness for his personal guilt, and second, he must deal with the injury he caused. Lord, thank You for forgiving me so I can come worship You. I will confess to those I harm and will make reconciliation. Amen.

5"When you become aware of having committed any of these sins, you must confess your sin {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 6and then bring to the LORD a female lamb or goat. This animal will be a substitute payment for your sin, and you will be forgiven. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 7If you can't afford a lamb, then bring two doves or pigeons, one as a sin offering {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and one as a burnt offering. 8The priest will offer one of them as a sin offering by wringing its neck 9and sprinkling some of the blood on the side of the bronze altar and draining out the rest of the blood at the base of the altar.

10"Then the priest will offer the other bird in the same way as a substitute payment for the man's sin. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

11"If the man can't afford the birds, then he must bring two quarts of fine flour. Because it is a sin offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} he must not mix any olive oil in it or put any incense on it. 12He must take it to the priest who will burn a handful of it on the altar. 13This will be a substitute payment for sin, and the man will be forgiven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} The priest is to get the rest of the flour as a grain offering."

[14]The LORD said to Moses, [15]"If anyone unintentionally sins against the LORD's holy objects, he will be guilty. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} He must bring a ram with no defect and one that is of the proper value. [16]He must pay for the loss plus 20 percent. Then the priest will accept these as substitute payments for sin as a guilt offering, and the man's sin will be forgiven." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, You require holiness in my inward life as well as holiness in my outward relations with others. Thank You for Christ who cleanses me inwardly, I will make restitution with all I offend outwardly. Amen.

[17]"If anyone breaks a command of the Lord without intending to, he will be guilty. When he realizes what he did, [18]he must bring to the priest a ram as a payment for sin. The animal must have no physical problems. The guilty person will then be forgiven [19]of this offense against the Lord."

Leviticus 6

Sin Requiring Sacrifices

[1]The Lord said to Moses, [2]"If anyone sins against Me by stealing something a neighbor entrusts to his care, or cheats him in some way, [3]or lies about something he found, [4]he must return the item, {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [5]plus a 20 percent fine. [6]He must then take to the priest a ram with no defects as a guilt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]and the priest will accept it as a substitute payment for sin, and the man's sin will be forgiven." {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24}

[8]The LORD said to Moses, [9]"Give Aaron and his sons these instructions about the burnt offering. Leave the fire on the altar overnight, and keep the fire burning. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} [10]Then in the morning the priest is to put on his special linen garments and underclothes and is to clean out the ashes and put them next to the altar. [11]Then he is to change to his everyday clothes and take the ashes outside the camp." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Lord, the priest typified Jesus' offering outside the camp; "Jesus...sanctified the people with his own blood, suffered outside the gate" (Heb. 13:12). Lord, thank You that Jesus not only became our sin but that He also suffered for me. "I will go forth unto Him without the camp where He bore my reproach" (Heb. 13:13, AMP). Amen.

[12]"He is to keep the fire on the altar burning, {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} putting wood on it each morning. He is to put the burnt offering on the altar and arrange on it the fat of the fellowship offerings. [13]The fire on the altar must be kept burning and never go out. {461 Stir Up Your Spiritual Gift-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:6}

[14]"These are instructions about the grain offering: Standing in front of the altar, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [15]the priest is to take a handful of flour mixed

with olive oil and incense and burn it on the altar. I will be pleased with the offering. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [16]The rest of the flour mixture will be food for Aaron and his sons, to be baked without yeast and eaten in the courtyard. [17]All of it is very holy, just like the sin offerings and guilt offerings. [18]Only Aaron's male descendants may eat of the grain offering; this is their share of the offering to the LORD. Whoever touches these offerings will be holy." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

[19]The LORD said to Moses, [20]"When Aaron and his sons are dedicated, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} they are to bring to the Lord a grain offering of two quarts of flour, mixed with olive oil, half in the morning and half in the evening. [21]They are to cook it on a grill, and then break it into pieces and offer it to Me {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} to please Me. [22]Each of Aaron's descendants is to offer this sacrifice as My share. [23]It is to be burned completely and none of it eaten."

[24]Then the LORD then said to Moses, [25]"These are instructions about the sin offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} The animal for this holy sacrifice is to be killed in My presence where burnt offerings are made. [26]The priest must eat it in the tabernacle courtyard. [27]Anyone who touches the meat will be holy. And if any of the animal's blood gets on the priest's clothing, he is to wash it off in a holy place. [28]If the meat is boiled in a clay pot, the pot must be broken, or if the meat is cooked in a bronze kettle, the kettle must be thoroughly cleaned. [29]Only males of the priest's family may eat of this offering, for it is holy. [30]However, none of the meat may be eaten if blood from the animal was taken into the tabernacle as a substitute payment for sin. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} In this case the animal must be burned."

Lord, thank You for practical insight into Your concerns because blood is a carrier of disease. You instructed Your priests to wash old blood away. You told them to break the porous clay pots where disease might hide, lest they eat out of that pot and expose themselves to viruses or diseases. Lord, I will separate myself from sinful practices to keep myself holy and healthy; {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} I will not drink alcoholic beverages lest I become addicted to them; I will keep myself sexually pure lest I expose myself to AIDS or sexual diseases; I dedicate anew my body to Your use. Fill me with the Spirit of God. Amen.

Leviticus 7

The Guilt Offering

[1]"These are instructions about the guilt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} which is very holy: [2]The guilt offering animal is to be killed where the burnt offerings are killed, and its blood is to be sprinkled on the altar. [3]All the animal's fat is to be offered, including the tail, the fat on the internal organs, [4]the two kidneys and their fat, and the liver. [5]The priest will burn them on the altar. {191 God-Pleasing

Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 6Only males of a priest's family may eat the animal meat, and in a holy place.

7"The same applies to the sin offering. The priest who performs this sacrifice may eat the animal's meat. 8The priest who offers a burnt offering may keep the skin of the animal. 9When a grain offering is given to Me, it belongs to the priest, regardless of how it was cooked. 10All grain offerings, whether with olive oil or not, are to be shared {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} by the priests." {344 Pastor-Prayer, 2 Cor. 1:11}

Lord, I'm glad You provided food for the priests who served You. I'll gladly tithe to my church knowing some of that money goes to those who serve You fulltime in ministry. Amen.

11"These are instructions about fellowship offerings: 12If you give an offering of thanks {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} include with it some wafers without yeast spread with olive oil, some bread made by flour and olive oil, 13and loaves of bread with yeast. 14After the loaves are presented to Me, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} give them to the priest who is to sprinkle the altar with blood from a sacrificed animal. 15The animal meat must not be left until morning. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

16"If someone brings an offering to fulfill a promise or give Me something, the meat may be eaten that day {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} and the next. 17But any meat left over on the third day must be burned. 18If any of it is eaten on the third day, it will not be accepted and the offerer will be guilty. I will despise it, and the offerer will be held accountable for his sin. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

19"If any meat comes in contact with something unclean, it may not be eaten; instead burn it. The other meat is to be eaten only by people who are ceremonially clean. 20If a priest is ceremonially unclean and he eats the fellowship offering, he must be cut off from the people. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 21If anyone touches something that is unclean and then eats meat from an offering, he must be cut off from the people." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

Lord, I will be clean inwardly and outwardly. I want to be holy in every area of life so You'll be glorified in all I do. Amen.

22The LORD said to Moses, 23"Tell the Israelites never to eat the fat of cattle, sheep, or goats. 24Don't eat the fat of an animal found dead or killed by a wild animal, though it may be used for other purposes. 25Don't eat fat from an offering given to the Lord, or you will be cut off from your people. 26Also never eat the blood of birds or animals. 27If you do, you will be cut off from your people."

28Then the LORD said to Moses, 29"Tell the Israelites that when they present a fellowship offering to Me, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 30they should bring it with their own hands. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} They

should wave the animal's fat and breast to Me. [31]Then the priest will burn the fat, and the breast will belong to Aaron and his sons. [32]The right thigh will be a gift to the priest [33]who will sprinkle the blood and offer the fat to the Lord. [34]The breast and right thigh are to be the priest's share of the fellowship offerings. [35]These are their share, portions to be set apart for Aaron and his sons [36]from the day I appointed them. This requirement is to be followed for all future generations." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

[37]These were the Lord's instructions for the burnt offering, grain offering, sin offering, guilt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} dedication offering, and fellowship offering. [38]The LORD gave these instructions to Moses on Mount Sinai, so he would tell the Israelites how they were to offer sacrifices to God in the Sinai Desert. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

There are five major offerings that the Levites brought to God. First, the burnt offering was a picture of Christ's perfect obedience whereby He offered Himself to God as a propitiation or satisfaction of our sins. Second was the meal offering in which bread and oil were perfectly blended before being offered to God. This is a picture of Christ's perfectly blended divine and human nature—the union in which He is completely God and completely man at the same time, perfectly blended into one personality. The meal offering presented Christ as the Bread of Life. The third offering was the fellowship or peace offering, which is a picture of worship or praise to God. The death of Christ was the basis of the believer's peace with God, and the indwelling presence of Christ becomes the basis of the believer's internal peace of God. The fourth was the sin offering, which shows Christ as the one who became sin for us (see Rom. 8:3), "For He made Him who knew no sin [to be] sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. 5:21). This offering was brought when a believer sinned against God. The fifth was the guilt offering which indicates Christ's atoning work for the sins of the believer after he is saved. Christ the Intercessor prays for the forgiveness of the believer's sin (see Heb. 7:24-25), and Christ the Mediator prays to keep the believer from sin (1 John 2:1-2). Lord You gave these commands to Moses to bring their offerings to You. I see Jesus in the various sacrifices that were offered to You in the tabernacle; thank You for all these prefigures of Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Amen.

Leviticus 8

Aaron and His Sons are Anointed

[1]The LORD said to Moses, [2]"Bring Aaron and his sons with their priestly garments, anointing oil, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} a bull for a sin offering, two rams, and bread baked without yeast, [3]and have all the Israelites gather at the tabernacle entrance." {106 Definition of Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [4]When all the people were gathered there, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Moses said, [5]"The Lord has told

me what I am about to do." {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8}
6Moses washed Aaron and his sons, 7and then put on Aaron the priestly tunic, robe, and sash. Then he put on him the vest with its embroidered belt. 8Next he put on him the chest piece and put the Urim and Thummim inside its pouch. 9Moses then placed on Aaron's head the turban with the strip of gold as the Lord had commanded. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}
10Then Moses sprinkled the anointing oil on the tabernacle and everything in it, to dedicate them to the Lord. 11He sprinkled the bronze altar of burnt offering seven times, and he sprinkled the altar utensils and also the tank and its base, to dedicate them to the Lord. 12He then poured anointing oil on Aaron's head {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} to dedicate him to the Lord. 13Then Moses put tunics and sashes on Aaron's sons as the Lord had commanded. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}
14Moses brought the bull for the sin offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and Aaron and his sons placed their hands on its head. 15Moses killed it and put some of its blood on the altar and its four horns, and then poured the rest of the blood at the base of the altar. This made the altar holy so that sacrifices could be made on it. 16He burned on the altar the fat around the internal organs, the liver, the two kidneys, and their fat. 17He burned the rest of the bull, with its hide and dung, outside the camp as God had commanded. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}
18Moses then brought the ram for the burnt offering. Aaron and his sons placed their hands on its head, 19and Moses killed it and sprinkled its blood on all sides of the altar. 20He cut the ram in pieces and burned them and the head and fat. 21He washed the ram's inside organs and legs and burned them on the altar too. This pleased the LORD, {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} and all this was done as the LORD had commanded. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
22Then Moses presented another ram, the one for the priests' dedication. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} Aaron and his sons placed their hands on its head, 23Moses killed it, and put some of its blood on Aaron's right ear, right hand, and right big toe. 24Moses then did the same with some blood on Aaron's sons. And he sprinkled the rest of the blood on the sides of the altar. 25Moses took the fat, the tail, the fat around the internal organs, two kidneys with their fat, and the right thigh. 26On top of these he placed a wafer without yeast, a thin wafer with olive oil, and some bread. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 27He gave all of these to Aaron and his sons who waved them as an offering to the LORD. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 28Moses then burned all these on the altar as part of the burnt offering, {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} and the Lord was pleased. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, I know that worship is pleasing to You. May You be pleased as I offer my life as a sacrifice of sweet incense to You. Amen.

29Moses then waved the breast to the LORD, as part of the dedication ram, as the LORD had commanded. {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7}
30Moses sprinkled anointing oil and blood from the altar on Aaron and his sons and their clothes to dedicate them to the Lord. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 31Moses told Aaron and his sons, "Boil the meat at the tabernacle entrance and eat it there with the dedication bread you cooked. 32Burn any leftover meat. 33Stay at the tabernacle entrance for a week, the time of your dedication. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 34This command from the LORD is payment for your sins. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 35Don't forget to stay at the tabernacle entrance for a week. If you don't, you will die." {251 Interchange with God, Gen. 18:23-33} 36So Aaron and his sons did all that the LORD told Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, just as Your servants were anointed with oil for tabernacle service, I ask today your anointing of the Holy Spirit on me so I can serve You in wisdom and power. If I'm not filled and anointed with the Holy Spirit, then I can't serve You effectively. So fill and anoint me today. Amen.

Leviticus 9

Aaron Offers Sacrifices

1After the week-long dedication, Moses got Aaron and his sons and Israel's leaders together. 2He told Aaron, "Take a bull for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering, and offer them to the Lord. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
3"Tell the Israelites to offer a male goat as a sin offering and a calf and year-old lamb as a burnt offering to the Lord. 4Also have them bring a fellowship offering of a bull and a ram and also a grain offering mixed with olive oil. The LORD will appear to you today." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
5The people brought these things and stood at the tabernacle entrance before the LORD. 6Moses said, "After you have done these things, the Lord will appear to you in His glory." {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30}

Lord, I know it's important for me to gather with other believers to worship and serve You. I will attend church every Sunday to worship You, and serve You with other believers. Amen.

7Moses said to Aaron, "Offer the sin offering and the burnt offering {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} to be substitute payments for you and the people." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 8So Aaron killed the calf as a sacrifice for his sins. 9His sons took the calf's blood to him, and he put some blood on the four

horns of the altar and poured out the rest of it at the base of the altar. [10]He burned the bull's fat, kidneys, and liver, as the Lord had said to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [11]Then Aaron burned the meat and skin outside the camp.

[12]Then Aaron killed the animal for the burnt offering. His sons brought him the blood, and he sprinkled it on four sides of the altar. [13]As they brought him the pieces of the animal, including the head, he burned them on the altar. [14]He washed the insides and the legs and offered them up as a burnt offering.

[15]Next Aaron sacrificed the goat for the people {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} just as he had offered the calf as a sin offering for himself. [16]Then he brought the ram as a burnt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} as God had said to do. [17]Then he brought the grain offering, burning a handful of it on the altar in addition to the morning burnt offering.

[18]Then Aaron killed the bull and ram as the fellowship offering from the people. Aaron's son took the blood to him, and he sprinkled it on all four sides of the altar. [19]Then he took the fat from the animals' tails, internal organs, kidneys, and liver, [20]and placed them on the animals' breasts and burned them. [21]Aaron then waved the breasts and right thighs {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} to the LORD, as Moses had said to do.

[22]Aaron spread out his hands toward the people and blessed them. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} Then having made the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the fellowship offering, he stepped down from the altar. [23]He and Moses went into the tabernacle. When they came out, they blessed the people, {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} and the LORD appeared in His glory. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [24]Fire from the LORD burned up the burnt offering and the fats on the altar. The people saw this, shouted, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} and fell to the ground in worship. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16}

Lord, it's important that You accept the offering of my life that I sacrifice to You; let the fire of Your presence fall in my life and burn up all sin and chaff within me; may my life be reverent and focused on You; may my life be a gift offering to You. Amen.

Leviticus 10

Nadab and Abihu Were Killed

[1]Aaron's sons Nadab and Abihu disobeyed God by burning incense in their fire pans. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [2]So God sent fire on them and it burned them to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]Moses told Aaron, "This is why the Lord said, 'I will show Myself holy to anyone who approaches Me, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and I will be glorified before everyone.'" But Aaron said nothing. [4]Then Moses told two of his cousins, "Take the bodies of those relatives of yours outside the camp away from the tabernacle entrance." [5]So they carried them

out by their tunics. [6]Moses told Aaron and his two sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Don't mourn by letting your hair hang loose or by tearing your clothes. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} If you do, you will die, and God will be angry with all the people. But others may mourn Nadab and Abihu. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [7]But you as God's anointed ones {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} are to stay here in the tabernacle, or you will die." So Aaron and his sons did as Moses said.

Lord, teach me to fear You. May I never take Your Word and commands lightly. Lord, I worship You as a burning fire that consumes all sin; I will separate myself from everything I know is sin. I want to be holy, acceptable by You. Amen.

[8]The LORD told Aaron, [9]"You are not to drink wine or any other alcoholic drink before going into the tabernacle. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} If you do, you will die. This rule is for every generation. [10]Know the difference between what is holy and isn't, and what is clean and unclean. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [11]Teach the people all the commands I gave them through Moses."

[12]Moses told Aaron and his sons Eleazar and Ithamar, "Take the leftover grain offering, be sure it has no yeast, and eat it, for it is a holy offering. [13]Eat it in the holy place; it is your share {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} of the people's offerings. [14]The breast and thigh that were waved to the Lord may be eaten anywhere so long as it is a ceremonial place. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} They are for your family as their share of the fellowship offerings. [15]The breast and thigh are to be waved to the Lord with the fat portions of offerings. [16]When Moses asked what happened to the goat of the sin offering, he learned that it had been burned. This made Moses very angry, and he said to Eleazar and Ithamar, [17]"Why didn't you eat the sin offering in the courtyard? This holy offering was to be a substitute payment for the people's sins. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [18]Since you didn't take the blood into the holy place, you were to eat its meat in the courtyard, but you burned it instead."

[19]Aaron said to Moses, "Yes, my sons offered both the sin offering and the burnt offering today to the Lord." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [20]Moses was satisfied with his response.

Lord, thank You for overlooking unintentional sin while judging premeditated sin; forgive me all my unintentional sins. I promise You I will not plan to sin or disobey You. Amen.

Leviticus 11

Clean and Unclean Foods

[1]The Lord told Moses and Aaron to tell the Israelites, [2]"You may eat the meat of any animal [3]that has divided hoofs and chews the cud. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [4-6]But if an animal chews the cud

but doesn't have divided hoofs, you are not to eat them. They include camels, rock badgers, and rabbits. 7The pig has divided hoofs but it doesn't chew the cud, and so you are not to eat it. 8Don't even touch the dead bodies of these animals." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

Lord, You are concerned with my inner physical health, as well as my outward spiritual testimony. May I please You with the things I eat. Make me physically strong and free from sickness. May my inner private life influence the outer, so I can be a testimony to others. Amen.

9"You may eat anything that lives in water, whether fresh water or salt water, and has fins and scales. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} 10You are to detest the idea of eating any other thing that lives in water. 11You are not even to touch their dead bodies. 12To repeat, don't eat any marine animal that does not have fins and scales. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

13"These are the birds you are never to eat: eagles, vultures, buzzards, 14kites, 15falcons, ravens, 16ostriches, owls, sea gulls, hawks, 17little owls, water birds, great owls, 18desert owls, ospreys, pelicans, 19storks, herons, and bats. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

20"Do not eat flying insects that have four legs, {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} 21except for those that jump with their hind legs, including 22locusts, crickets, and grasshoppers. 23Any others that fly and crawl are not to be eaten.

24"If you touch the dead bodies of these off-limits insects, you will be ceremonially unclean all day. 25If you touch the dead bodies of any of these animals, you must wash your clothes. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 26You will also be unclean if you touch the dead body of any animal that has divided hoofs but doesn't chew the cud. 27You will also be unclean all day if you touch the carcass of a four-legged animal that has paws. 28If you touch the carcass, you must wash your clothes and you will be unclean all day. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

29"Mules, rats, lizards, 30geckos, mice, snails, chameleons 31are unclean. If you touch the dead body of one of these, you will be unclean all day. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 32Suppose one of them dies and its dead body falls on something made of wood, cloth, leather, or sackcloth. That object must be washed and yet will remain ceremonially unclean all day.

33"If one of these dead animals falls into a clay pot, the pot must be smashed, and anything in the pot will be unclean. 34If water that is used to clean an unclean object touches food, the food will be unclean.

35"If the dead body of an animal touches any object, that object will be unclean. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} 36If a dead body falls into a spring or well, the water will not be unclean, but anyone who removes the carcass will be. 37If a carcass falls on seeds to be planted, the seeds are still clean. 38But if the seeds are wet when the carcass falls on it, the

seeds are ceremonially unclean. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}
39"If an animal that may be eaten dies and you touch it, you will be unclean all day. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}
40If you eat any of its meat or carry the carcass away, you must wash your clothes; you will be unclean all day. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}
41"Don't eat any animals that crawl, 42including reptiles or creatures with many legs. 43Don't touch or eat any of them. 44Because I the LORD your God, am holy, you are to be holy. So don't make yourselves unclean by touching or eating crawling creatures. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} 45I brought you out of Egypt. You are to be holy because I am holy." {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}

Lord, thank You for Your concern for my health. I again dedicate my body to Your service. Help me make right choices about the food I eat; and after that, protect me from unknown food dangers. Lord, I want to be healthy to Your glory; help me discipline my physical life to that end. Amen.

46"These are My instructions about which animals, birds, fish, and crawling things 47you may and may not eat, which ones I consider clean and unclean." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}

Why Dietary Laws?

God listed many animals that the people of Israel couldn't eat. There was one common denominator with them all; they couldn't eat predator or scavenger animals. This included certain types of animals in their livestock, fish and seafood, rodents, birds, and insects. With the sin by Adam and Eve, death came and with it decay, germs, disease, and bacteria. Every dead body produces an enormous amount of potential disease and was life-threatening in some cases. A scavenger animal spreads diseases. As an example, many insects feed off garbage, feces, and food that is spoiled, rotten, or contaminated. God didn't want His people ingesting animals that possibly had disease in their bodies. The clean animals were vegetarians. Those that eat the leaves of trees, grass, or bushes do not normally have bacteria in their system as do scavenger creatures. The issue was much more than eating an unclean creature or eating things that seem repulsive, poisonous, or obnoxious. God wanted His people to be holy in their bodies or total lifestyle. He didn't want His people associated with creatures that were dirty, or creatures that depended on garbage or rotting things for its livelihood. The issue was holiness of mind and body as well as health and physical wholeness. The dietary laws protected God's people from sickness and disease. When God promised, "You won't get any of the diseases I sent on the Egyptians" (Exod. 15:26), their health involved obedience to all of God's dietary instructions about removing garbage and anything that would defile them physically or spiritually. When God did away with the dietary laws (Acts 10:9-16; Col. 2:14-17), He allowed humans to eat those creatures previously called "unclean." Usually, cooking the creatures over 220° will

kill any bacteria and make the food safe to eat today. Lord, I thank You for the provision of food. Use good food to strengthen my body and make me healthy. I will eat good food and refrain from food that is harmful to my health. Amen.

Leviticus 12

Cleansing after Childbirth

[1]The LORD told Moses, [2]"Give these instructions to the Israelites. After a woman gives birth to a son, she will be ceremonially unclean for a week; just as she is during her monthly period. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} [3]On the eighth day the boy must be circumcised. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [4]For another 33 days she will be unclean because of loss of blood. So during that time she must not touch any object dedicated to Me and must not enter the tabernacle. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [5]After a woman gives birth to a daughter, she will be unclean for two weeks, as in her period. Then she will be unclean for another 66 days. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22}

[6]"When these days are completed for either a son or daughter, the mother must take to the priest at the tabernacle entrance a year-old lamb as a burnt offering and a dove or a pigeon as a sin offering. [7]The priest will offer them to the Lord on her behalf, and the mother will be completely clean again from her loss of blood at childbirth. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} [8]If she can't afford a lamb, she must take to the priest two doves or two pigeons, one as a burnt offering and one as a sin offering." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Luke's birth story of Jesus of Nazareth includes the special ceremonies given in Leviticus 12. Prophetically God was revealing that the baby Jesus was human and that He would live and grow by human laws. Lord, You give salvation to all who call on You. Thank You for saving my soul. Thank you that Jesus became a human so He could die for my sins. Amen.

Leviticus 13

The Rules about Skin Diseases

[1]The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, [2]"If anyone breaks out with sores, boils, or a rash, and the hair in the area has turned white, Aaron or one of his sons must examine the skin. [3]If the priest sees that the area is white and the sore is more than skin deep, the priest is to state that the man is a leper and is ceremonially unclean. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31}

[4]"But if the spot is not white and is only skin deep and the hair has not turned white, the priest is to have him quarantined for a week. [5]Then if the spot has not spread, the priest is to quarantine him for another week. [6]If the spot still has not spread, the priest will say he is clean and the man will only need to wash his clothes. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [7]But

if the spot spreads, the man must see the priest again. [8]And if the priest sees that the spot has spread, he is to say the man is a leper and is ceremonially unclean." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Lord, there is so much disease in this sinful world. Protect me as I protect myself. May my body be a clean temple where You live and You are glorified. Amen.

[9]"Anyone with a skin disease must be brought to the priest. [10]If the priest sees the spot is white and swollen with hair in the spot, [11]he will state that the man is a leper and is ceremonially unclean and need not be quarantined. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [12]If the skin is white with scars and no sores or rash, [13]the priest is to say that the man is clean. {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} [14]But if open sores appear, [15]the priest is to say the man is a leper and is ceremonially unclean. [16-17]But if the sores heal and turn white, the man is to go again to the priest. He will examine the man and if the skin is completely white, the priest is to say that the man is now clean. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}

[18]"If someone has a sore on his skin that healed [19]but then swelled and turned reddish-white, he must see the priest. [20]If the priest sees that the sore is more than skin deep and the hairs in the sore have turned white, he is to say the man is unclean. [21]But if the spot has no white hairs and the spot is not skin deep, the priest is to quarantine him for a week. [22]If the infection spreads during that week, the priest is to say he is unclean because the disease is contagious. [23]But if the spot hasn't spread, it is a scar from the sore, and the priest is to say he is clean. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}

[24]"If someone is burned and a spot on the skin turns reddish white or white, [25]the priest must examine it. If the hairs in the spot are white and the spot is more than skin deep, the priest is to say he is unclean because the infection is contagious. {301 Medical Answer-Prayer, James 5:15} [26]If no white hairs are in the spot and it is not skin deep and the color is fading, then he is to be quarantined for a week. [27]If after seven days the burned area is spreading, the priest is to say he is unclean because the disease is contagious. [28]However, if the area is unchanged and has not spread and is fading in color, and is clear from the burn, the priest is to say he is clean. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

[29]"If someone has an open sore on his head or chin, {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} [30]the priest is to examine it. If it seems more than skin deep and the hairs in the sore are yellow, the priest is to say he is unclean because the sore is contagious. [31]But if the sore does not seem to be more than skin deep and there are no black hairs in it, then he is to be quarantined for a week. [32]Then if the spot is only skin deep and the hairs are not yellow, [33]he is to shave except for the diseased area, and he is to be quarantined for another week. [34]If after that week the spot has not spread and does not seem to be skin deep, the priest is to say he is clean, and the man must wash his clothes. [35]But if later the problem spreads,

[36]the priest need not look for yellow hairs, for the person is unclean. [37]But if the sore seems unchanged and the hairs in it are now black, the man is clean.
[38]"If a person has white spots on his skin, [39]and the spots are dull white, this is not leprosy; it is a rash, and that person is clean. {301 Medical Answer-Prayer, James 5:15}
[40]If a man becomes bald, that doesn't mean he is a leper. [41]If he simply has a bald forehead, he is clean. [42]But if a reddish-white sore appears on his head or forehead, that means he has an infectious disease. [43]If the priest sees that the sore is swollen and is reddish-white, [44]then he is a leper and the priest is to say he is unclean. {301 Medical Answer-Prayer, James 5:15} [45]The person must wear torn clothes, not comb his hair, cover the lower part of his face, and say, 'I am unclean.' [46]While he has the infection, {301 Medical Answer-Prayer, James 5:15} he must live alone and outside the camp. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
[47-49]"If a green or red spot appears on clothing made of linen or woven or knitted material or leather, it must be shown to the priest. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [50]After examining it, the priest is to set it aside for a week. [51]Then if the green or red spot has spread, the article is unclean, [52]and the priest must burn it. [53]But if the priest finds that the spot has not spread, [54]he is to have the item of clothing or leather washed and isolated for a week. [55]Then he is to examine it again and even though it hasn't spread, he is to say it is unclean and is to have it burned {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} whether it was affected on the inside or outside. [56]But if the spot faded after the item was washed, the priest is to tear out that spot. [57]If the spot appears again somewhere on the item, it must be burned. [58]But if the item is okay after being washed, it should be washed one more time, and it will be ceremonially clean.
[59]"These are the instructions for determining if clothing with an unusual spot on it is clean or unclean." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

Lord, thank You for preventive measures to keep me from disease and sickness. I praise You for Your concern for my health. May I do all I can to stay healthy. Lord, I renew the dedication of my body to You. Live in me and be glorified in me. Amen.

Leviticus 14

Cleansing from Skin Disease

[1]The LORD gave Moses [2]these instructions for a person who thinks he is healed of leprosy. "He is to go to the priest [3]who is to examine him outside the camp. [4]If the priest considers him healed, he is to take two birds, cedar wood, red yarn, and a hyssop branch. [5]He is to have someone kill one of the birds over fresh water in a clay pot. [6]Then he is to dip the other bird, the cedar, the red yarn, and the hyssop in the blood of the first bird. [7]Then the priest is to sprinkle the blood of the dead bird seven times on the person who had the disease and to say, 'You are clean.' Then the priest

will let the live bird fly into the open field. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}
8"The man who is cured must then wash his clothes, shave himself, and bathe. He may then live in the camp, but he must stay outside his tent for a week. 9On the seventh day he must again shave, wash his clothes, and bathe. He will then be ceremonially clean. 10The next day he must take to the priest two rams and a year-old female lamb, all with no defects, along with five quarts of flour mixed with olive oil, and half a pint of olive oil. 11The priest is to present to the Lord the man and his offerings at the tabernacle entrance." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, medical technicians have demonstrated with good reason laws of cleanliness and uncleanliness given by You; these were not superstitious taboos. You wanted the Israelites to be in the best health possible in their physical bodies with a strong intellect, emotion, and will. That meant they had to exercise self-discipline in their diets. So help me do the same to keep healthy. You told them what they could eat and not eat to prevent disease and infection; I will obey healthy dietary rules to glorify You. Amen.

12"The priest is to take one of the rams and the oil and wave them to the LORD as a guilt offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 13He is then to kill the lamb in the place where animals for sin offerings and burnt offerings are killed. This guilt offering is to be given to the priest for food. This is a very holy offering. 14The priest is to put some blood from the guilt offering on the man's right ear, his right thumb, and right big toe.
15"The priest is then to pour some of the olive oil in his left hand, 16dip his right finger into the oil, and sprinkle it seven times to the LORD. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} 17The priest is then to put some of the oil on the man's right ear, right thumb, and right big toe. 18He is then to pour the rest of the oil on the man's head as a substitute payment for his sins." {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, I know the blood must be applied first to my life, to cleanse me from sin. Then the oil of the Holy Spirit must anoint me for refreshing, spiritual illumination, power, and assurance. I ask for the Holy Spirit to fill me now. Amen.

19"The priest is then to offer the sin offering and the burnt offering 20on the altar with a grain offering. All of these are to be substitute payments for sin. Then the person will be ceremonially clean. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
21"If the person being cleansed can't afford two lambs, then he is to bring a ram as a guilt offering to wave before the Lord as a substitute payment for sin, along with a half pint of olive oil and five quarts of flour mixed with olive oil for a grain offering. 22He is also to offer two doves or two pigeons, one for a sin offering and the other for a burnt offering. 23He is to take them to the priest at the tabernacle entrance on the

eighth day. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [24]The priest is to take the lamb for the guilt offering and wave it and the olive oil to the LORD."

Lord, the cleansed leper brought offerings to You because he was healed of his leprosy. Next he brought the normal sacrifice to You because he wanted to thank You and worship You. Lord, in the same way I first pray for forgiveness of sin, then I thank You for cleansing of sin. Next I come to You to worship You for Your guidance and for Your providential leading in my life. Amen.

[25]"Then the priest is to kill the other lamb and put some of its blood on the person's right ear, right thumb, and right big toe.
[26]"The priest is to pour some of the olive oil in his left hand, [27]dip his right finger into the oil, and sprinkle it seven times to the LORD. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [28]He is then to put some of the oil on the person's right ear, right thumb, and right big toe, the same places where he is to put the blood of the guilt offering. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [29]He is to pour the rest of the oil on the person's head as a substitute payment for sin.
[30]"Then the priest is to offer the two doves or two pigeons, along with the grain offering. [31]One bird is for a sin offering and the other is for a burnt offering. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [32]These are what the person must do if he has leprosy and can't afford the offering normally required." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}
[33]The LORD told Moses and Aaron to tell the people, [34]"When you are in Canaan, some of your houses may have mildew. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} [35]The owner of the house is to tell the priest, 'I may have mildew in my house.' [36]The priest is to have the house emptied, and then he is to inspect it. [37]If he finds green or red spots on the walls and they seem to be behind the wall's surface, [38]he is to lock up the house for a week. [39]Then he is to go see if the mildew has spread. [40]If it has, the stones are to be removed and dumped in an area outside of town. [41]Then all the walls must be scraped, [42]and other stones brought in, and the walls plastered again. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
[43]"But suppose the mildew reappears. [44]Then the priest is to inspect it again. If the mildew has spread, the house is unclean, [45]and it must be torn down {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} and the stones, wood, and plaster must be carried out of town to an unclean place. [46]If anyone goes into the house when it is closed up, he will be ceremonially unclean the rest of the day. [47]And if anyone eats or sleeps there, he is to wash his clothes.
[48]"However, if the priest inspects the house and finds that mildew has not reappeared after the walls were replastered, the house is ceremonially clean. [49]To complete the cleansing process [50]the priest is to kill a bird over a water-filled pot, [51]and dip a piece of cedar wood, red thread, and a hyssop branch into the bird's blood. The priest is also to dip a live bird into the blood of the killed bird and then sprinkle the blood on the house seven times. {16

Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [52]After purifying the house, [53]the priest is to let the live bird fly away into open fields.
[54]"These are the instructions to follow for dealing with contagious skin diseases or mildew [55]in one's clothing or house, [56]or a sore or a swollen area of his skin. [57]These instructions will help you know if something is ceremonially clean or unclean." {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, you speak to us through symbols, such as the live bird that is released and given its freedom. Thank You for Your freedom given to me after You have forgiven my sins and made me clean. Lord, You also had the health of your people in mind, because they had not recognized the airborne diseases caused by mildew in their houses. Thank You for protecting my health, when I didn't even understand what You were doing. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} Amen.

Leviticus 15

Rules about Unclean Discharges

[1]The Lord gave Moses and Aaron [2]these instructions to give to the Israelites: "If a man has a genital discharge, he is unclean, [3]whether it continues flowing or is blocked. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [4]Any bed he lies on or chair he sits on will be unclean. [5-7]And if anyone touches his bed, his chair, or even the man himself, he is to wash his clothes and bathe. He will be ceremonially unclean all day. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [8]If you are spit on by the man, you are to wash your clothes, bathe, and be ceremonially unclean all day. [9-10]Any saddle or seat the man sits on will be unclean that day. And even if you pick up those items, you are to wash your clothes, bathe, and be unclean all day. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [11]If he touches you before first washing his hands, you are to wash your clothes, bathe, and be unclean all day. [12]If he touches a clay pot, it is to be broken, and any wooden utensil he touches is to be washed." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, You are deeply concerned when Your people are guilty of sexual sins. Therefore, You tell us to be sexually pure. Lord, I will be sexually holy to please You. Amen.

[13]"During the week after the discharge stops, he is to wash his clothes and bathe and he will be ceremonially clean. [14]Then on the eight day he is to give the priest two doves or two pigeons for the Lord at the tabernacle entrance. [15]The priest is to offer one of the birds for a sin offering and one as a burnt offering as substitute payments for sin. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
[16]"If a man emits some semen, he is to bathe and he will be ceremonially unclean all day. [17]If the semen gets on any clothing or leather, that item is to be washed, and it will be unclean all day. [18]After intercourse, the husband and wife are to bathe, and they will be unclean all day."

Lord, You said sex is not dirty, but is holy between a husband and wife (Heb. 13:4). I will keep Your commands and bring glory to You in all things. Amen.

19"During a woman's monthly period, she will be unclean for a week, and anyone who touches her will be unclean all day. 20Anything she lies on or sits on will be unclean. 21-22If anyone touches her bed or anything she sits on, 23whether her bedding or any piece of furniture, he is to wash his clothes and bathe, and he will be unclean all day. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 24If a man has intercourse with a woman in her monthly period, he will be unclean for a week, and any bed he lies on will be unclean.

25"If a woman's menstrual flow lasts longer than normal or if she has some other ongoing discharge of blood, she will be ceremonially unclean during the flow. 26Any bed she rests on or chair she sits in will be unclean. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 27And if anyone touches them, he is to wash his clothes and bathe, and he will be unclean all day.

28"A week after the woman's monthly discharge stops, she will be ceremonially clean. 29Then on the eighth day she is to give the priest two doves or two pigeons at the tabernacle entrance. 30The priest is to offer one of the birds as a sin offering and one as a burnt offering {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} to the LORD as substitute payments for sin. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

31"In this way you will keep the Israelites separate from things that would make then unclean, {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} and thus avoid death by making the tabernacle unclean. 32These are the regulations for men with a genital discharge or emission of semen, 33for women in their monthly period or a discharge, or for a man who sleeps with a woman during her period." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, the Old Testament laws are done away in Christ, but I will continue to obey the principles so I can be healthy and disciplined in body. May I please You in all my physical habits. May I worship You in a strong, healthy body. Amen.

Leviticus 16

The Day of Atonement

1After Aaron's two sons Nadab and Abihu died, 2the LORD said to Moses, "Tell Aaron not to go whenever he wants into the most holy place where I appear in a cloud over the lid on the sacred chest. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} If he does, he will die. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}

3"Before entering the most holy place, Aaron is to offer a bull as a sin offering and a ram as a burnt offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 4Then he is to take a bath and put on the special priestly garments, including the tunic, linen

undergarments, linen sash, and linen turban." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Lord, clothe me with the garments of righteousness so I can come properly into Your presence. Amen.

5"The people are to bring him two male goats for a sin offering and a ram for a burnt offering.
6"The ram is for a sin offering for Aaron and his family. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 7Then he is to present the two male goats to the LORD at the tabernacle entrance. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 8He is to cast lots to see which goat is to be offered to the LORD and which one is to be the 'scapegoat,' that is, to be sent away. 9One goat is to be offered to the LORD as a substitute payment for sin, 10and the 'scapegoat' is to be sent into the desert. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} It too is to be a substitute payment for sin.
11"Aaron is to offer the ram for himself {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and his family as a substitute payment for sin. 12Then he is to take a fire pan with coals from the altar of burnt offering, with incense in each hand, and go behind the curtain that separates the holy place from the most holy place. 13He is to put the incense on the coals {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} so that the smoke will cover the chest and so he won't die. 14He is then to sprinkle some of the animal's blood in front of the lid and then seven times on the lid itself. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
15"Aaron is then to kill the goat as a sin offering and to sprinkle some of its blood as he did with the ram's blood. 16This will remove the sins that make the most holy place and the people unclean. {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} Aaron is to do the same for the entire tabernacle. 17When Aaron is in the most holy place, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} no one is to be in the tabernacle.
18"Then Aaron is to sprinkle some of the ram's blood {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and some of the goat's blood on the horns of the altar of burnt offering. 19By sprinkling it seven times, he will cleanse it from Israel's sin and rededicate it to Me."

Lord, when many deny the efficacy of the blood of Jesus Christ, I believe in the blood and apply it to my life. There's an old hymn that says, "There's power in the blood." I reaffirm the effectiveness of that power and claim it for my life. Amen.

20"Then Aaron is to take the live goat, 21place his hands on its head, {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} confess the people's sins, {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} and send it away into the desert led by someone chosen for that task. 22By being released, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} the goat will carry Israel's sins far away.
23"Going back into the tabernacle, Aaron is to remove his priestly garments and leave

them there, [24]to bathe {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and put on his everyday clothes. Then he is to offer the burnt offering {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} for himself and the burnt offering for the people, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [25]burning the fat of the sin offering on the altar.

[26]"The man who sent the goat into the desert is to wash his clothes and take a bath before he returns to the camp. [27]The ram and goat given as sin offerings {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} are to be taken outside the camp and burned. [28]The man who burns them is to wash his clothes and take a bath {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} before he returns to the camp."

Lord, the scapegoat tells me you have separated my sins, as far as the east is from the west. You have forgiven me of my sins and will remember them no more. Amen.

[29]"Every year on the tenth day of the seventh month (September) you are to fast and not work. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} This includes foreigners living with you. [30]On this day a substitute payment for your sins {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} will be made in the LORD's presence. [31]This is to be a day of complete rest just like the Sabbath; something you are to do to every year. [32]In the future generations the sacrifice will be made by a priest serving in Aaron's place and wearing the priestly garments. [33]The sacrifice will be for the most holy place, the tabernacle, {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} the altar of burnt offering,{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} the priests, and all Israel. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [34]"This is to be done every year as a substitute payment for the people's sins." Moses did as the LORD commanded. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, every Israelite had to fast on the Day of Atonement to identify with cleansing for his/her sins. When the high priest atoned for the sins of all Israel, it did not apply to a faithless Israelite. A person demonstrated his/her faith by fasting. Lord, I fast to identify with Jesus who fasted 40 days, but I also identify with His atoning death. Finally, I fast not to get something from You. I fast to know Your heart and have You know mine. Amen.

Leviticus 17

The Importance of Blood

[1]The LORD told Moses [2]to tell Aaron, his sons, and all the Israelites these commands: [3]"If anyone offers a cow, lamb, or goat anywhere except at the tabernacle entrance, [4]he will be as guilty as if he shed someone's blood and he will no longer be part of the nation. [5]The offerings are not to be made in open fields; they are to be brought to the LORD at the tabernacle entrance {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and sacrificed as fellowship offerings." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, just as it was important for an Israelite to sacrifice to You in the tabernacle, so I know it's imperative for me to meet with other believers in a local church every Sunday. Lord, I will meet each Lord's Day to worship You and fellowship with a congregation of believers. Amen.

6"The priest is to sprinkle blood on the altar of burnt offering and to burn the fat, and I will be pleased with the offering. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 7Never offer any sacrifices to demons in the fields." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, the blood was applied to my sin when I accepted Christ as Savior. "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). I praise You for the cleansing blood of Christ, and I promise to walk in the light. Amen.

8"Don't forget: Any Israelite or foreign resident who offers a sacrifice anywhere {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 9except at the tabernacle entrance {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} will no longer be part of the nation.

10"Also I will be against any Israelite or foreigner who eats or drinks blood from a sacrifice, and he will no longer be part of the nation. 11Life of any animal is in the blood, and I have given you the blood {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} as a substitute payment for sins. 12That is why you are not to eat or drink an animal's blood. 13If you kill an animal or bird while hunting, drain out the blood and cover the blood. 14The life of every living creature is in the blood, and that is why you are never to eat or drink it. So anyone who does will no longer be part of the nation. 15If you eat an animal that died naturally or was killed by a wild animal, {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} you are to wash your clothes and take a bath, and you will be unclean all day. 16But if you don't wash your clothes and bathe, you will suffer the consequences." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

The Lord is omniscient. He knew all about germs and infections long before scientific discovery told us disease is transferred by blood and resides in fat. So God told us not to drink the blood or eat the fat. God didn't want any type of potential health threat to be ingested by His people. Lord, I will eat healthy foods so I can glorify You in my body. Amen.

Leviticus 18

Laws about Sexual Practices

1The LORD told Moses 2to tell the Israelites these words: "I am the LORD your God, 3so don't live like the people of Egypt where you used to live or like the people of Canaan {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} where I am taking you. 4You must obey me because I am the LORD your God 5and by obeying My laws you will live." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I yield my body to Your use. May my life bring glory to You. Lord, I will be sexually pure; I will be a good testimony for You. Amen.

6"Don't have sex with a close relative, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 7including your mother, 8any of your father's wives, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 9your sister or stepsister, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 10your granddaughter, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 11half-sister, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 12aunt (whether sister of your father or 13sister of your mother, or 14wife of your father's brother), {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 15daughter-in-law, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 16or sister-in-law. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}

17"Don't have sex with both a woman and her daughter; this is a terrible sin. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 18Don't marry two sisters; they will be in conflict all the time. If your wife dies, then it is okay to marry her sister. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 19Don't have sex with a woman during her monthly period. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 20Don't have sex with another man's wife; that would make you ceremonially unclean. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 21Don't sacrifice your children by burning them on an altar to the false god Molech, because I am your true God, the LORD. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 22Don't practice homosexuality; it is a deplorable sin." {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}

Lord, sex is a growing modern-day sin. I will be separate from this sin. I pray for homosexuals and lesbians that they may use Your standard for purity, and obey You in sexual purity. I pray for the salvation of all homosexuals and lesbians and their growth in Christ. Amen.

23"Don't have sex with an animal. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}

24"People in other nations do these disgusting things, but I am going to force them out of the land. 25The entire country where you are going is so guilty of these sins that I am going to vomit them up." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I pray for the growing sin of sexual relations in my nation; send a growing spirit of conviction against all sexual sins. Lord, save my nation from Your judgment, and bless my nation. Amen.

26"You must obey My laws; don't do any of these awful things. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 27The people in the land where I am taking you have done these things continually and have corrupted the land. 28If you do these things, I will vomit you out of the land just as I will do with the nations there now. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

29"Anyone who does any of these things will no longer be a part of my people. {79

Conditional-Prayer Promise, 2 Chron. 7:14} [30]Keep My laws, and don't do any of the disgusting things of these people. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Remember that I am the LORD." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I commit myself to be sexually pure. I will not violate my sexual purity, nor the sexual purity of another person. Keep me in the hour of temptation; I want to be a clean vessel for Your use. Amen.

Leviticus 19

Obey God's Laws

[1]The LORD told Moses [2]to tell the Israelites these things: "Be holy, because I, your God the LORD, am holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [3]Respect your parents, and always observe my Sabbath of rest. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [4]Don't trust in idols or make idols of metal; I am the LORD your God. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [5]When you offer a fellowship offering, follow My instructions so it will be accepted. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [6]Eat it on the day you offer it or the next day, but burn any of it left over on the third day. [7]If you eat any of it on the third day, I will not accept the sacrifice, {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18} [8]and you will be guilty of disregarding My holiness {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} and you will no longer be a part of the Israelite people. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[9]"At harvest time leave some grain by the edges of the fields, and don't pick up what falls on the ground. [10]Also leave some grapes on your vines, and don't pick up grapes that fall to the ground. Leave them for the poor and foreigners living with you, remembering that I am the LORD your God. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

[11]"Don't steal, lie, or cheat others. [12]Don't misuse My name in making false promises, remembering that I am the LORD your God. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [13]Don't rob or cheat anyone, and pay your hired workers at the end of the day, don't wait overnight to pay them. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [14]Show your respect for Me by never cursing a deaf person or tripping a blind person, remembering that I am the LORD. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [15]Judge fairly, whether the person is poor or rich. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]Don't gossip, or do anything that will harm someone's life, remembering that I am the LORD. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

[17]"Don't hate anyone. Yet if someone does something wrong, let him know it; otherwise you will be guilty. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [18]Don't be angry or hold grudges. Love your neighbor as much as you love yourself, remembering that I am the LORD." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

Lord, You gave us certain instructions on how to treat others. I will always treat others

as I want them to treat me. I will follow the rule of love. I will love others as I love myself. Give me a heart for other people. Help me treat them as You would. Then I can be Your follower. Amen.

19"Obey My commands, including never breeding your animals with other kinds of animals, never planting two kinds of seeds in the same field, and never wearing clothes made from two kinds of material. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 20If a man sleeps with a slave girl who is engaged to be married, he must pay a fine, but they are not to be put to death because she is still a slave. 21The man is to bring a ram as a guilt offering at the tabernacle entrance. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 22The ram will be a substitute payment for his sin, and so his sin will be forgiven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

23"When you arrive in the land of Canaan, and you plant fruit trees, don't eat the fruit for the first three years. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 24Then the fourth-year crop is to be offered in praise to Me, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 25and the fifth-year crop will be yours, as you remember that I am the LORD your God. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

26"Don't eat the blood of any animal, and don't be involved in witchcraft. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 27Don't trim your hair on your temples and trim the edges of your beard. 28As you mourn for the dead, don't cut yourself and don't put tattoo marks on your skin. Remember that I am the LORD. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 29Don't let your daughters be prostitutes because that will lead others to do the same, and it is a terribly wicked thing. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 30"Keep the Sabbath and respect the tabernacle because I am the LORD. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 31Don't go to mediums or psychics; you will be badly influenced by them. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 32Show respect for older people just as you do for Me, remembering that I am the LORD. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 33Don't mistreat foreigners in your land; {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} 34treat them as one of your own and love them just as you love yourself, remembering that I am the LORD your God. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

35"Use honest scales when measuring anything of length, weight, or volume. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 36Also containers for measuring dry items or liquids must be accurate. Remember that I am the LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 37Obey all My laws and instructions, remembering that I am the LORD." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, You have rules and expectations for my life. May I always follow Your principles; may I be a testimony to others and show them that Christ lives in me. Lord, help me be a dedicated disciple of Jesus and keep me obedient to You. Amen.

Leviticus 20

Punishment for Disobeying God's Laws

[1]The LORD told Moses {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [2]to tell the Israelites these things: [3]"If anyone of you or a foreigner with you has any of his children burned to death on an altar to the false god Molech, he must be put to death by stoning. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [4]Giving his children to Molech means he has corrupted My tabernacle and dishonored Me, so he is no longer to be a part of the Israelites. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [5]If you ignore this and don't stone him to death, I will separate him from My people and any others who worship Molech. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[6]"If anyone goes to mediums or psychics, I will separate him from being a part of My people. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [7]So dedicate yourselves and be holy because I am the LORD your God. [8]You are to obey my laws because I am the LORD who makes you holy." {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}

Lord, I will be faithful in these things. My nation has a growing tolerance to seek these demon-influenced practices. Forgive my nation its sin, and don't judge us. I pray for national revival. May my nation fear and worship You. Amen.

[9]"Anyone who curses his parent is to be put to death because he stands guilty before God. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[10]"If a man has sex with another man's wife, both the man and the woman are to be put to death. [11]If a man has sex with his father's wife, both the man and the woman are to be put to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [12]If a man has sex with his daughter-in-law, both of them are to be put to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} What they have done is terrible, and so they are guilty before God. [13]If two men have sex together, they are to be put to death because what they have done is repulsive. [14]If a man has sex with a woman and her mother, all three are to be burned to death for this terrible sin. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [15]If a man has sex with an animal, he and the animal are to be put to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[16]"If a woman has sex with a male animal, she and the animal are to be put to death for this terrible sin.

[17]"If a man has sex with his sisters, this is a disgrace. So both of them are to be separated from My people, and he will be responsible. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [18]If a man has sex with a woman during her monthly period, both of them will no longer be a part of the Israelites. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [19]If a man has sex with a sister of his father or mother, he will be punished. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [20]If a man has sex with his uncle's wife, neither of them will have children. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [21]If a man marries his sister-in-law, neither of them

will have children. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}
22"Obey My laws so that the land where you are going will not vomit you out." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, Your laws are exact and when I break them, Your punishment is sure. Lord, I thank You for the blood of Jesus Christ who cleanses me from all sin, and delivers me from future judgment. Amen.

23"Don't follow the customs of the people in the land where you are going. 24I have promised you that that land is rich with milk from cows and honey from bees. Remember that I am the LORD your God, and that I have made you distinct from all other nations.
25"Be sure to distinguish between ceremonially clean and unclean animals, birds, or creeping creatures, and don't eat any of them I have said are unclean. 26Be holy because I am holy. I have set you apart from other nations to be My people. 27Mediums or psychics must be put to death by stoning because they are guilty before Me."

Lord, I will obey Your laws and I will honor You in all I do. Use me for Your glory. Amen.

Leviticus 21

Rules for the Priests

1The LORD told Moses to give the priests these instructions: "Don't touch a dead person, because it will make you ceremonially unclean. 2However, exceptions are your close relatives, such as your mother, father, son, daughter, brother, 3or unmarried sister who is dependent on you because she has no husband. 4Because you are a leader, you are to avoid becoming ceremonially unclean. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}
5"Don't shave part of your heads or beards or cut your bodies as non-Israelites do. 6Be holy, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and don't dishonor My name because you are the ones who present offerings to Me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
7Don't marry someone who has been a prostitute and don't marry a divorced woman, because you are holy to Me. 8You are set apart to offer sacrifices to Me, so you are to be holy because I the LORD am holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
9"If you have a daughter who becomes a prostitute, she is to be put to death by burning. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10If you are the high priest, anointed with the anointing oil {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} and wearing the priestly garments, you are not to let your hair be unkempt and you are not to tear your clothes in mourning for the dead. 11Don't go near a dead body, even if it is that of your father or mother. 12Don't desecrate the tabernacle by leaving it to attend a funeral. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}
13"You as high priest must marry a virgin who is of the tribe of Levi. 14You must not marry a divorcee or a former prostitute. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[15]This will keep you from giving your descendants a bad reputation. Remember that I am the LORD, who has set you apart to Me."
[16]The LORD told Moses [17]to give these words to Aaron: "No descendant of yours can ever serve as My priest if he has any physical defect, [18]or if he is blind or lame, disfigured in some way, [19]is crippled, [20]is a hunchback or a dwarf, has a disease of the eye, or has running sores or damaged testicles. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
[21]No descendant of Aaron can offer sacrifices to Me if he has any of these defects. [22]He may eat from the sacrifices, [23]but because of his defects he may not go into the most holy place or go near the altar of burnt offering. He must remember that I am the LORD who makes priests holy." {233 Impartial-Prayer, Gen. 25:22-34}
[24]Moses relayed these instructions to Aaron, his sons, and the Israelites. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

Lord, the rules for priests were more strict than the rules for average Israelites. You want Your servants to be holy so they can wholly serve and glorify You. Today, Christ is my High Priest who sacrificed for me, and today, He is interceding for me. In a special way, I am a priest who ministers for You in worship and prayer. I will be separate from sin because I'm Your priest. I will serve You in worship and intercession. Amen.

Leviticus 22

Be Holy

[1]The LORD told Moses [2]to tell Aaron and his sons these words: "Show respect for the offerings the people bring to Me because I am the LORD. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [3]If any of your descendants is ceremonially unclean when approaching an offering, he can no longer serve as My priest. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [4]No priest is to eat some meat from a sacrificed animal if he has a skin disease or bodily discharge, or touches a corpse, or had an emission of semen, [5]or touches an unclean crawling creature, or touches a ceremonially unclean person. [6]If he does, he will be unclean all day, and so he is to bathe before eating of the offerings. [7]At sunset he may eat some of the food. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [8]He is not to eat meat of an animal that died naturally or was killed by a wild animal because this would make him ceremonially unclean. Remember that I am the LORD. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [9]Tell the priests to follow these instructions so they won't die. Remember that I am the LORD, the one who makes them holy.
[10]"No one may eat of the sacrifices if he is not a member of the priest's family or if he is a servant. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [11]However, slaves a priest has purchased or who have children may eat some of the sacrificed meat. [12]If a priest's daughter marries someone not of the tribe of Levi, she may not eat of the food. [13]But if she is widowed or divorced and has no

children and lives with her father, she may eat of the food. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
14"If someone eats some of the sacrificed meat without realizing it, he is to pay the priest for the food plus a 20 percent fine. 15The priest must not make the offering unholy 16by allowing anyone of a non-priestly line to eat of the sacrifices. If he does, he will be guilty before Me. Remember that I am the LORD, who makes the sacrifices holy." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
17The LORD told Moses 18to tell Aaron, his sons, the Israelites, and foreign residents these words: "Any burnt offering brought to fulfill a promise or to be a free-will offering 19must be a male animal with no defects from the cows, sheep, or goats. 20Any animal with a physical defect won't be accepted. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}
21"When someone brings a fellowship offering to fulfill a promise or to be a freewill offering, the animal must have no physical defects. 22Any animal that is blind, injured, or has a growth or open sore must never be offered to the Lord. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 23If an ox or a sheep is deformed, it may be offered as a freewill offering but not to fulfill a promise. {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 24And never offer to the Lord an animal with bruised testicles. 25Also don't accept from foreign residents any animals with defects because I will not accept them." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
26The LORD then told Moses, 27"When an ox, sheep, or goat is born, leave it with its mother for a week. Only after the eighth day will I accept it as an offering. 28Don't kill a newborn animal and its mother on the same day. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 29When you bring an offering of thanks, be sure to do it in the right way. 30Eat the meat of the sacrificed animal on the day it is offered without keeping any until the next day. Remember I am the LORD your God. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
31"Be sure to obey My laws because I am the LORD. 32Don't treat Me with disrespect, and don't disgrace My name. Remember that I am the LORD, the one who set you apart 33and brought you out of Egypt to be My very own people so that I may be your God." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

Lord, the priest had strict rules for the animals they brought as a sacrifice to You. They were a prediction of Christ who was a perfect fulfillment of these types; Christ was the lamb of God who took away the sins of the world. Thank You for cleansing my sin by the blood of Jesus Christ. In appreciation I will live a holy life to You and I will serve You with my whole heart. Amen.

Leviticus 23

The Festivals

1The LORD told Moses to tell the Israelites, 2"Each year you are to celebrate several festivals in which you are to worship Me. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

[3]You are to work six days each week and then rest on the seventh day and assemble for worship." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

This chapter describes Israel's religious calendar as expressed in the seven festivals of the year. Each of these festivals has a spiritual fulfillment in the historic roots of Christianity or its future. The annual calendar of Israel was for many centuries a prophetic witness to the ministry of Christ in our new dispensation of grace. The fourth festival, the Festival of Trumpets, represents the coming rapture of Christ. The last two festivals in the calendar refer to Israel and are yet to be fulfilled. Amen.

[4]"The festivals you are to observe each year include {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [5]the Passover, which is to start on the evening of March 14 at sundown. [6]Next is the Festival of Bread without Yeast, from March 15 to 22, when you are to eat bread cooked without yeast. [7]Assemble for worship on the first day of this festival and do not work on that day. [8]For the next seven days offer sacrifices and on the seventh day assemble again and don't work." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

Lord, thank you for the Passover, for on this day Jesus died for my sins, and the sins of the whole world. Lord, I pray for the salvation of a lost family so they will come to know you. Amen.

[9]The LORD then told Moses to say to the people, [10]"When you are in the land I will give you and you have your first harvest, take to the priest the first bundle of wheat. [11]He is to wave it to Me on the day after the Sabbath, {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [12]and that same day you are to sacrifice a year-old lamb with no defects. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [13]Also offer a grain offering of four pounds of flour mixed with olive oil; when it is burned, I will be pleased with it. Also include a drink offering of a quart of wine. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [14]Don't eat any bread or grain until you bring this offering to Me. This permanent law is not to be changed."

Lord, You raised up Jesus on the Sunday after Pentecost. His resurrection is the first fruits of all those who will be resurrected after Him. Lord, I praise You for Jesus' resurrection, for I will be raised, because of Him. Amen.

[15]"The day after you wave the first bundle of wheat to Me, [16]count off 50 days and then bring to Me two loaves of bread as a wave offering. [17]The bread is to be made with yeast and four pounds of flour. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [18]Also include seven year-old male lambs with no physical defects, and a bull and two rams. These will be a burnt offering to Me, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and I will be pleased with the sacrifice. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [19]Also offer a male goat as a sin offering and

two one-year-old lambs as a fellowship offering.
20"The priest is to wave to Me the two lambs {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and the bread. These are holy to Me and are food for the priests. 21That same day assemble the people who are to do no work then. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} This law too is to be carried out from generation to generation.
22"At harvest time leave some crops by the edges of the fields and don't pick up what falls on the ground. Leave them for the poor and foreigners living with you, remembering that I am the LORD your God." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, Pentecost was fulfilled when the Holy Spirit came on the Day of Pentecost to fill every believer. Fill me with Your Holy Spirit to live a holy life and serve You acceptably. Amen.

23The Lord then told Moses 24to tell the Israelites, "The first day of September is to be a day of rest. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} Call the people together to the Festival of Trumpets by blowing trumpets. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 25Do no work on that day, but bring offerings to the altar."

Lord, the Festival of Trumpets predates the return of Christ. He will return with the sound of a trumpet. My saved family and friends will be raised, and if I die before the rapture, I too will be raised with them. Lord, thank You for the hope of the rapture. I look for Jesus coming in the clouds. Amen.

26The Lord told Moses, 27"The tenth of this seventh month is the Day of Atonement. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Assemble the people, have them fast, and make an offering on the altar to the Lord. 28Don't do any work that day, {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} and 29if someone does not fast, he is no longer to be a part of the Israelites. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} 30And the same is true if someone does some work on that day. 31This law is to be followed by every generation. 32Again you are to rest and fast from the ninth day of the month until the following evening."
33The Lord told Moses 34to tell the Israelites, "The Festival of Shelters is to be from the 15th day of September to the 22nd. 35On the first day everyone is to assemble and do no work. 36Then offerings are to be made each day for a week. On the eighth day the people are to assemble for worship {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} and offer a sacrifice to God."

Lord, You have a future prepared for Israel. I look forward to that special day when "all Israel will be saved." Amen.

37"At these annual festivals the people are to bring burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 38These are in addition to the Sabbaths, when you bring gifts or make a sacrifice {521 Vow-Prayer,

Rev. 10:6} to keep a promise to the LORD or to give a freewill offering.
39"Beginning on September 15 celebrate the Festival of Shelters for seven days, with the first and the last days of the Festival being days of rest. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 40For each of the seven days pick choice fruit from fruit trees, along with palm-tree branches, and leafy branches, and be joyful before Me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 41Celebrate this festival every year for a week in September for generations {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} to come. 42For the week every Israelite is to live in a shelter. 43This is to remind you and your descendants that when I rescued you from Egypt, {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} I had you live in shelters. Remember that I am the LORD, your God."
44Then Moses told the people about these six festivals.

Lord, the Festival of Shelters looks back to Your deliverance of Israel from the land of Egypt. It also looks forward to the coming millennium when Israel will live in the Promised Land and enjoy Your special presence in peace. Amen.

Leviticus 24

Care of the Lamps

1The LORD told Moses 2to tell the people to bring clear olive oil for the lampstand {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} to keep it burning all the time. 3"Aaron is to take care of the lampstand in the holy place {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} so that it burns continually from evening till morning. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 4Also he is to tend each of the seven lamps on the lampstand.

Lord, I will let my light shine in a dark world for You. I will be constant in my testimony so others will see Christ in me. Amen.

5"Aaron is to bake 12 bread loaves, {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} using four quarts of flour for each loaf. They are to be placed on the gold table before Me 6in two rows of six loaves each.
7"Put some incense by each row as an offering to Me. 8Every Sabbath put out fresh bread loaves {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} as an agreement between Israel and Me. 9Aaron and his sons are to eat the bread in a holy place; it is part of their share of the offerings given to the LORD."

Lord, I will fellowship constantly with Jesus, the Bread of Life, He will be my strength, and I will serve You. Amen.

10One day a man whose mother was an Israelite and whose father was an Egyptian got into a fight with an Israelite. 11In the fight the son of the Israelite woman cursed God, and so they brought him to Moses. (His mother's name was Shelomith, daughter of Dibri of the tribe of Dan.) 12He was held in jail till the Lord's will was known on what they should do.

{533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
13Then the LORD said to Moses, 14"Take
him outside the camp and have every-
one who heard him curse God put their
hands on his head. Then everyone must
stone him. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts
5:4, 9} 15Tell the people that anyone who
curses Me will be punished. 16He is to die
by stoning, whether he is an Israelite or a
foreign resident." {268 Judgmental-Pray-
ing, Acts 5:4, 9}

*Lord, I will guard my speech so I don't blas-
pheme You. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer,
James 3:8} I want to be a good testimony
with my speech so others will glorify You.
Amen.*

17"Murderers are to be put to death. {268
Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18Any-
one who kills someone's animal must
replace it. 19And if you injure someone,
you must be injured in the same way: 20a
broken bone for a broken bone, an eye
for an eye, or a tooth for a tooth. {269
Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 21If you kill some-
one's animal, you must replace it, but if
you murder someone, you must die. 22This
law applies to foreign residents as well as
Israelites, because I am the LORD your
God." 23Moses took the man who cursed
the Lord outside the camp, and the peo-
ple stoned him {268 Judgmental-Praying,
Acts 5:4, 9} just as God had said to do.

*Lord, I will not intentionally harm another
person; if I do so intentionally, forgive me.
May I glorify You with all my actions. Help
me be kind to other people, and keep me
from hurting anyone. Amen.*

Leviticus 25

The Year of Solemn Rest

1When Moses was on Mount Sinai, 2the
Lord gave him these instructions for the
Israelites: "After you enter the land I'll
give you, you must let the land rest every
seventh year. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer,
Heb. 12:14} 3You may plant your fields,
prune your vineyards, and harvest your
crops for six years. 4But let the land have
a rest every seventh year as a Sabbath {188
God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} in honor
of Me. Don't plant crops or trim your vine-
yards that year. 5And don't harvest any-
thing that grows by itself, for the land is to
have a year of rest. 6But if something grows
of itself, it may be eaten by yourselves,
your servants, hired workers, and foreign
residents 7as well as your livestock and any
wild animals in the land. {388 Provision of
Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
8-9"Every fiftieth year, blow the trumpets
loud throughout the land on September
10, the Day of Atonement. {173 Forgive-
ness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 10Dedicate that
year to Me as a year of liberty for everyone.
{188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
Everyone is to receive back his original
property, as well as his clan. 11Don't plant
or harvest crops or gather crops, 12because
this is a holy year. {223 Holiness-Prayer,
1 Peter 1:16} Eat only what grows on its

own. [13]That year everyone is to return home to his original property.
[14]"If you sell or buy land in the preceding 49 years, don't cheat each other. [15]Determine the price based on the number of potential crops from that time to the Year of Jubilee. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} [16]If the Jubilee is many years away, the price is to be higher; or if the Jubilee is only a few years away, the price is to be lower. What you are really buying is the number of crops. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [17]Don't cheat. Respect Me because I am the LORD your God.
[18]"To live safely in the land, obey {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} My laws. [19]If you do, you will have abundant crops and plenty to eat. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [20]You might wonder how you will have food to eat in the seventh year since you won't be planting or harvesting that year. [21]Don't worry; I will give you such a bumper crop in the sixth year {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28} that it will last for three years—year six, seven, and eight. [22]In the eighth year you will eat from the sixth-year harvest, until the ninth-year crops are harvested.
[23]"Because the land is Mine and you are My tenants, don't sell any land permanently. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [24]When you sell property, you must stipulate that it can be redeemed at any time. [25]If someone becomes so poor that he must sell some of his property, his nearest relative must buy back what the poor man sold. [26]But if there is no one to buy it and later the man has enough money, [27]then he can buy it back at a price determined by the number of years left till the Year of Jubilee, and the owners must return the land to him. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [28]But if he doesn't have the money to buy it back, it will be returned to him in the Year of Jubilee.
[29]"If someone sells a house in a walled city, he has only a year in which to buy it back. [30]If he doesn't buy it back in that year, then it is the permanent property of the buyer, and it can't be returned in the Year of Jubilee. [31]But a house in an unwalled village can be bought back or returned in the Year of Jubilee. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [32]Levites have the right to buy back their houses. [33]And any houses they don't buy back will be theirs in the Year of Jubilee. [34]However, pastureland owned by Levites is never to be sold.
[35]"If anyone of your people becomes so poor he can't support himself, help him as you would any foreigner living in your land. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [36]Don't charge him interest on a loan; respect Me and let him continue to live where he is. [37]And don't sell him food for a profit. [38]Remember that I am the LORD your God, who rescued you from Egypt {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} to give you the land of Canaan and be your God.
[39]"If one of your people becomes so poor he sells himself, don't think of him as a slave. [40]Treat him as a hired worker or a foreign resident, and then he will be released in the Year of Jubilee [41]so he and his children can return to their clan and property. [42]Because the Israelites are My servants whom I brought out of Egypt,

they are not to be sold as slaves [43]or treated harshly. Remember to respect Me. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

[44]"You may buy slaves from other nations, [45]or from foreigners living in your land. [46]You may pass them on to your children, but don't treat your slaves cruelly.

[47]"If one of you becomes so poor that he sells himself to a foreign resident, [48]he has the right to be set free by a relative, [49]such as an uncle or a cousin or other close relative. Or he may redeem himself if he gets enough money. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [50]He and his buyer are to determine the price by counting the number of years he would still be a slave till the Year of Jubilee. [51]If many years remain, he must pay a larger amount, [52]but if only a few years are left, the amount would be smaller. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [53]He is to be treated like a servant hired on a yearly basis. [54]If he hasn't been freed in any of these ways, he is to be set free in the Year of Jubilee. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [55]Remember that I, the LORD your God, brought you out of Egypt to be My servants." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, You blessed Your people with rest in the Sabbatical year, and the Year of Jubilee. Thank You for Sunday, my day of rest, the day I will worship and serve You. Amen.

Leviticus 26

Blessings of Obedience and Curses of Disobedience

[1]"Don't make or worship idols, images, or shaped stones, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} for I am the LORD your God. [2]Respect the Sabbaths and honor My tabernacle, for I am the Lord. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [3]If you obey My laws and commands, [4]I will send you rain every year, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and you will have abundant crops and your trees will have plenty of fruit. [5]You will be harvesting grapes even after you have harvested other crops, and you will be harvesting grapes until it is time to plant crops again. You will have plenty to eat, {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} and you will be safe in the land. [6]I will give you peace {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} and you will sleep without fear. I will remove wild animals from the land, and chase down your enemies. [7]You will chase your enemies and kill them with your swords, [8]even if there are only five of you against a hundred of them, or a hundred of you against ten thousand of them. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [9]"I will favor you and increase your numbers, and I will keep My promises to you. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [10]You will have so many crops that you will need to get rid of leftovers to make room for the new harvest. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [11]I will live among you in My tabernacle, and I won't reject you. [12]I will walk with you {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and be your God, and

you will be My people. [13]Remember, I am the LORD your God who rescued you from being slaves in Egypt. I broke the chain of your slavery so that you can now hold your beads high in confidence. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[14]"If you will not listen to Me and obey Me, [15]and if you reject My laws and break My covenant {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [16]here is what I will do: you will experience panic, terrible disease, and fever that will affect your eyesight, and your life will slowly ebb away. Your enemies will eat the crops you plant. [17]I will be against you, and your enemies will defeat you and rule over you; and you will be so afraid that you will run even when no one is chasing you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[18]"If you won't obey Me, I will punish you seven times over for your sins. [19]I will destroy your pride, make the sky like iron in holding back rain, and the ground will be hard and dry like bronze. [20]You will waste your time in your fields because you will have no crops or fruit. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[21]"If even then you won't obey Me and listen to Me, I will punish you seven times more than your sins. [22]Wild animals will kill your children and your cattle, and there will be so few of you that your roads will be deserted. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [23]And if you still are against Me, [24]I will be against you, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and as I said, I will punish you seven times more than your sins deserve. [25]If you break My agreement, enemies will come against you. When you escape to your cities, you will have terrible diseases and your enemies will defeat you. [26]You will have so little bread that women will be able to bake in one oven enough bread for ten families. With your small amount of bread you will still be hungry.

[27]"If you are still against Me, [28]then I will be very angry with you, and I will punish you seven times more than your sins deserve. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [29]You will be so terribly hungry that you will even eat your own children. [30]I will destroy your pagan shrines and incense altars, and pile your dead bodies on top of your idols, and I will despise you. [31]I will wipe out your towns and destroy your places of worship, and the aroma of your offerings will no longer be pleasing to Me. [32]Your land will be so devastated that your enemies will be shocked. [33]I will scatter you among the nations, chasing you with My sword. Your land will be deserted, and the cities in ruins. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [34]Then while you are in captivity, the land will enjoy its missed Sabbath years. [35]By lying in ruins the land will rest, making up for your failure to give it rest every seventh year. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[36]"When you are captives, you will be living in such fear that even the rustling of a leaf will frighten you, and you will run as if someone with a sword is chasing you, and you will fall even though no one is after you. [37]Even though no one is chasing you, you will stumble over each other. [38]Many of you will die in other lands and be destroyed by your enemies, [39]and others of you will waste away because of your sins

and the sins of your ancestors. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
40-41"However, if you will confess your sins {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} and the sins of your ancestors in betraying Me and you humble yourselves, 42I will remember My promises to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and I will remember the land. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 43The land will enjoy its Sabbaths as it lies deserted when you are in captivity being punished for rejecting My laws {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and despising My rules.
44"But I will not completely reject My people {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} or destroy them completely. I am the LORD your God. 45I will keep the promises I made with your ancestors {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} when I rescued them from Egypt as the nations looked on. I am the LORD." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
46These are the laws and regulations the Lord gave Moses when he was on Mount Sinai.

Lord, I will learn from the disobedience of Israel, I will keep Your commands of instruction; I will bring glory to You. Forgive my sins and the sins of my people; have mercy on me and my people. Amen.

Leviticus 27

Laws about Gifts Offered to the Lord

1The LORD told Moses 2to tell the Israelites, "If someone wants to dedicate a person to Me, based on a vow he made, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} he may do so by paying these amounts: 350 shekels of silver for men between the ages of 20 and 60, 4or 30 shekels of silver for females, 520 shekels of silver for males between 5 and 20, 65 shekels for males between one month and 5 years and 3 shekels for females between one month and 5 years, 7or 15 shekels for males 60 years of age or older, and 10 shekels for females 60 or over. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 8If anyone is too poor to pay the amount, he is to present the person to the priest who will set the fee. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
9"If someone vows an animal as an offering to Me, that animal is holy. 10If he tries to substitute a good animal for a bad one, or a bad one for a good one, they will both be holy and will belong to me. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 11If the animal is ceremonially unclean, 12he must take it to the priest who will determine its value. 13If the man wants to buy it back, rather than have it sacrificed, he must pay the price plus an additional 20 percent. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}
14"If someone donates his house to Me, the priest is to set the price. 15But if the man decides to buy it back, he must pay the price plus an additional 20 percent. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 16If someone dedicates some of his land to Me, its value is to be determined by the bushels of barley seed needed to plant in the land. Fifty pieces of silver is the price for every six bushels. 17If he dedicates the land in the Year of Jubilee, the value stays

as determined, [18]but if he dedicates it later, the priest is to determine the value based on the number of years till the next Year of Jubilee. [19]If the man decides to buy it back, he is to pay the price set by the priest plus an additional 20 percent. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [20]If he sells it, he can't buy it back. [21]When the field is released in the Year of Jubilee, it will be holy and will become the property of the priests. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[22]"If a man dedicates to Me a field he has bought, [23]the priest is to determine its value based on the number of years till the Year of Jubilee, and the man is to pay the priest that amount. [24]Then in the Year of Jubilee the field will return to its original owner from whom it was purchased. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [25]Every price is to be set by the standard tabernacle shekel.

[26]"No firstborn of an ox or sheep can be dedicated to Me because they are already Mine. [27]If someone promises an unclean animal to Me, he may buy it back for the price set by the priest plus an additional 20 percent of its value. If he doesn't buy it back, the priest may sell it to someone else at the price he sets. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[28]"Anything you dedicate to Me—whether a person, an animal, or land—can be sold or bought back for they are holy to Me. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [29]Also no one who is sentenced to die can be bought back; he must be put to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [30]A tenth of your grain and fruit is holy and is to be given to Me. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [31]If someone buys back some of this grain or fruit, he must add 20 percent to its value. [32]One of every ten animals is to be holy to Me. [33]If a person picks out a bad animal to give Me, and substitutes one animal for another, both animals will belong to Me and cannot be bought back." {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[34]These are some of the many instructions the LORD gave to Moses on Mount Sinai.

Lord, You have spoken in the book of Leviticus; help me understand Your commands and instructions and apply them to my life. I want to obey You and keep Your commands. Give me strength to always obey You. When I am weak, forgive me. Amen.

Numbers

Ch 1: The Israelites Are Counted 211
Ch 2: The Arrangement of the Tribes 212
Ch 3: The Sons of Aaron 213
Ch 4: The Duties of Kohath's Sons 215
Ch 5: Keep the Camp Pure 217
Ch 6: The Vow of a Nazarite 218
Ch 7: The Leaders Make an Offering 219
Ch 8: Aaron Lights the Lamps 220
Ch 9: Observe the Passover Meal 222
Ch 10: Silver Trumpets 223
Ch 11: The People Complained 224
Ch 12: Miriam Is Punished 226
Ch 13: The Twelve Spies 227
Ch 14: The People Rebel at Kadesh-Barnea 228
Ch 15: Rules about Offerings 230
Ch 16: The Rebellion of Korah 232
Ch 17: Aaron's Walking Stick 234
Ch 18: The Duties of the Priests and the Livites 235
Ch 19: Rules about Cleanliness 236
Ch 20: Moses Defies God 238
Ch 21: The Israelites Defeat the Canaanites 239
Ch 22: Balaam, the False Prophet 241

Ch 23: Balaam Blesses Israel the First Time..... 242
Ch 24: Balaam and Balak (continued)..... 243
Ch 25: The Israelites Are Seduced by the Midianites 244
Ch 26: The Israelites Are Counted a Second Time..... 245
Ch 27: The Daughters of Zelophehad..... 246
Ch 28: The Daily Offerings to the LORD..... 247
Ch 29: The Offerings in Several Festivals 248
Ch 30: Rules About Vows 249
Ch 31: War against the Midianites..... 250
Ch 32: Two Tribes Remain East of the Jordan River..... 251
Ch 33: The Journey from Egypt to Moab..... 252
Ch 34: Boundaries of the Promised Land 253
Ch 35: The Levites Are Given Land 254
Ch 36: Land Is Given to the Daughters of Zelophehad..... 255

NUMBERS

Key Words: *Wilderness wanderings* (Numbers 32:13)

Key Verse: "And the LORD'S anger was kindled against Israel, and he made them wander in the wilderness forty years, until all the generation that had done evil in the sight of the LORD, was consumed" (32:13).

Theme: The book of Numbers gets its name from the two censuses (chapters 1 and 26) at the beginning and end of Israel's wilderness wanderings. The people of God were counted to determine how many there were. God promised to lead the people to a land flowing with "milk and honey" (14:8), but Israel rejected God and refused to enter the Promised Land. Therefore God allowed all people age 20 and older to wander in the wilderness until they died there.

But even in Israel's failure, God's faithfulness is seen in the ways He continually provided for them. We see a picture of our sinfulness in Numbers as we fail to walk with God and serve Him, but even then God is faithful to punish and bring us back to Himself. *Lord, great is Your faithfulness in saving me and guiding me through the wilderness of this life. Amen.*

Numbers 1

The Israelites Are Counted

1 On the first day of the 14th month after the Israelites left Egypt, the LORD
spoke to Moses in the tabernacle when they were in the Sinai Desert. {286
Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} He said, 2"Find out how many people are in each of Israel's
clans and families. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 3List the numbers of every
man 20 years of age or older who are able to serve in the army. {327 Obedient-Prayer,
Col. 2:6} 4Get a man from each tribe to help you, including these: 5Elizur son of Shedeur
from the tribe of Reuben, 6Shelumiel son of Zurishaddai from Simeon, 7Nahshon son of
Amminadab from Judah, 8Nethanel son of Zuar from Issachar, 9Eliab son of Helon from
Zebulun, 10Elishama son of Ammihud from Ephraim, Gamaliel son of Pedahzur from
Manasseh, 11Abidan son of Gideoni from Benjamin, 12Ahiezer son of Ammishaddai from
Dan, 13Pagiel son of Ocran from Asher, 14Eliasaph son of Deuel from Gad, 15and Ahira
son of Enan from Naphtali. 16These tribal leaders were chosen by the people."

17Moses and Aaron with these 12 leaders,
18called the Israelites together that same
day and counted the people by their clans
and families, 19as the LORD commanded,
in the Sinai Desert. 20The number of men
20 years of age and older from each tribe
was as follows: {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev.
12:7} 21-46,500 from the tribe of Reuben,
Jacob's oldest, 22-23-59,300 from Simeon,
24-25-45,650 from Gad,26-27-74,600 from
Judah, 28-29-54,400 from Issachar, 30-31-57,400
from Zebulun, 32-33-40,500 from Ephraim,
34-35-32,200 from Manasseh, 36-37-35,400
from Benjamin, 38-39-62,700 from Dan,
40-41-41,500 from Asher, and 42-43-53,400
from Naphtali. 44-There men were listed
by their tribal descent, 45-and were counted
by families. 46-The total was 603,550. {528
Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
47-Those from the tribe of Levi were not
included 48-because the Lord had said,
49-"Don't count the men of the tribe of Levi
50-because they are in charge of taking care
of the tabernacle and its equipment. {182
Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} They
are to carry it when you move from one
location to another, and they are to camp
around it. 51-They are to take it down and
set it up. If anyone else goes near it, he is to
be put to death.
52-"All other Israelites are to set up their
tents by tribes with a flag at each tent. 53-The
Levites are to set up their tents all around
the tabernacle to keep My wrath from
falling on the people. {206 Guarding Our
Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} The Levites
are to be totally responsible for the taber-
nacle." 54-The Israelites did everything the
Lord told Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer,
Col. 2:6}

Numbers 2

The Arrangement of the Tribes

1-The LORD said to Moses, 2-"The Israelites
are to camp around the tabernacle a little
distance from it, and each tent is to fly a
flag representing the family. {160 Fam-
ily-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 3-The
tribe of Judah is to camp east of the tab-
ernacle; its leader is Nahshon, 4-and their
census number is 74,600. 5-The tribe of
Issachar is to camp on one side of Judah;
its leader is Nethanel, 6-and their census
number is 54,400. 7-The tribe of Zebulun
is to camp on the other side of Judah; its
leader is Eliab, 8-and their census number is
57,400. 9-Those three tribes total 186,400,
and when the Israelites move, they are to
go first.
10-"The tribe of Reuben is to camp to the
south of the tabernacle; its leader is Elizur,
11-and their census number is 46,500. 12-The
tribe of Simeon is to camp on one side of
Reuben; its leader is Shelumiel, 13-and their
census number is 59,300.14-The tribe of
Gad is to camp on the other side of Reu-
ben; its leader is Eliasaph, 15-and their cen-
sus number is 45,650. 16-These tribes total
151,450, and when the Israelites move,
these three will follow the three tribes on
the east of the tabernacle. 17-When the Lev-
ites move with the tabernacle, they will go
behind Reuben, leaving in the same order
as they camped.

18"The tribe of Ephraim is to camp west
of the tabernacle; its leader is Elishama,
19and their census number is 40,500. 20The
tribe of Manasseh is to camp on one side
of Ephraim; its leader is Gamaliel, 21and
their census number is 32,200. 22The tribe
of Benjamin is to camp on the other side
of Ephraim; its leader is Abidan, 23and
their census number is 35,400. 24These
three tribes total 108,100, and when the
Israelites move, these three will follow the
Levites.
25"The tribe of Dan is to camp north of
the tabernacle; its leader is Ahiezer, 26and
their census number is 62,700. 27The tribe
of Asher is to camp on one side of Dan;
its leader is Pagiel, 28and their census num-
ber is 41,500. 29The tribe of Naphtali is to
camp on the other side of Dan; its leader
is Ahira, 30and their census number is
53,400. 31These three tribes total 157,600,
and when the Israelites move, these three
will be last.
32"The total of all these men 20 of age and
older is 603,550, 33not including the Lev-
ites." 34The Israelites did everything the
Lord told Moses, {327 Obedient-Prayer,
Col. 2:6} encamping around the taberna-
cle with their flags. And when they moved
from one location to another, they fol-
lowed in the order the Lord told them.

Lord, I know You do all things decently and in order (1 Cor. 14:40). There were approximately 3 million people in the wilderness. Your common sense demanded them to travel and live in order. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} The counting of the Israelites reminds me that You do not overlook one of Your children. Amen.

Numbers 3

The Sons of Aaron

1When the LORD spoke to Moses on
Mount Sinai, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt.
18:19} 2Aaron's sons were Nadab, Abihu,
Eleazar, and Ithamar. 3They were anointed
and set apart to be priests {16 Anoint-
ed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} 4but Nadab and
Abihu died in the Sinai Desert when they
used unapproved fire in an offering to the
LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
Since Nadab and Abihu had no sons,
Eleazar and Ithamar served as priests with
Aaron.
5The LORD said to Moses, 6"Present the
Levites to Aaron as his assistants. {219
Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 7They are to
serve him and all the Israelites at the tab-
ernacle, 8taking care of all the equipment
and doing the work involved in the taber-
nacle. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 9The
Levites are to help Aaron and his sons in
every way. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim.
2:15} 10Aaron and his sons are the priests,
and anyone else who tries to assume their
work will be put to death."
11The LORD said to Moses, 12"I have cho-
sen the Levites to be Mine in place of every
firstborn son. {103 Dedication-Prayer,
Mark 10:16} 13When I killed all the first-
born of the Egyptians, {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I set apart for Me the
firstborn son in each of your families. But

now the Levites will be Mine in their place."
{430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
14Then the LORD said to Moses in the
Sinai Desert, 15"Count by clans and fam-
ilies every male Levite a month old and
older." 16So Moses did as the Lord said.
{327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 17The
sons of Levi were Gershon, Kohath, and
Merari. 18Gershon's sons were Libni and
Shimei, 19Kohath's sons were Amram,
Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel, 20and Merari's
sons were Mahli and Mushi. These sons
and grandsons of Levi were heads of Lev-
ite clans.
21The Gershon clans were the Libnites
and Shimeites, 22and the men and boys
of at least a month old totaled 7,500.
23They were to camp west of the taberna-
cle. 24Their leader was Eliasaph son of Lael.
25-26They took care of the tabernacle, {432
Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} its coverings, all
its curtains in and around the tabernacle,
ropes, and all the related equipment.
27The Kohath clans were the Amramites,
Izharites, Hebronites, and Uzzielites,
28and the men and boys at least a month
old totaled 8,600. {432 Service-Prayer,
Heb. 5:4} 29They were to camp south
of the tabernacle. 30Their leader was
Elizaphan. 31They were to take care of the
sacred chest, the table with the bread, the
lampstand, the incense altar, the altar of
burnt offering, various utensils, the curtain
between the holy place and the most holy
place, and other related items. {536 Work-
er's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 32Eleazar, Aaron's
son, was chief of all the Levites, and was
responsible for the care of the tabernacle.
33The Merari clans were the Mahlites and
Mushites, 34and the men and boys at least
a month old totaled 6,200. 35Their leader
was Zuriel. They were to camp north of
the tabernacle. 36They were to take care of
the tabernacle frames, crossbeams, posts,
sockets, and related equipment, {432
Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 37and the posts,
sockets, pegs, and ropes.
38Moses, Aaron, and his sons were to camp
east in front of the tabernacle, with over-
all responsibility for the tabernacle. {355
Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} Anyone
else who tried to get close to the tabernacle
was to be put to death. 39The Levite males
at least one month old totaled 22,000.
40The LORD said to Moses, "Count and
list the names of every Israelite male at
least a month old. 41The Levites are to be
set apart for Me in place of them, and the
firstborn of the Levites' livestock are to be
for Me in place of the Israelites' firstborn
livestock." {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1
John 3:22} 42Moses followed the Lord's
command and counted all the Israelite
firstborn sons at least a month old, {377
Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 43and
the total was 22,273.
44The LORD said to Moses, 45"The Lev-
ites are to be in place of all the firstborn
in Israel, and the Levites' livestock in place
of all the Israelites' firstborn livestock.
{355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}
46But there are 273 more firstborn Israel-
ites than Levites, so they must be bought
back from Me. {394 Redemption-Wor-
ship, Rev. 5:12} 47Collect five pieces of
silver for each one, 48and give the money
to Aaron and his sons." 49Moses did this,

{394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
50collecting 1,365 pieces of silver, 51and
he gave the money to Aaron and his sons,
as the Lord had said to do. {327 Obedi-
ent-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, just as the tabernacle was in the center of the camp, and Your presence was in the tabernacle; so I want Your presence in the center of my life {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}. May others see You living in me. Lord, You choose to live in the center of all believers. When they rebelled, You withdrew Your presence. So, Lord, I worship You and yield to Your will. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Come live in the center of my life. Lord, at the end You will occupy the center of heaven. "Behold, in the midst of the throne... and in the midst of the elders, stood a lamb" (Rev. 5:6). Amen.

Numbers 4

The Duties of Kohath's Sons

1The LORD then said to Moses and
Aaron, 2-3"Find out how many men in
the Kohathite clans are between 30 and
50 years old who are able to work in the
tabernacle. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}
4They are to take care of all the holy objects
in the tabernacle. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2
Tim. 2:15} 5And when the Israelites move
camp, Aaron and his sons are to go into the
tabernacle, take down the curtain between
the holy place and the most holy place,
and cover the sacred chest with it. 6Then
they are to cover it with leather, and then
a cloth of solid blue. Then they are to put
the carrying poles in the rings on the chest.
7"Aaron and his sons are to spread another
blue cloth over the table {377 Presence of
God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} for the bread, and
on the cloth they are to place the dishes,
spoons, bowls, cups, and the bread itself.
8Over this they are to spread a red cloth, a
piece of leather, and put the carrying poles
in the rings in the table.
9"They are to cover the lampstand with its
lamps with another blue cloth, along with
the lamp snuffers, fire pans, and jars of oil.
{283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 10Then
they are to cover all these items with a
piece of leather and put it on a frame for
carrying it. 11They are to cover the gold
altar of incense with another blue cloth
and a piece of leather, and put its carrying
poles in the rings on the altar.
12"Then they are to wrap in a blue cloth all
the other utensils used in the tabernacle,
{432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and cover
them with a piece of leather and place
them on a carrying frame. 13After remov-
ing the ashes from the altar of burnt offer-
ing, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} they
are to cover it with a purple cloth. 14Then
they are to place on the purple cloth all
the utensils used at the altar, including the
fire pans, meat forks, shovels, and bowls.
They are to cover all of these with a piece
of leather and put the carrying poles in the
rings on the altar.
15"When Aaron and his sons have covered
all the tabernacle items, and the camp is
ready to move, the Kohathites will carry
all the items. But they must not touch any

of the items, or they will die. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
16"Eleazar, Aaron's son, is responsible for the oil for the light, incense, the daily grain offering, and anointing oil. He is in charge of seeing that everything {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} is properly cared for."
17The LORD told Moses and Aaron, 18"To be sure the Kohathites don't die, 19when they go near the holy objects {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} have Aaron and his sons go into the tabernacle with them and tell each one what to carry. 20If they look at these objects before they are covered, they will die."
21Then the LORD told Moses, 22-23"Find out how many men in the Gershonite clans are between 30 and 50 years old who are able to work in the tabernacle. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 24-25They are to carry the tabernacle curtains and coverings, 26the courtyard curtains, the curtains at the tabernacle entrance, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and other related equipment. They are to do whatever needs to be done with these items. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 27Aaron and his sons are to supervise the Gershonites, assigning specific duties to each one. 28These are the Gershonite's tabernacle duties, all under the direction of Aaron's son Ithamar.
29-30"Find out how many men in the Merarite clans {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} are between 30 and 50 years old who are able to work in the tabernacle. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 31They are to carry the tabernacle frames, crossbars, posts, and sockets, 32and the courtyard bases, pegs, ropes, and all related equipment. Tell each man what he is to carry. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 33These are the Merarites' duties, all under the direction of Aaron's son, Ithamar."
34Moses, Aaron, and the leaders did as the Lord said, and 35counted all the men between 30 and 50 years old who could work in the tabernacle. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 36-37The Kohathites totaled 2,750, 38-41the Gershonites totaled 2,630, 42-45and the Merarites totaled 3,200. 46-48The total of all these Levite men between the ages of 30 and 50 was 8,580. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 49Each one was given a specific responsibility, and the numbering followed the Lord's command. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Lord, You had a reason to command a man to begin serving in the tabernacle when he was 30 years old just as You waited for Jesus to be 30 years old before He began His life ministry. Lord, You want people to serve You in wisdom. You want them to learn from childhood and adolescence the important lessons that come from experience. Lord, You have said novices should not be used in the Lord's work (1 Tim. 3:6), lest they be lifted up with pride. You don't want selfishness in ministry. You also want a minister who knows what to do. Lord, may I grow in spiritual maturity as did Christ, {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} so I can serve You effectively. Amen.

Numbers 5

Keep the Camp Pure

[1]The LORD told Moses to tell the Israelites, [2]"Remove from the camp anyone who has leprosy or a discharge, or who has touched a dead body. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [3]This applies to both men and women. Because I live among you, it is important for you to keep the camp clean." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [4]The Israelites did this just as the Lord commanded.

[5]Then the Lord told Moses [6]to tell the Israelites, "When someone sins against another person and thus has been unfaithful to Me, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} he is guilty, [7]and must confess his sin. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} He must pay the person for whatever he did wrong plus 20 percent of its value. [8]If the victim has no close relative to whom the payment can be made, the payment belongs to Me {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} and is to be paid to the priest. Also a ram must be offered as a substitute payment for sin. [9]All such gifts brought to the priest are to belong to him. [10]Each priest must keep what is given to him."

[11]The LORD told Moses [12]to tell the Israelites, "Suppose a man's wife sleeps with another man, [13]but there are no witnesses, [14]and yet the husband is jealous and suspicious. [15]He is to take his wife to the priest and present an offering of two quarts of barley flour as a grain offering. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} [16]And he is not to put any oil or incense on the flour. The priest will then have the woman stand in the Lord's presence. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [17]He will put some dust from the tabernacle floor in some water, [18]and have her loosen her hair and hand her the barley flour offering, and then hold the jar of water. [19]He is to say, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 'If you have been faithful to your husband, this bitter water will not harm you. [20]But if you have sinned by sleeping with another man, [21]you will be unable to have children and people will curse your name.' [22]Then the woman is to say, 'Let it be as you have said.' [23]Then the priest is to write these curses on some leather {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} and wash them into the bitter water. [24]The woman is to drink the water, [25]and the priest is to take the grain offering from her hands, wave it before the Lord, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [26]and burn a handful of it on the altar of burnt offering. [27]If she is guilty of adultery, then when she drinks the water she will suffer pain, be unable to have children, and people will curse her. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [28]But if she has not been unfaithful, she will be clean and able to have children.

[29]"This is what you are to do if a woman commits adultery {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [30]or if her husband suspects that she has been unfaithful to him. The priest is to have her stand in My presence {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and follow these instructions. [31]Her husband will not be punished, but if she is guilty, she will suffer the consequences.

Lord, a new believer must learn Your requirements as soon as he or she begins following You. They must be pure inwardly and outwardly, so You make them separate themselves from all sin and filthiness of daily life. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} *Lord, You make Your followers separate themselves to protect them from physical contamination and inward filthy attitudes and actions. Just as You commanded Israel to separate unclean people, today all Your followers must separate themselves from all influence that will harm them. Amen.*

Numbers 6

The Vow of a Nazarite

1The LORD told Moses to say to the Israelites, 2"If someone wants to dedicate himself to Me by taking the vow of a Nazarite, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 3he must drink no wine or any fermented drink or any kind of vinegar. 4He must not eat or drink grape juice or eat grapes or raisins, not even the grape seeds or skins.
5"During the time he is a Nazarite, he must not cut his hair, because he is set apart to Me. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 6Also while he is a Nazarite he must not go near a dead body, 7even if it is his own father, mother, brother, or sister. That would make him ceremonially unclean and would defile his hair, which is a symbol of his separation to God as a Nazarite. 8So he must remain dedicated to Me. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
9"If someone suddenly dies near him, his hair is defiled. So seven days later he is to shave his head. 10The next day he is to take two doves and two pigeons to the priest at the tabernacle entrance, 11who will offer one as a sin offering and one as a burnt offering as substitute payments for sin, {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} because he is guilty by being near a dead body. Then his hair will grow back, and he will again be dedicated to the Lord. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 12He must start over as a Nazarite by making a vow again and bringing a year-old male lamb as a guilt offering.
13"When he has completed the time of his being a Nazarite {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} he is to go to the tabernacle entrance, 14and present to the Lord {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} a year-old female lamb without defects as a sin offering, {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} and a ram without defect as a fellowship offering. 15Also he is to bring a grain offering, a drink offering, and bread baked without yeast, cakes made of fine flour mixed with olive oil, and wafers with oil in them.
16"The priest is to present to the Lord {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} the sin offering, the burnt offering, 17the ram as a fellowship offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} the bread without yeast, and the grain offering and drink offering. 18At the tabernacle entrance the Nazarite is to shave off his hair {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} and put it in the fire under the fellowship offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 19The priest is to put the

boiled shoulder of the ram and a cake and a wafer into the Nazarite's hands, [20]and then he will give them back to the priest who is to wave them before Me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} They and the ram's breast and thigh belong to the priest. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} Then since he is no longer a Nazarite, the man may again drink wine. [21]These are the regulations for the Nazarites. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} If they can bring more to the LORD than what they vowed, they should do so."

Lord, vowing the Nazarite vow {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} of the Old Testament is similar to vowing a fast today. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} It means I am making a commitment to You so You will answer my prayer that I seek. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} Lord, I know I cannot bargain with You, so that You answer a prayer because I keep my vow. That is good works, and we cannot bargain with You. You answer our prayers because of Your grace. Lord, I fast to know You more intimately and completely. When I abide in You, {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} You answer my request. Lord, when I vow a fast, give me strength. May I be strong enough to discipline myself {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} so I can bring glory to You and worship You. Amen.

[22]The LORD told Moses [23]to tell Aaron to bless the people with these words and his sons: {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [24]"'May the LORD bless you and protect you; {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [25]may His face shine on you; may He be gracious to you; {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [26]may He favor you and give you peace.' {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [27]In this way Aaron and his sons will place My name on the Israelites, {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} and I will bless them."

Numbers 7

The Leaders Make an Offering

[1]The day Moses set up the tabernacle, he dedicated it to the Lord {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} with its furnishings, the altar of burnt offering, and utensils. [2]Then the 12 leaders who had counted the people made offerings, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [3]including six covered carts and 12 oxen, an ox for every leader and a cart for every two leaders. [4]The LORD told Moses [5]to accept these gifts so the Levites could use them in their tabernacle work. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

[6]So Moses gave the carts and oxen to the Levites: [7]two carts and four oxen to the Gershonites, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [8]and four carts and eight oxen to the Merarites, all under the direction of Ithamar, Aaron's son. [9]None were given to the Kohathites because they were to carry sacred objects on their shoulders.

[10]The 12 leaders brought offerings to dedicate the altar of burnt offering to the Lord. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [11]The

LORD told Moses to have one leader bring his offerings each day. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} 12The first day Nahshon of the tribe of Judah brought these offerings: 13a silver platter weighing over three pounds; a silver sprinkling bowl weighing about two pounds, both of them filled with flour mixed with olive oil as a grain offering; 14a gold box filled with incense and weighing about four ounces; 15a young bull, a ram, and a one-year-old male lamb as a burnt offering; {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 16a male goat as a sin offering; 17and two oxen, five rams, five male goats, and five one-year-old male lambs as a fellowship offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

18-83The same offerings were brought by each of these leaders on the following days: On the second day Nethanel of the Issachar tribe, on the third day Eliab of the Zebulun tribe, on the fourth day Elizur of the Reuben tribe, on the fifth day Shemumiel of the Simeon tribe, on the sixth day Eliasaph of the Gad tribe, on the seventh day Elishama of the Ephraim tribe, on the eighth day Gamaliel of the Manasseh tribe, on the ninth day Abidan of the Benjamin tribe, on the tenth day Ahiezer of the Dan tribe, on the eleventh day Pagiel of the Asher tribe, and on the twelfth day Ahira of the Naphtali tribe.

84So these offerings for the dedication of the altar of burnt offerings {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} totaled these items: 12 silver platters and 12 silver sprinkling bowls, 85weighing about 60 pounds; 8612 gold boxes filled with incense and weighing about 4 pounds; 8712 bulls, 12 rams, and 12 one-year-old male lambs for the burnt offering with the grain offering; 8824 bulls, 60 rams, 60 male goats, and 60 one-year-old male lambs for the fellowship offering. All these were for dedicating the altar of burnt offering. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

89Whenever Moses went into the tabernacle to speak with the Lord, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} he heard the Lord's voice from between the two winged creatures above the lid on the sacred chest in the most holy place. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

Lord, the leaders brought their gifts to You in front of all the people as an example of generosity. May I be a generous example to all. Also they brought offerings of all the various sacrifices that they should make for their sins. Lord, I too ask You to forgive my sins {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} so I may be accepted in Your fellowship. Amen.

Numbers 8

Aaron Lights the Lamps

1The LORD said to Moses, 2"Tell Aaron to put the seven lamps on the lampstand so that the light shines forward." {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 3Aaron placed the lamps just as the LORD had said. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4The lampstand was made of gold from the base to the blossoms at the top, exactly as God had told Moses.

5The LORD said to Moses, 6"Set the Levites apart from the rest of the Israelites. Make them ceremonially clean {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 7by sprinkling water on them. Then have them shave their entire bodies and wash their clothes. 8Have them bring a bull with a grain offering of flour mixed with olive oil, and a second bull for a sin offering. 9Have all the Levites come to the tabernacle entrance and ask all the Israelites to come. 10Present the Levites to Me {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and have the Israelites lay their hands on them. 11Have Aaron present the Levites to Me as a wave offering from the people {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} to get the Levites ready to serve Me.

12"The Levites are to place their hands on the bulls, one for a sin offering {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and one for a burnt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} as substitute payments for sin. 13Have the Levites stand in front of Aaron and his sons who will then dedicate them to Me as a wave offering. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 14This will show that the Levites are separate from other Israelites and belong to Me.

15"After you have dedicated the Levites to Me as a wave offering, they will be ready to serve in the tabernacle. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 16They are to be given completely to Me, {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} and they will be Mine in place of the firstborn sons. 17When I killed the firstborn sons of the Egyptians, I had set apart the firstborn males in Israel as Mine. 18But now I have chosen the Levites in place of all the firstborn Israelite sons. 19I have given the Levites as gifts to Aaron and his sons to work in the tabernacle and to provide substitute payment for sin so no disease will come on them when they approach the tabernacle." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

20Moses, Aaron, and the Israelites dedicated the Levites as the LORD had commanded. 21After the Levites purified themselves and washed their clothes, Aaron presented them to the Lord as a wave offering {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} and provided a substitute payment for their sins. 22Then the Levites began working in the tabernacle, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} supervised by Aaron and his sons, thus doing exactly what the LORD commanded Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

23The LORD said to Moses, 24"Levites between the ages of 25 and 50 are to work in the tabernacle, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 25but they are to retire at age 50. 26When they retire, they can help the Levites in their duties, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} but not take on any regular tasks. This is how duties are to be assigned to the Levites."

Lord, I live in a world darkened by sin and lawlessness. Light my path so I will know where to walk, and not lose my way. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} Lord, teach me to begin walking, when the light moves ahead and teach me to not run ahead of Your lighted path. I will stay close to the light so I'll not get hurt and I can pray and

read Scripture in the light. It feels safe in the light, and from it I can see danger; also the light is warm and cozy. Amen.

Numbers 9

Observe the Passover Meal

[1]In their 13th month after leaving Egypt the LORD told Moses in the Sinai Desert, [2]"Celebrate Passover [3]at sundown on the14th day of April." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [4]So Moses told the Israelites to celebrate the Passover, [5]and the people did, just as the Lord said.

[6]But because some people had touched a dead body, they were ceremonially unclean. [7]So they said to Moses, "True, we have touched a dead body, but why should that keep us from celebrating the Passover?" {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [8]Moses responded, "I'll see what the Lord says about this." [9]Then the LORD told Moses [10]to tell the people, "If you are unclean because of having touched a dead body or you are away on a journey, you may still celebrate the Passover. [11]But like everyone else, you must celebrate it on April 14, eating the lamb and bread without yeast and bitter herbs. [12]Don't leave any leftovers till the next morning, and don't break any of the lamb's bones. Follow the regulations carefully. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[13]"If you don't celebrate the Passover when you are on a journey, you will no longer be a part of the Israelites. You will suffer this consequence for failing to present a Passover lamb to Me at the proper time. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} [14]If a foreigner living among you wants to celebrate the Passover, he must follow its rules and regulations. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} The regulations for Israelites are the same for foreign residents."

[15]On the very day the tabernacle was erected, a cloud that looked like a fire covered the tabernacle all night long. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} [16]Every day the cloud covered the tabernacle, and every night it changed to what looked like fire.

Lord, Israel knew You were with them when they saw the cloud. Today, I know You are with me everywhere because You promised it in the Word of God. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} By faith I will trust You to be with me to protect, guide, and cause me to grow in grace. Lord, thank You for Your promise in the Word of God, for without it I would be left to my own resources. Amen.

[17]When the cloud moved above the tabernacle, the Israelites moved on, and wherever the cloud stopped, the Israelites made camp there. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [18]This was the LORD's way of telling the Israelites when to move out and when to stop and make camp. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [19]As long as the cloud stayed over the tabernacle, the people did not move out. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [20]Sometimes the cloud was over the tabernacle only a few

days, and so the people would then set out. 21Sometimes the cloud stayed over the tabernacle only overnight, and so when it lifted, whether in the daytime or at night, the people moved out. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 22Other times the cloud didn't move for a couple of days or a month or a year; and so the Israelites stayed encamped. But when it lifted, they set out. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 23The people obeyed the Lord, following whatever He told Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, the church is a mighty thing that You lead. You have set a time for each of us to march, and set a time for each of us to rest. Lord, help me to find my place in this huge parade, help me not to lag or bother those behind, help me not run ahead or bump into those in front. I want to learn to walk at the pace You taught me, and to carry the burdens You have for me. Help me to fit comfortably into Your joyful procession. Amen.

Numbers 10

Silver Trumpets

1The LORD told Moses, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 2"Make two trumpets of silver to use in calling the Israelites to assemble or in signaling them to move camp. 3If both trumpets are blown, all the Israelites must gather at the tabernacle entrance. 4But if only one trumpet is sounded, the 12 tribal leaders are to assemble. 5When a different trumpet blast is sounded, the tribes to the east of the tabernacle are to set out. 6When a second blast is sounded, the tribes to the south of the tabernacle are to set out. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 7Trumpet blasts for assembling the people are to be different from the signals for breaking camp. 8The trumpet blowers are to be only the priests, Aaron's descendants. This law is to be the same for generations to come.

9"When you are in your land and you go into battle against your enemy, sound an alarm with the trumpets. I will hear it and will rescue you. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 10Also blow the trumpets when you celebrate your annual festivals and at the beginning of each month and when you offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} These trumpet blasts will remind you that I am with you and I am the LORD your God."

11On the 20th day of the 14th month after the Israelites left Egypt, the cloud over the tabernacle lifted. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 12So the Israelites left the Sinai Desert and followed the cloud till it stopped in the Paran Desert. 13This was the first time they followed the cloud after God gave His traveling instructions to Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 14The tribe of Judah behind its flag went first, led by Nahshon. 15Next was the tribe of Issachar, led by Nethanel, 16and the tribe of Zebulun, led by Eliab.

17The tabernacle was taken down, and the Gershonites and Merarites were next and carried the tabernacle. 18Next was the tribe of Reuben, led by Elizur, 19followed by the

tribe of Simeon, led by Shelumiel, [20]and the tribe of Gad, led by Eliasaph.
[21]Next were the Kohathites, who carried the objects for the tabernacle, which was to be erected by the time they arrived. [22]Following them were the tribe of Ephraim, led by Elishama; [23]the tribe of Manasseh, led by Gamaliel; [24]and the tribe of Benjamin, led by Ahidan. [25]The last three were the tribe of Dan, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} led by Ahiezer; [26]the tribe of Asher, led by Pagiel; [27]and the tribe of Naphtali, led by Ahira. [28]This was the order in which the tribes marched each time they moved camp.
[29]Moses said to his brother-in-law Hobab, son of Reuel the Midianite, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} "Finally, we are on our way to the land the LORD promised to give to us. Why don't you join us? We will treat you well, {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} because the LORD has given us wonderful promises." {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [30]Hobab replied, "No, thanks. But I should return to my own country and relatives." [31]Moses pleaded, "Please stay with me. You know this desert, so you can help us know where to camp. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [32]And you can share in the blessings the Lord gives us."
[33]Leaving the Sinai Desert, they traveled for three days, with the sacred chest as the head of the procession, [34]and the cloud over them. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [35]As the Levites carried the sacred chest, Moses said, "Rise up, LORD, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} defeat your enemies and make them run." [36]Then when the Levites stopped with the chest, Moses prayed, "Return, LORD, and bless Israel's thousands of people."

Lord, keep me from looking down in discouragement; may I look up to see You leading me by Your presence. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Lord, may the cloud remind me to worship You and follow You without complaint. Get glory out of my obedience today. Amen.

Numbers 11

The People Complained

[1]The people started complaining about their hardships, and the LORD heard them. And He became so angry that He destroyed the outskirts of their camp by fire. [2]The people yelled to Moses for help, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and when he prayed the fire went out. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [3]So they named the place Taberah (meaning "Burning").

Lord, give me a good memory so I won't forget the places and times I disobeyed You. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} Help me remember my disobedience and the consequences I suffered because I disobeyed You. Lord, may my memory keep me from future consequences; may I always obey You from now on. Amen.

4One day some Egyptians who had come
with the Israelites complained, "We would
like some meat. 5We remember the fish we
ate in Egypt, and also the cucumbers, mel-
ons, leeks, onions, and garlic. 6But now all
we ever see is manna!" {504 Unbelief-Hin-
drance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 7The manna
was like small white seeds and looked like
resin from the bark of a tree. 8The peo-
ple gathered it from the ground, crushed
it or pounded it into flour, and boiled it
to make thin wafers. It tasted like it was
cooked in olive oil. 9The manna fell with
the dew each evening. {97 Daily-Prayer,
Acts 2:42}
10Moses heard the people weeping at their
tents. The LORD got very angry, and
Moses was displeased too. 11Moses asked
the Lord, "Why are you bringing this trou-
ble on me? What have I done to deserve
this? 12They aren't my children? So why
should I have to nurse them along? {248
Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 13They
keep wanting meat, but where could I pos-
sibly get any? 14The load of these people is
too heavy for me. {454 Spiritual-Strength
Prayer, Rom. 1:16} 15If this is how You will
trust me, then put me to death {100 Death-
Prayer, Rev. 9:6} and end my misery."
16The LORD said to Moses, "Choose 70
leaders of Israel and have them meet with
you at the tabernacle. {66 Church Leader-
ship-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} 17I will talk
with you there and I will empower them
with My spirit. They will share your respon-
sibilities so you won't have to carry the
burden of these people alone. {219 Help-
Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 18Tell the people,
'Purify yourselves because tomorrow you
will have meat to eat. I heard your com-
plaint. 19And so you will have meat every
day for a month, 20so much so that you will
get sick of it, all because you rejected Me
{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
and complained that you even left Egypt.'"
{504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb.
3:12}
21Moses said, "There are 600,000 men
here, so how can you give them meat for
a whole month? 22If we slaughter all our
flocks and herds and catch every fish in
the sea, that wouldn't be enough meat."
{467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts
14:19-20} 23The LORD answered, "Is my
power limited? You will see that my word
will come true."
24Moses told the people what God had
said. Then he had the 70 leaders stand with
him by the tabernacle. 25The LORD came
in the cloud {377 Presence of God-Prayer,
Ps. 16:11} and spoke to Moses. Then his
Spirit took control of them, {167 Filling
of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and they
prophesied (but they did it only this one
time).
26Two of the 70, Eldad and Medad, had not
gone to the tabernacle with the others. But
the Spirit came on them and they proph-
esied. 27A young man told Moses what
happened, 28and Joshua, Moses' assistant,
urged Moses to stop them. {504 Unbe-
lief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 29But
Moses replied, "Are you concerned that I
don't have this ability to prophesy? I could
wish that all God's people were prophets
and had God's Spirit on them." {224 Holy
Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 30Then Moses and
the 70 leaders went to their tents.

[31]Later God sent a strong wind that blew quails from the Mediterranean Sea and completely covered the Israelite camp, flying three feet high for 15 miles or so in every direction. [32]All day and night the people gathered quail, {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} each person getting about 50 bushels. Then they spread them out to dry. [33]But as the people started eating, the Lord in His anger sent a terrible disease and many people died. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [34]The people called the place Kibroth-Hattaavah (meaning, "Graves for the Greedy" because they buried the people who complained about the manna). {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [35]Then Israel traveled to Hazeroth.

Lord, many times I doubt Your ability to do things, just as Moses didn't believe You could feed the multitude. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} Yet You brought quail to feed almost 3 million people. This was exceedingly above and beyond what the people expected. Lord, give me faith to trust You for great answers by faith and take away my unbelieving heart. I believe, help my unbelief. Amen.

Numbers 12

Miriam Is Punished

[1]Miriam and Aaron criticized Moses because he married a woman from Ethiopia. [2]"So does he think the Lord speaks only through him? The LORD has spoken to us too." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} And the Lord heard them. ([3]Moses was the most humble man on earth.) {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [4]So the LORD told Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to go to the tabernacle entrance. [5]Appearing in a cloud, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} He told them to come close. [6]Telling them to listen carefully, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} He said, "I speak to prophets in visions {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} and dreams, {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [7]but not with Moses, My servant. [8]I speak face to face with him {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} and clearly, not in riddles. So you should not be criticizing him." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [9]The Lord was angry with them and He left.

[10]As the cloud lifted, Miriam's skin suddenly turned white with leprosy. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} Seeing what happened, Aaron said, [11]"Don't punish me for our foolishness. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [12]Don't let Miriam's skin be like that of a stillborn child." [13]So Moses asked the LORD to heal her, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [14]and the LORD said, "If her father had spit in her face she would have been ceremonially unclean for a week. I'll have her stay outside the camp for a week."

[15]A week later, when Miriam returned, the Israelites left Hazeroth [16]and camped in the Paran Desert. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}

Lord, it is so easy to complain. Even Aaron and Miriam, leaders in Israel, fell into the trap of complaining. But You never allow any sin to go unpunished, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} even when leaders give in to selfish criticism, even for a seemingly small sin like criticizing. Lord, keep my heart's desire pure and straightforward. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Keep me from comparing myself to others. May I be filled with the fruit of the Spirit. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} May I glorify You with my words. Amen.

Numbers 13

The Twelve Spies

1The LORD instructed Moses {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 2to explore Canaan by sending in 12 spies, one from each tribe. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 3They went from the Paran Desert where the Israelites were camped. 4These are their names and tribes: Shammua from the tribe of Reuben, 5Shaphat from Simeon, 6Caleb from Judah, 7Igal from Issachar, 8Hoshea from Ephraim, 9Palti from Benjamin, 10Gaddiel from Zebulun, 11Gaddi from Manasseh, 12Ammiel from Dan, 13Sethur from Asher, 14Nahbi from Naphtali, 15and Geuel from Gad. 16At that time Moses changed Hoshea's name to Joshua.

17As Moses sent them out, he gave them these instructions: "Go south through the Southern Desert and into the hill country {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} 18to see what the land is like. See if the people are strong and weak and how many live there. 19See if the land is fertile or not and if the towns are walled or not. 20See if the soil is good and what kind of trees grow there. Bring back some of the crops including grapes, since they should be ripening now." 21The 12 men left from the Zin Desert in the south and went all the way to Rehob near Lebo-Hamath in the north. 22Going through the Southern Desert, they came to Hebron. They saw there clans of giant people, the Ahiman, Sheshai, and Talmai. 23When they got to the Eschol Valley, they cut off a branch with such a large cluster of grapes {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} that it took two men to carry it on a pole. They also took some pomegranates and figs. 24The Israelites called the place Eschol (meaning "Cluster") because of the cluster of grapes the spies took.

25After exploring the land for 40 days, 26the 12 spies returned to Kadesh in the Paran Desert and reported to Moses, Aaron, and all the Israelites what they saw, and showed them the fruit they brought back with them. 27They reported, "The land does have lots of milk from many cows and has much honey from bees. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 28But the people there are strong, their cities are well fortified, {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} and we even saw clans of giants. 29Also the Amalekites live in the Southern Desert; the Hittites, Jebusites, and Amorites live in the hill country; and the Canaanites live near the Mediterranean Sea and the

Jordan River." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
30Then Caleb, the spy from Judah, calmed down the people and said, "Let's go take the land. We can do it." {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} 31But the other men said, "We can't go against these people. They are stronger than we are." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
32They spread discouraging words about the land, saying, "The land devours its people, {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} the people are very tall, 33and we saw giants there. Next to them we felt as small as grasshoppers."

Lord, unbelief looks at the obstacle and enemies, and cries out in unbelief, "It can't be done!" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} Faith looks at Your promises and Your almighty hand, and cries, "It will be done!" {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} Lord, may I not look at where You're leading me, and draw back in unbelief. May I walk forward in strong faith to do Your will, because You have always kept Your promises. Amen.

Numbers 14

The People Rebel at Kadesh-Barnea

1After hearing the majority report of the spies, the Israelites cried all night long. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 2They complained to Moses and Aaron, "We wish we had died in Egypt or here in the desert. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}
3Why is the Lord leading us into Canaan only to be killed and our women and children captured? Let's go back to Egypt. That would be better than here." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
4They said, "Let's choose a leader and go back."
5Moses and Aaron fell with their faces down to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 6Two of the spies, Joshua and Caleb, tore their clothing in grief 7and told the people, "The land we explored is very good. 8The LORD will bring us there into that fertile land and give it to us. 9So don't rebel against the LORD, and don't be afraid of the people there. We can easily conquer them because the LORD is with us. So don't be afraid." {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}
10The people even talked about stoning Joshua and Caleb. But the Lord appeared in a cloud, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 11and he said to Moses, "How long will these people reject Me? Will they never believe Me even after all the miracles I have done for them? 12So I will destroy them with a terrible disease, but I will make you the ancestor of a nation greater than they are." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
13Moses pleaded, "But, LORD, what if the Egyptians hear about it? You brought these people from Egypt by Your great power. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 14If You destroy them, the Egyptians will tell the people of Canaan about it. And the Canaanites know that You are with us, and talk with us, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and

that You guide us by a bright cloud in the daytime and a flaming fire at night. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 15If You kill us, the nations who hear about it will say 16You weren't strong enough to bring us into the land, and so You killed us all in the desert. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

17"So, LORD, show us Your power. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 18You don't easily get angry, You are full of love, {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} and You forgive sin. Yet You punish the guilty, even their guilty children and grandchildren. 19Because of Your love forgive our sins, {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} just as You have forgiven us since we left Egypt."

20The LORD replied, "Okay. I will forgive them. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 21But as surely as I live and My glory fills the earth, not one of these Israelites will enter the land of Canaan. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 22They saw My miracles in Egypt and in the desert, 23but they won't see the Promised Land. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 24But My servant Caleb is different and follows Me wholeheartedly. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I will bring him into the land, and his descendants will live there. 25But since the Israelites are so afraid of the Amalekites and Canaanites, tomorrow My people are to go back in the desert toward the Red Sea." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 26The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, 27"How long will these people complain against Me? {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 28Tell them this: 'I will do the very things I heard you say. 29You said you would rather die in the desert, and you will! {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} This includes everyone 20 years of age and older who complained against Me, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 30except Caleb and Joshua. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} 31You were concerned that your children would be captured, but they will enter the land you rejected, 32but you will die in the desert. 33You will wander in the desert for 40 years, {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} because of your unfaithfulness to Me. 34You will suffer one year for each of the 40 days the spies explored the land. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} You will see what it is like for Me to be your enemy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 35I will do these things because you have all been against Me.'" {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

36-37The LORD sent a terrible disease on the men who spread a bad report about the land, and they died. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 38Of the 12 spies only Joshua and Caleb lived on. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 39When Moses reported God's words to the people, they were very sad. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

40Early the next morning they said, "We have sinned. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} But we are now ready to enter the Promised Land." 41But Moses said, "You are disobeying the LORD. Your plan won't work. 42Don't go up, because your enemies will defeat you. 43The Amalekites and Canaanites will kill you with their swords, because you rejected the LORD."

44But the Israelites went into the hill country anyway, though neither Moses or the sacred chest left the camp. 45The Amalekites and Canaanites defeated the Israelites and chased them all the way to Hormah, southeast of Beersheba.

Lord, Moses had a difficult job when interceding to You. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} He had to change Your mind so You wouldn't destroy Your people Israel. Moses didn't just plead Your mercy or goodness (which is a good basis for prayer) but Moses based his request on the promises You made to Your people. Moses also reminded You what the pagan would say if You destroyed Your people in the desert. Lord, Moses interceded and You listened to Him. He had the ability to touch Your heart in prayer. Lord, I want that ability in my prayer life so I can get answers. Teach me how to find Your heart in prayer. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} Amen.

Numbers 15

Rules about Offerings

1The LORD told Moses 2to tell the Israelites, "When you are in the land 3and you want to please Me by bringing a burnt offering or any other offering by fire, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} the sacrifice must be from your sheep, goats, or cattle. Whether you bring a burnt offering, a sacrifice in fulfillment of a vow, or a freewill offering, or an offering associated with the annual festivals, {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 4you must also bring a grain offering of two quarts of flour mixed with a quart of olive oil. 5With each lamb for a burnt offering, also present a quart of wine as a drink offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

6"If you bring a ram as a sacrifice, include with it a grain offering of four quarts of flour mixed with two and a half pints of olive oil; 7and two and a half pints of wine as a drink offering. I will be pleased with this sacrifice. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

8"If your offering is a bull as a burnt offering or other sacrifice or to fulfill a vow or as a fellowship offering, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 9also bring a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with two quarts of olive oil. 10Also bring two quarts of wine as a drink offering. I will be pleased with this sacrifice. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 11-12Follow these instructions for each bull, ram, lamb, or young goat you offer. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

13"These instructions are to be followed by you Israelites 14and also foreign residents. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 15The same laws apply to both and are not to be changed. I view you and foreign residents the same way, and that's why 16the same laws apply to both." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, help me remember the nature of a sacrifice. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} A sacrifice is giving up something I need,

or something I use, or something I enjoy. Lord, when I sacrifice something to You, it's a choice to put You and Your work first, and put me and my plans second. Israel was asked to show their faith and love to You by sacrificing their animals and crops to You. This was quite a sacrifice for those living in an agricultural society; they gave You necessities, not luxuries. May I be willing to sacrifice my necessities to demonstrate my faith and love to You. Amen.

17Then the LORD told Moses 18to tell the people, "When you enter the land 19and you eat the food there, give some of it as an offering to Me. 20From the first of the flour you grind present a cake to Me. 21This offering from your threshing floor must be given every year for generations to come. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

22"Suppose you as a nation fail to keep any of these commands but don't mean to, 23or suppose some of your descendants fail to do it without meaning to, 24and you are not aware of it at first, {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} then they must offer a bull as a burnt offering (I will be pleased with it), along with a grain offering, drink offering, and a male goat as a sin offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 25Then the priest will present these as substitute payments for sin, and the people will be forgiven, since their sin was not intentional and they brought to Me an offering by fire and a sin offering. 26Both Israelites and foreign residents will be forgiven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

27"Suppose one of you sins without intending to. Then he must bring a year-old female goat as a sin offering. 28The priest is to offer the sacrifice as a substitute payment for sin, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and the individual will be forgiven. 29This law applies to both Israelites and foreign residents.

30"If anyone purposefully sins by blaspheming the LORD, that person, whether an Israelite or a foreign resident, will no longer be part of the Israelites. 31Because he has mistreated My word and despised My commands, {509 Unpardonable-Sin Prayer, Matt. 12:30-32} he will not be a part of the nation and he will suffer the consequences of his sin."

32One time a man was found gathering wood on the Sabbath. 33He was brought to Moses and Aaron and all the people. 34But no one knew what to do with him so they kept him in custody. 35Then the LORD told Moses that the man must die by stoning by all the people. 36So the people took him outside the camp and stoned him to death, as the Lord had commanded. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

37The LORD told Moses to tell the people, 38"Sew tassels on the bottom of your clothes, and tie each one with a blue string. 39As you look at these tassels, they will remind you of My commands {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and urge you not to follow your desires. 40The tassels will help you remember to obey My commands {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and to be holy before Me. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 41Don't forget that I am the

LORD your God who brought you out of Egypt. Yes, I am the LORD, your God."

Lord, this passage reminds me how much You hate sin, especially when Your followers sin willfully. Lord, I will do my best to obey Your commands and not sin as I live on this earth. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Lord, I don't know everything, so I sin unintentionally; forgive me of all my sins of ignorance. Help me to learn what I must do and give me strength to please You and live above sin. Amen.

Numbers 16

The Rebellion of Korah

1One day Korah, a grandson of Levi, and three Reubenites, Dathan, Abiram, and On, 2rebelled against Moses. They and 250 well-known leaders {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 3went to Moses and Aaron and said, "Why do you two think you are greater than anyone else in our nation? All of us—not just you—have been set apart by the LORD, and He is with all of us." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

4Hearing this, Moses fell with his face to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 5Then he said to Korah and the others, "Tomorrow morning the LORD will show who is set apart to Him, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and that person will come near to Him. 6Korah, you and your followers 7tomorrow are to burn fire and incense in some fire pans to the LORD. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Then we will see whom the LORD has chosen to be His priest. You Levites, not Aaron and I, are the ones who have gone too far."

8Moses then said to Korah, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} "Isn't it enough that God has separated you and all other Levites from the rest of the Israelites 9to serve Him in the tabernacle and minister to the people? {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 10He has given you Levites special responsibilities, and now you are trying to be the priest too. 11You and your followers are actually working against the LORD, not against Aaron. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}"

12When Moses sent for Dathan and Abiram, they said, "We won't come. 13Isn't it enough that you have brought us out of the rich land of Egypt to die in the desert? And now you want to boss us. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 14What's more, you haven't brought us into a land where there is plenty of milk and honey and fertile fields and vineyards. You can't fool us. We won't come."

15Hearing this, Moses got very angry and said to the LORD, "Don't accept their offering. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} I've done nothing wrong to them. I haven't even taken a donkey from them." 16Then Moses said to Korah, "Tomorrow you and your 250 followers are to present yourselves to the LORD, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and Aaron will be there too. 17Put fire and incense in your fire pans, to present them to the LORD, and Aaron is to do the

same." [18]So each man did that and stood with Moses and Aaron at the tabernacle entrance. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [19]Then the LORD's glory appeared to all the Israelites, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [20]and He told Moses and Aaron [21]to get away from the Israelites because He would kill them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[22]Moses and Aaron fell with their faces to the ground {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and prayed, "God, You are the source of life. So why be angry with all the Israelites when only one man sinned?" {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[23]Then the LORD told Moses to tell the people to [24]move away from the tents of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram. [25]Moses went over to Dathan and Abiram, and was followed by the leaders. [26]He warned the people, "Get away from the tents of these evil men and don't touch anything of theirs or you will be destroyed." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [27]So they moved back from their tents, but Dathan and Abiram stood at their tents with their wives and children.

[28]Moses said to everyone, "This wasn't my idea, but here is how you will know that the Lord is in this. [29]If these men die a natural death, then the Lord didn't send me. [30]But if a deep crevice appears in the ground and they with their belongings fall into it and die, you will know they turned against the Lord." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[31]As soon as Moses said this, the ground split open, [32]and Korah, Dathan, and Abiram and their families and households fell into the large crevice. [33]As soon as they fell into the grave alive, the crevice closed over them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and they died. [34]Hearing the men's screams, the Israelites ran, fearing that the earth would swallow them too. [35]Then fire from the LORD killed the 250 men who were offering incense. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[36]The LORD told Moses, [37]"Tell Eleazar, Aaron's son, to take the fire pans, which are holy, from the fire and scatter the coals far away from the tabernacle. [38]That's because these men sinned against Me in burning incense. Hammer the metal of the fire pans into a thin sheet of bronze for a covering over the altar of burnt offering, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} which will be a warning to the Israelites." [39]So Eleazar had the bronze fire pans hammered out into a thin sheet of bronze to cover the altar of burnt offering, [40]as the LORD told Moses. This was a warning to the Israelites that only Aaron's descendants were to burn incense to the LORD. If anyone did, he would meet the same fate as Korah and his followers. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[41]The very next morning the Israelites again complained against Moses and Aaron and said, "You two have killed the Lord's people." [42]As the people gathered around Moses and Aaron, suddenly the glory of the LORD appeared and the cloud covered the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [43]As Moses and Aaron were standing at the tabernacle entrance, {26 Atmospheric-Worship,

Gen. 32:24-30} 44the Lord told Moses to get away from the people 45so He could destroy them. Falling face down on the ground, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 46Moses told Aaron, "Grab a fire pan, put incense and fire in it, so it can be a substitute payment for sin." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Why? Because the LORD is angry and He has already sent a terrible disease on the people. 47-48Aaron did as Moses said and stood between the living and the dead. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} The disease had started to spread, but Aaron offered the incense in the fire pan to the Lord, thus making a substitute payment for the people's sin. Then the disease stopped spreading. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

49But 14,700 people died from the disease besides those who died with Korah and his followers. 50Then Aaron joined Moses at the tabernacle entrance.

Lord, You have put Your Spirit on those men You call to serve You fulltime as Your leaders. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} I realize some like the "honor" and "power" of "church leadership," but they were not called by You, nor are they spiritually qualified. Moses was correct to test them by fire, and the church must test false leaders who wrongly want to lead your church today. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} Lord, You said, "Do not despise inspired messages, put all things to the test: Keep what is good, and avoid every kind of evil" (1 Thess. 5:20, 22, TEV). Lord, I will carefully obey what You have said {328 Obligation-Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} in the inspired Word of God. Amen.

Numbers 17

Aaron's Walking Stick

1The LORD told Moses, 2"Take 12 wooden sticks, one from each of the tribes, and write the name of the tribal leader on his stick. 3Write Aaron's name on the one from the tribe of Levi. 4Then place them in the tabernacle in front of the sacred chest where I meet with you. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 5Buds will sprout on the stick of the man I choose to be My priest. This will put an end to the people's complaining." {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1}

6So Moses told this to the Israelites, and their leaders and Aaron brought their sticks to Moses, 7who then placed them in the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 8The next day when Moses went into the tabernacle, he saw that Aaron's stick had buds, flowers, and almonds on it. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 9Moses brought out all 12 sticks, showed them to the people, and each man took his own.

10The LORD told Moses, "Put Aaron's stick in front of the sacred chest, as a warning to any rebellious people. This will put an end to their complaining against Me and keep them from dying." 11Moses did that. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12But the Israelites shouted, "We'll die! We

are all doomed! 13We'll all die if we even get close to the tabernacle." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

Lord, Aaron's dry walking stick that bloomed and bore fruit shows that You are able to make dead bodies live. I thank You for this picture that shows Your resurrection promise and power. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Lord, I believe Your promise of resurrection throughout Scripture. I know one day I will be raised from death, and that I'll live forever with You. I thank You for the hope of life beyond the grave now. I will live for You on this earth, because I have the hope of heaven after death. Amen.

Numbers 18

The Duties of the Priests and the Levites

1The LORD said to Aaron, "You, your sons, and your relatives are responsible for any violations against the tabernacle, and you and your sons are responsible for any violations against the priesthood. 2Your fellow Levites are to help you when you serve in the tabernacle. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 3But in performing their duties, they are not to go near the tabernacle furnishings or the altar of burnt offering. If they do, they and you will die. 4The Levites are to help you in caring for the tabernacle, and no one else. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 5"You are to care for the tabernacle and the altar of burnt offering, so that I won't be angry with you again. 6The Levites are a gift from Me to you. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} They are dedicated to Me to serve in the tabernacle. 7But only you and your sons are to serve as priests at the altar of burnt offering and the most holy place. {384 Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Rom. 12:3-8} Anyone else who tries to do these things will die."

8Then the LORD said to Aaron, "You are in charge of all the gifts the people bring to Me. And I am giving you and your sons a regular share in these offerings. 9The grain offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings are for you and your sons, along with portions of sacrifices that are not found on the altar of burnt offering. 10These portions you eat are very holy, {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} and only men may eat them. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

11"Also gifts that are presented to Me as wave offerings are for you and your children to eat if they are ceremonially clean. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 12-13Also the first-harvested olive oil, wine, and grain that people bring to Me are for you {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} and your children if they are ceremonially clean. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

14"Everything that the people dedicate to Me is yours. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 15The firstborn son in every family and the firstborn male of your flocks and herds are yours. But you must buy back from me every firstborn son

and every firstborn male of unclean animals. [16]Buy them back when they are one-month old for about two ounces of silver. [17]But do not buy back the firstborn of an ox, a sheep, or a goat because they are set apart to Me. Sprinkle their blood on the altar of burnt offering and burn their fat as an offering to Me. I will be pleased with those offerings. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [18]You may eat the meat of these animals, just as you may eat the heart and right thigh that are offered to Me as wave offerings. [19]These offerings the people bring to Me I give to you as your children. This is My everlasting promise (like a covenant of salt) for you and your descendants." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[20]The LORD also said to Aaron, "You will not inherit any land or share property with others, because I am your inheritance. [21]One-tenth of the people's crops and one out of every ten newborn animals are to be given to the Levites as pay {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} for their tabernacle work. [22]No Israelite is to go near the tabernacle, or they will be guilty and will die. [23]Only the Levites are to serve at the tabernacle, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} and they are responsible for any offences against it. They are to receive no inheritance; [24]instead their inheritance consists of the crops and newborn animals the Israelites bring to Me." {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[25]The LORD told Moses [26]to speak to the Levites and tell them, "When the people bring ten percent of their crops and newborn animals to you, {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} you are to present a tenth of that to Me. [27]This will be as if you are bringing to Me grain from the threshing floor and grape juice from the winepress. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [28]By presenting to Me one-tenth of all you receive from the Israelites, you are making an offering to Me. [29]This portion to be given to Me is to be the best of everything you receive.

[30]"When you present the best part to Me, it will be as if it came from your own threshing floor or winepress. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [31]You and your Levite families may eat this food wherever you wish; it is your pay for serving in the tabernacle. [32]You won't be punished for eating this food so long as you give the best portions to the priests. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} But if you treat the offerings as commonplace and not holy, you will die."

Lord, thank You for the way You take care of Your servants. Amen.

Numbers 19

Rules about Cleanliness

[1]The LORD said to Moses and Aaron, [2]"Here is another requirement. The people are to bring to you a red heifer with no physical defects and that has not been used for plowing. [3]Give it to Eleazar, who is to have it slaughtered outside the camp while he watches. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [4]Then he is to sprinkle some of its

blood seven times toward the tabernacle, [5]and the heifer is to be burned completely. [6]Eleazar is to take some cedar wood, a hyssop branch, and red wool and throw them onto the heifer as it's being burned. [7]Then he is to wash his clothes and take a bath. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} He may return to the camp, but he will be ceremonially unclean all day. [8]The man who burns the heifer must also wash his clothes and take a bath, and he too will be ceremonially unclean all day.

[9]"A ceremonially clean person is to gather up the heifer's ashes and put them in a clean place outside the camp. The ashes are to be kept there mixed with water for the people to use in the ceremony to wash away sins symbolically. [10]Also the man who gathers up the ashes is to wash his clothes and take a bath, but he too will be ceremonially unclean all day. This is a permanent law to be followed by both Israelites and foreign residents.

[11]"If someone touches a dead human body, he will be ceremonially unclean for a week. [12]He can become ceremonially clean by washing on the third and seventh days with the water mixed with the heifer's ashes. If he doesn't do this on those two days, he will remain unclean. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [13]If someone touches a dead human body and doesn't purify himself, he makes the tabernacle unclean and he will no longer be a part of My people. Since the water of purification was not sprinkled on him, he will remain ceremonially unclean.

[14]"If someone dies in a tent, anyone who enters the tent or is already in it will be ceremonially unclean for a week, and [15]any open jar in the tent will be unclean. [16]If someone touches the body of a person who has been killed with a sword or has died a natural death, or if he touches a human bone or a grave, he will be ceremonially unclean for a week.

[17]"To be ceremonially clean, pour over him some of the water with the heifer's ashes in it. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [18]Then someone who is ceremonially clean is to dip a hyssop branch in the water that has the heifer's ashes and sprinkle the tabernacle and its furnishings and the people who were there. He is also to sprinkle anyone who touched a human bone or a grave or someone who was killed or died a natural death. [19]He is to do this on the third and seventh days. Then the person being cleaned is to wash his clothes and take a bath, and that evening he will be clean. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [20]But if he does not purify himself, he is no longer to be a part of the Israelites. [21]This is a permanent law. The one who sprinkles the water and ashes must wash his clothes, and if someone touches this water he will be ceremonially unclean all day. [22]If a person is unclean, anything he touches becomes unclean, and anyone who touches that object will be unclean all day." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Lord, this chapter tells me You want Your servants to be clean from all kinds of defilement. I will separate myself from all that defiles. Amen.

Numbers 20

Moses Defies God

[1]In March of the Israelite's 40th year in the wilderness they arrived at the Zin Desert {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} and set up camp near Kadesh. There Miriam, Moses' sister, died {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and was buried. [2]No water was there, so the Israelites [3]complained to Moses and said, "We wish we had died when the LORD killed our brothers. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} [4]You brought us into the desert and now we and our livestock will die. [5]Why bring us out of Egypt into this awful place? Here we have no grain, figs, grapes, or pomegranates. And we have no water to drink." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}

[6]Moses and Aaron fell face down at the tabernacle entrance, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and the LORD's glory appeared to them. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [7]The LORD instructed Moses, [8]"Take your walking stick and you and Aaron gather the Israelites together. Speak to that nearby rock, {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27} and water will come gushing out of it. This will give plenty of water for all of them and their livestock."

[9]So Moses took his stick, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [10]he and Aaron assembled the people, and Moses said, "Listen, you rebellious people. Why must we bring you water out of this rock?" [11]Then Moses struck the rock twice, and water gushed out, and the people and their livestock drank. [12]But the LORD said to Moses and Aaron, "You did not trust Me {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} and treat Me with respect in front of the Israelites—you hit the rock twice, not once as I said—so you will not be the one to lead them into the land I will give them." [13]Because the people had complained to the LORD about the lack of water, they named the place Meribah (meaning, "Complaining").

Lord, You called Moses the most humble man {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} on earth (Num. 12:3, KJV), yet he was motivated by pride. "Must we bring water... out of this rock" (Num. 20:10, NKJV). He was tempted at his strongest point of character, yet he sinned. When I am tempted at my strength, may I not sin. Amen.

[14]Moses sent messengers from Kadesh to the king of nearby Edom with this message: "We are Israelites, your relatives, and no doubt you have heard about the trouble we've had. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [15]Our ancestors lived a long time in Egypt. But the Egyptians were mean to them. [16]So they prayed to the Lord, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} and He brought us out of Egypt. We are now at Kadesh near your territory. [17]Please let us go through your country. We won't go into your fields or vineyards or drink from any of your wells. We'll stay on the main road until we have passed through your country."

[18]The king of Edom answered, "No way! You may not go through our country. If

you try, we will attack you." 19The Israelites answered, "We promise to stay on the main road and if any of our livestock drink any of your water, we will pay for it. We simply want to pass through on foot." 20Again Edom answered, "No, you can't go through our land." Then Edom sent out many strong soldiers. 21So since Edom would not let them go through their country, Israel gave up the idea.

22The Israelites then traveled from Kadesh to Mount Hor, near Edom's border. 23There the Lord said to Moses and Aaron, 24"Aaron will die here. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He will not enter the land I promised because both of you rebelled against Me by disobeying Me at Meribah. 25Moses, take Aaron and his son Eleazar up Mount Hor. 26Then take Aaron's priestly garments and put them on Eleazar. Aaron will die there." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

27Moses did as the LORD told him to do. Everyone watched as Moses, Aaron, and Eleazar climbed up Mount Hor. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} 28Moses took off Aaron's priestly garments and put them on Eleazar. And Aaron died there on the mountaintop. 29And when the Israelites heard the news, they mourned for Aaron for 30 days. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

Lord, it's inconceivable that Moses sinned against You, so that You didn't permit him to enter Canaan. Yet Your Word is clear, Moses sinned publicly and You kept him from the Promised Land. Lord, teach me to obey Your Word instantly, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and seek Your will with all my heart. Lord, I will be Your servant and obey You. I will quickly obey Your Word. Amen.

Numbers 21

The Israelites Defeat the Canaanites

1When the Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Southern Desert, heard that the Israelites were approaching Atharim, he attacked them and took some as captives. 2Then the Israelites promised the LORD, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} "If you will help us defeat the Canaanites here in the Southern Desert, we will completely destroy their cities." 3The LORD heard their prayer, and helped them destroy the Canaanites and their towns. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} So they named the place Hormah (meaning "Destruction").

4The Israelites traveled from Mount Hor eastward to go around Edom. But they got impatient, and complained again to the Lord and Moses. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 5"Why have You brought us here to die in the desert? {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} We have no bread and no water, and we are tired of this awful manna." 6Then the LORD sent poisonous snakes which bit the people and many died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 7The people said to Moses, "We admit we did wrong in speaking against the LORD and you. So ask the LORD

to take the snakes away." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Moses prayed,
[8]and the LORD said to Moses, "Make a bronze replica of a snake so people can look at it and be healed." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [9]So Moses made a bronze snake and put it on a pole. Anyone who was bitten and looked at the bronze snake lived. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18}

Lord, the bronze serpent points me to Jesus Christ. Both were lifted up as a sign of the peoples' sin. All they had to do was "look and live." I have looked to Christ who bore my sin and I have eternal life. Amen.

[10]The Israelites then camped at Oboth,
[11]and from there they went to Iye Abarim in the desert east of Moab. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [12]From there they traveled to the Zered Valley, [13]and then near the Arnon River and camped in Amorite territory. The Arnon is the border between the Amorites and the Moabites. [14]The Book of the Wars of the Lord mentions the town of Waheb in the Suphah territory, [15]the Arnon River, and the ravine leading to the town of Ar near the southern Moabite border.
[16]Then the Israelites went to Beer, a well where the LORD told Moses to gather the people together because {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} He was going to give them water. [17]The Israelites sang about his well in this song: "Spring up, O well. Sing
[18]about the well that the princes dug, the well the leaders dug with their scepters and staffs." {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6}
Then they traveled to Mattanah, [19]Nahaliel, Bamoth, [20]and the valley in Moab where Mount Pisgah overlooks the desert near the Dead Sea.
[21]Messengers went to Sihon, king of the Amorites, with this request: [22]"Let us pass through your territory. We won't go into your fields or vineyards or drink from any of your wells. We will stay on the main road as we go through your land." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[23]But Sihon refused to let Israel pass through his land. Instead he marched his army against the Israelites at Jahaz.
[24]But Israel defeated them {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} and took over their land from the Arnon River north to the Jabbok River, but not beyond that with the territory of the Ammonites, whose border was well fortified. [25]The Israelites captured the cities of the Amorites {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} including Heshbon and nearby villages. [26]Heshbon was the city of Sihon, the Amorite king, who had conquered all the Moabite territory north of the Arnon. [27]That's why they wrote this poem about Heshbon:
"Come and rebuild Heshbon, which was King Sihon's capital city. [28]Fire went out from Heshbon, Sihon's city, and burned up the city of Ar in Moab, killing its citizens. [29]You Moabites are destroyed. Your god Chemosh could not keep your sons and daughters from being taken as captives to Sihon.
[30]"We Amorites completely defeated the Moabites, including their towns of Heshbon, Dibon, Nophah, and Medeba."

[31]So the Israelites settled in the land of the Amorites. [32]They captured Jazer and surrounding towns, and forced out the Amorites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [33]Then the Israelites went north toward Bashan, and Og, Bashan's king, attacked the Israelites at Edrei. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [34]The LORD assured Moses that he would help His people defeat Og, just as they had done to Sihon in Heshbon. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [35]So Israel defeated Og and his entire army, killing them all. And the Israelites took over the land of Bashan.

Numbers 22

Balaam, the False Prophet

[1]The Israelites traveled back to Moab {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} and camped by the Jordan River across from Jericho. [2]Balak, son of Zippor, and king of Moab, heard what Israel had done to the Amorites, and [3]Moab was frightened. [4]So the Moabites said to the Midianite leaders, "These people will wipe us out like an ox eats grass." So Balak [5]sent a message to Balaam, who was at Pethor near the Euphrates River, with these words: "A great number of people have left Egypt and have settled next to me. [6]Come put a curse on them. Then maybe I can defeat them. I know that people you bless will prosper {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and those you curse will fail."

[7]The leaders of Moab and Midian left and took money to pay Balaam for his help. When they told Balaam why they had come, Balaam [8]urged them to spend the night and told them he would give them the Lord's answer the next day. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [9-11]When God asked Balaam who those men were, Balaam told him their message. [12]God told Balaam, "Don't put a curse on these people because they are blessed."

[13]The next morning Balaam told Balak's leaders, "The Lord has refused to let me go with you." [14]So they went back to Balak and told him Balaam would not join them. [15]So Balak sent more princes who were more distinguished than the others. [16]They went to Balaam and said, "Balak urges you not to let anything keep you from coming. [17]He'll pay you well for your services and he'll do whatever you suggest. Please come curse these people."

[18]But Balaam responded, "I can't go beyond what the LORD my God has told me even if Balak gave me his palace filled with silver and gold. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [19]So stay here overnight, and I'll see what the LORD will tell me." [20]That night God told Balaam, "Okay, go with these men. But do only what I tell you to do."

[21]The next morning Balaam saddled his donkey and went with the men. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [22]But God was very angry with Balaam, and so He had His angel stand in the road to stop him. [23]When the donkey saw the angel in the road with a sword in his hand, the donkey turned into a field. Balaam beat the donkey to get it back on the road. [24]Then the angel stood where the road was a narrow path between two vineyards with a wall on each side. [25]The donkey got

so close to one of the walls that it crushed Balaam's foot. Balaam beat the donkey again.[26]Then the angel stood in a place so narrow the donkey couldn't get by. [27]So the donkey lay down. And Balaam was so mad he beat the donkey again. [28]Then the LORD caused the donkey to speak, and it said, "What have I done to you that made you beat me these three times?"
[29]Balaam answered, "You've made me look like a fool. If I had a sword with me, I'd kill you." [30]The donkey said, "Have I ever done anything like this before?" Balaam answered, "No." [31]Then Balaam saw the angel with a sword in his hand. And he bowed down.
[32]The angel asked, "Why did you beat your donkey three times? I have come to stop you because you are going in the wrong direction. [33]If the donkey hadn't seen me and stopped, I would have killed you." [34]Balaam admitted, "I admit I was wrong. I didn't realize you were trying to stop me. If you don't think I should go on, I'll go back home." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [35]Then the angel replied, "You may go, but say only what I tell you." So Balaam went on with Balak's princes.
[36]Balak went to meet Balaam at a town on Moab's northern border. [37]Balak asked, "Why didn't you come right away when I asked you? Did you think I wouldn't pay you enough?" [38]Balaam answered, "Well, I'm here now. But I can say only what God tells me to say."
[39]Then Balaam and Balak went to Kiriath-Huzoth, [40]where Balak sacrificed some cows and sheep, and gave portions of the meat to Balaam and his officials. [41]The next morning Balak took Balaam to Ramoth-Baal and from there Balaam could see some of the Israelites down below.

Lord, Balaam was a false prophet. Keep my heart and mind so I will never deny You or compromise Your Word. Amen.

Numbers 23

Balaam Blesses Israel the First Time

[1]Balaam then told Balak to build seven altars there and to bring him seven bulls and seven rams. [2]Balak did that and together they sacrificed a bull and a ram on each altar. [3]Balaam said, "Wait here while I go see what the LORD will tell me. If He meets with me, I'll tell you what He says." [4]Balaam told the Lord about the animal sacrifices he and Balak made. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [5]Then the LORD told Balaam to go to Balak with His message. [6]When Balaam returned, Balak was standing there by his offerings with his officials. [7]Then Balaam said, "Balak brought me from the hills of eastern Syria to curse Israel. [8]But I can't curse them when God hasn't. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [9]I see them from the mountaintops, a people who are different from other nations. [10]There are so many of them, no one could count even a fourth of them. I hope to be righteous all my life and die in peace like them."
[11]Balak said to Balaam, "Why are you saying all this? I asked you to curse them, and you are blessing them instead." [12]Balaam

answered, "I can say only what the LORD tells me to say." [13]Balak then said, "Let's go to another place where you can see only a smaller part of the Israelites, and you can curse at least them." [14]So Balak took him to the Zophin plateau on the top of Mount Pisgah, where again he built seven altars and sacrificed a bull and a ram on each one.

[15]Balaam told Barak to stay by his offering while he went aside to meet the LORD. [16]After the LORD appeared to Balaam and gave him another message, [17]Balaam went back to Barak, who asked, "What did the LORD say?" [18]Then Balaam gave this message: "Listen to my words, Balak. [19]I am not a man, so I don't lie or change my mind. I keep every promise I make." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [20]God has told me to bless Israel, and I can't change His command. [21]No problems will come to Israel because the LORD their God is with them and He is their King. [22]God has brought them out of Egypt, and they are strong like a wild ox. [23]No magic or curse can harm them. Instead people will say, 'Look what God has done for them.' [24]They are like lions ready to attack, and they won't rest till they've eaten their prey."

[25]Hearing this, Balak said, "If you aren't going to curse them, at least don't bless them." [26]Balaam replied, "As I told you, I can say only what the LORD tells me to say." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [27]So Balak suggested they go to yet another place. He said, "Maybe God will let you curse them from there." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [28]So he took Balaam to Mount Peor, overlooking the desert. [29]Balaam told Barak to build seven altars again and to bring him seven bulls and seven rams. [30]Then Balak, like before, offered a bull and a ram on each altar.

Lord, teach me to speak only the words that come from You. Amen.

Numbers 24

Balaam and Balak (continued)

[1]This time Balaam did not go to meet the Lord as he had done before. Instead he looked toward the desert [2]and saw the Israelites camped there. Then God's Spirit came on him, and he said, [3]"I am Balaam, and my eyes clearly see the future. [4]I hear God's words, I see a vision, I fall down, and my eyes are open. [5]Israel, your tents are beautiful. [6]They are like wide valleys, gardens by a river, like tall aloe trees, and cedar trees near water. [7]They will have plenty of water. Their king will be greater than Agag the Amalekite, and their kingdom will be outstanding. [8]God brought them out of Egypt, and they are strong like a wild ox. They will defeat their enemies, breaking their bones and shooting them with arrows. [9]They are like a lion lying down, and no one dares arouse him. So anyone who blesses Israel will be blessed, and anyone who curses Israel will be cursed."

[10]Hearing this, Balak was furiously mad. He said, "I called you out to place a curse on these enemies of mine, but you have

blessed them—not once, but three times.
[11]So leave here and go home! I said I would pay you well, but because you blessed Israel, I won't pay you anything."
[12]Balaam reminded Balak that he said that [13]even if Balak gave him his palace, he couldn't go against the LORD's words. He could say only what the LORD told him to say. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[14]"Yes, I am going home, but first let me give you a warning about what the Israelites will do to you."
[15]Balaam said, "I am Balaam, and my eyes clearly see the future. [16]I hear God's words and the Almighty gives me a vision, and I fall down and my eyes are open. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [17]I see that in Israel's future a king of Israel will rise like a star; he will be important like a scepter. He will crush the people of Moab. [18]Israel will conquer Edom and Seir, and Israel will grow strong. [19]The ruler of Israel will destroy the survivors of every city he conquers." {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
[20]Then Balaam saw a vision about the Amalekites and spoke these words: "Amalek was a prominent nation, but it will be destroyed." [21]He saw a vision about the Kenites and spoke these words: "You think you are in a safe place, living in the rocks. But you will be destroyed when Assyria takes your people as captives."
[22]Then Balaam concluded, [23]"No one can live when God does this. [24]Ships will come from Cypress, and those people will oppress Assyria and Eber. But later Cypress will be destroyed." [25]Then Balaam left to go home, and Balak also left.

Lord, may I not serve You for money, as Balaam did (2 Peter 2:15). I will serve You out of love. Amen.

Numbers 25

The Israelites Are Seduced by the Midianites

[1]When Israel was camped at Shittim, some of the men had sex with some Moabite women. [2]These women had invited the men to attend their sacrifices to their gods. The men ate meat from the sacrificed animals and worshiped the Moabite gods. [3]This led the Israelites to worship Baal-Peor, which made the LORD very angry.
[4]God said to Moses, "Take these Israelite leaders who are responsible for this and kill them in broad daylight so that I may no longer be so angry with the Israelites."
[5]Moses told the leaders to put to death anyone who worshiped Baal-Peor.
[6]One of the Israelite men brought a Midianite woman to meet his family right in front of everyone. [7]Phinehas, Aaron's grandson, saw this, grabbed a spear, [8]followed the man and woman into his tent and killed both of them. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} Then the disease stopped, [9]though 24,000 Israelites had already died. [10]The LORD told Moses [11]that if Phinehas hadn't done that, He would have wiped them all out. [12]"Because of Phineas' loyalty and zeal for Me, [13]I promise that he and his descendants will be priests forever."

14The man who was killed was Zimri, son
of Salu, a leader in the Simeon tribe. 15The
name of the Midianite woman was Cozbi,
daughter of Zur, a tribal leader in Midian.
16The LORD said to Moses, 17"Treat the
Midianites as your enemies and kill them
for two reasons: 18because they tricked you
into worshiping Baal, and because Cozbi
was involved with Zimri."

Lord, may I look at false religions and heresy as You look at them. *{220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}* *Give me eyes to see their lies and wisdom to understand their danger. Then give me courage to turn my back against it. Amen.*

Numbers 26

The Israelites Are Counted a Second Time

1Then the LORD told Moses and Eleazar
2to take a census of every male 20 years
of age or older who is able to serve in the
army. 3The Israelites were camped then on
the plains of Moab by the Jordan River
across from Jericho. Moses and Eleazar
told the leaders 4to take a census, as the
LORD had commanded.
5In the tribe of Reuben were the clans
of Hanoch, Pallu, 6Hezron, and Carmi,
7whose total was 43,730. 8Pallu was the
father of Eliab, whose sons were Nemuel,
Dathan, and Abiram. 9Dathan and Abi-
ram were the leaders who with Korah had
rebelled against the LORD. 10That is when
the Lord caused a huge crevice in the earth
into which Korah and his followers fell to
their death, and when fire killed 250 oth-
ers, all as a warning to Israel. 11But Korah's
line wasn't destroyed.
12In the tribe of Simeon were the clans of
Nemuel, Jamin, Jakin, 13Zerah, and Shaul,
14whose total was 22,200. 15In the tribe
of Gad were the clans of Zephon, Haggi,
Shuni, 16Ozni, Eri, 17Arod, and Areli,
18whose total was 40,500. 19Judah's sons Er
and Unan died in Canaan. 20In the tribe
of Judah were the clans of Shelah, Perez,
Zerah, 21Hezron, and Hamul, 22whose
total was 76,500.
23In the tribe of Issachar were the clans
of Tula, Puab, 24Jashub, and Shimron,
25whose total was 64,300. 26In the tribe
of Zebulun were the clans of Sered, Elon,
and Sahleel, 27whose total was 60,500.
28-29In the tribe of Manasseh, Joseph's son,
were the clans of Makir and his son Gilead,
30and the clans of Makir, were Iezer, Helek,
31Asriel, Sechem, 32Shemida, and Hepher.
33(Hepher's son Zeluphehad had no sons,
but he had daughters named Malah, Noah,
Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah.) 34The total
of those in Manasseh's clans was 52,700.
35In the tribe of Ephraim were the clans
of Shuthelah, Beker, Tahan, 36and Eran,
Shuthelah's son. 37Their total was 32,500.
38In the tribe of Benjamin were the clans
of Bela, Ashbel, Ahiram, 39Shupham,
Hupham, 40and of Bela's sons Ard and
Naaman, 41whose total was 45,600. 42In
the tribe of Dan was the one clan of Shu-
ram, 43whose total was 64,400.
44In the tribe of Asher were the clans of
Imnah, Ishvi, Beriah, 45and of Beriah's
sons Heber and Malkiel. 46(Asher had a

daughter named Serah.) 47Their total was
53,400. 48In the tribe of Naphtali were the
clans of Jahzeel, Guni, 49Jezer, and Shillem,
50whose total was 45,400.
51The total number of the men of Israel 20
years of age and older was 601,730.
52The LORD said to Moses, 53"Divide the
land of Canaan among the tribes accord-
ing to their numbers. {118 Directional
Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 54Larger
tribes are to receive more land than smaller
tribes. 55-56Cast lots to find out which
tribes are to have which land, and the size
of the land is to be based on the number
each tribe."
57In the tribe of Levi were the clans of Ger-
shon, Kohath, Merari, 58along with the
clans of Libni, Hebron, Mahli, Mushi, and
Korah. Kohath was the father of Amram,
59whose wife was Jochebed. She was a
descendant of Levi, from Egypt. Jochebed
and Amram's three children were Aaron,
Moses, and Miriam. 60Aaron had four
sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar.
61Nadahb and Abihu died when they
offered to the Lord the wrong kind of fire.
62All the Levite males one month old
and older totaled 23,000. They were not
counted in the census numbers with
the other tribes because they would not
receive any land in Canaan.
63These are the census figures Moses and
Eleazar counted on the plains of Moab
by the Jordan River across from Jericho.
64These figures included no one Moses
and Aaron had counted in the Sinai Des-
ert years earlier, except Caleb and Joshua,
because, as 65the LORD said, they all died
in the desert.

Lord, You number Your people, just as You number the stars. Because everyone is valuable to You, You count them. Thank You for counting me among Your children. Amen.

Numbers 27

The Daughters of Zelophehad

1-2One day the five daughters of Zelophe-
had—Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and
Tirzah—made a request of Moses, Eleazar,
the tribal leaders, and all Israelites at the
tabernacle entrance. Zeluphehad was the
great-great-grandson of Manasseh. The
daughters said, 3"Our father died in the
desert, but not because he rebelled with
Korah and his followers. He died because
of his own sin. 4But since he had no sons,
we are concerned that his name will not be
remembered. So we ask that you give us
some property in Canaan with our father's
relatives."
5When Moses asked the LORD what to
do about this request, {377 Presence of
God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 6He said, 7"They
are right. Give them the property that
would have gone to their father. 8And
tell the Israelites, 'If a man dies with-
out a son, give his land to his daughters.
9Or if he has no daughters, give it to his
brothers. 10Or if he has no brothers, then
give the land to his uncles. 11If he has no
uncles, give the property to his nearest
relative. This law is to be followed by My
people.'"

[12]The LORD told Moses, "Go into the Abarim Mountains and look out over the land I am giving to My people. [13]After you have seen it, you will die as did Aaron. [14]Both of you disobeyed me in the Zin Desert at the waters of Meribah near Kadesh. [15]Moses said, [16]"You are LORD, the God of the spirits of everyone. So appoint a leader for the people, {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} [17]someone capable of leading them in battle. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Otherwise the people will be like sheep with no shepherd."

[18]The LORD then told Moses, "Lay your hands on Joshua, in whom is My Spirit. [19]Then as he stands before Eleazar the priest and all the Israelites, have them appoint Joshua as their leader. [20]Transfer your authority to him so all My people will follow his leadership. [21]To get information from Me have him go to Eleazar, who will ask Me through the Urim and Thummim. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} The people are to follow his leadership." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[22]Following the LORD's command, Moses had Joshua stand before Eleazar and all the Israelites, [23]while Moses laid his hands on Joshua, as the LORD had told him to do.

Lord, Moses did exactly as You commanded; he elevated Joshua to follow him. When my time comes, I will choose someone to follow me. Amen.

Numbers 28

The Daily Offerings to the LORD

[1]The LORD told Moses [2]to say to the Israelites, "At the appropriate times offer sacrifices to Me, and I will be pleased with them. [3]Each day offer as burnt offerings two one-year-old lambs without any defects. [4]One lamb is to be offered in the morning and the other in the evening. [5]With each of them offer a grain offering of two quarts of flour mixed with a quart of olive oil. [6]This is the same as the offering you first offered to me at Mount Sinai. [7]Along with each sacrifice, pour out a quart of wine on the altar of burnt offering as a drink offering to Me. [8]In the evening offer the second lamb with the same kind of grain offering and drink offering. I will be pleased with the offerings.

[9]"Each Sabbath offer two year-old lambs without defects, along with the drink offering and grain offering of four quarts of flour mixed with olive oil. [10]This is in addition to the regular daily burnt offering and drink offering.

[11]"On the first day of each month offer to Me a burnt offering of two bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. [12]With each bull offer a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with olive oil. With the ram include a grain offering of four quarts of flour mixed with oil. [13]And with each lamb offer a grain offering of two quarts of flour mixed with oil. I will be pleased with these burnt offerings. [14]With each bull offer a drink offering of two quarts of wine; with the ram, about one and a fourth quarts; and

with each lamb, a quart. 15Also offer to Me a male goat as a sin offering.
16"Celebrate the Passover every April 14. 17The next day begin the week-long Festival of Bread without Yeast. 18On the first day of this festival assemble together and do no work. 19Offer to Me a burnt offering of two young bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. 20With each bull present a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with oil; with the ram, four quarts; and 21with each lamb, two quarts. 22Also offer a male goat as a substitute payment for sin. 23These are to be in addition to the regular daily sacrifices, 24and the sacrifices in this week-long festival will be pleasing to Me. 25Then on the last day of this festival have the people assemble in worship and don't do any work that day. 26On the first day of the Harvest Festival in the fall, have the people assemble in worship, do no work that day, and bring an offering of new grain. 27Offer a burnt offering of five young bulls, one ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs. I will be pleased with their sacrifices. 28With each bull bring a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with olive oil; with the ram, four quarts; 29and with each lamb, two quarts. 30Also offer a male goat as a substitute payment for sin. 31These animals are to have no defects and are to be offered on this festival day with their drink offerings, and in addition to regular burnt offerings and grain offerings."

Lord, just as daily offerings were brought to You in the Old Testament, I will offer myself to You daily in prayer and Bible study. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} ***Amen.***

Numbers 29

The Offerings in Several Festivals

1"For the Festival of Trumpets assemble in worship on the first day of September and don't do any work. 2For a burnt offering bring a young bull, a ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 3With the bull present a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with olive oil; with the ram, four quarts; and 4with each lamb, two quarts. 5Also offer a male goat as a substitute payment for sin. 6These are in addition to monthly and daily burnt offerings, grain offerings, and drink offerings—offerings that will be pleasing to Me.
7"On the tenth day of this seventh month, the Day of Atonement, assemble in worship and don't do any work. 8Present to Me a burnt offering of a young bull, a ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. 9With the bull prepare a grain offering of six-quarts of flour mixed with olive oil; with the ram, four quarts; 10and with lamb, two quarts—the same as on the Festival of Trumpets. 11Also offer a male goat as a substitute payment for sin, in addition to the sin offering and the regular burnt offering, grain offering, and drink offerings.
12"On the 15th day of that same month assemble in worship and don't do any work. For seven days celebrate the Festival

of Shelters. 13Present to Me a burnt offering of 13 bulls, two rams, and 14 one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. 14With each bull include a grain offering of six quarts of flour mixed with olive oil; with each of the two rams, four quarts; 15and with each of the 14 lambs, two quarts. 16Also offer a male goat as a substitute payment for sin, in addition to the regular burnt offering, grain offering, and drink offering.

17-34"For the next six days sacrifice one less bull each day than the day before, starting with 12 bulls on the second day and ending with seven bulls on the seventh day. The other sacrifices and offerings are to be the same for each day. 35On the eighth day assemble again in worship and don't do any work. 36Present to Me a burnt offering of a bull, a ram, and seven one-year-old male lambs, all with no defects. 37Also offer the proper grain offerings and drink offerings with each animal. 38Include a male goat as a substitute payment for sin, in addition to the regular burnt offering, grain offering, and drink offering.

39"Present these offerings in your annual festivals, in addition to any offering given with vows you make or any fellowship offerings." 40Moses told the people everything the Lord had told him about all these offerings.

Lord, just as Israel brought to You whole burnt offerings, food offerings, drink offerings, and peace offerings, plus additional vow offerings and special gifts, I will serve You in every way I know. Amen.

Numbers 30

Rules about Vows

1Moses said to the tribal leaders, "The LORD has said that 2when someone makes a vow or a pledge to the Lord, he must carry through with what he promised. 3If a woman who is still living with her parents makes a vow or a pledge, 4and her father hears of it but doesn't say anything about it, she must keep her vow or pledge. 5But if her father objects to it, she needn't keep it, and I will forgive her.

6"If she marries after making a vow, 7and her husband hears of it and says nothing, then she must carry through with it. 8But if her husband objects to it, she needn't keep it, and I will forgive her. 9However, widows and divorced women are to keep their vows.

10"If a married woman makes a vow or a pledge, 11and her husband hears about it and says nothing, then she must carry through with it. 12But if her husband objects to it, she needn't keep it, and I will forgive her. 13Her husband may confirm or nullify any vow or pledge she makes. 14If he says nothing about it, on the day he hears about it, she must do what she promised. 15But if he waits till the next day before trying to stop her, he must be punished."

16These are the regulations the LORD gave Moses about the relationship between a husband and his wife and the relationship

between a father and his daughter who is living at home.

Lord, I will vow to You from the depth of my heart. I will fulfill my vows to You because I love You and want to please You. Amen.

Numbers 31

War against the Midianites

1The LORD said to Moses, 2"Punish the Midianites for leading the Israelites into idolatry. Then you will die." 3So Moses said to the people, "Prepare for battle against the Midianites to punish them. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 4-5Have each tribe send in 1,000 men." So 12,000 men were chosen, 6and Phinehas, Eleazar's son, led them and took some objects from the tabernacle and trumpets for sounding the charge. 7They killed every Midianite soldier, 8including their five kings, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba. Also they killed Balaam, son of Beor. 9The Israelites captured all the Midianite women and children and took all their herds and flocks and a lot of miscellaneous items. 10Also they burned away every Midianite town and camp. 11Gathering all the plunder, captives, and animals, 12the soldiers brought them to Moses and Eleazar and the Israelites where they were camped on the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across Jericho. 13Moses, Eleazar, and the leaders went to meet the soldiers outside the camp, 14but Moses was very angry with the officers. 15He asked, "Why did you bring back the women alive? 16They are the ones who followed Balaam's advice and encouraged our people to rebel against the LORD at Baal-Peor. That's why thousands of our people died from a terrible disease. 17So kill every boy and any of the women who have had sex. 18But keep alive the virgins.

19"Any of you who have killed anyone or touched a corpse is to stay outside the camp for a week. Then purify yourselves and your captive virgins on the third and seventh days of that week. 20Wash your clothes {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and anything made from leather, goat hair, or wood."

21Then Eleazar told the soldiers that the LORD said, "Put into the fire anything that can stand heat, 22such as gold, silver, bronze, iron, tin, and lead, 23to make it ceremonially clean. Then purify it with water. 24Wash your clothes on the seventh day and you will be clean, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and then you can return to the camp."

25The LORD said to Moses, 26"You and Eleazar and the tribal leaders are to list everything taken from the Midianites, including the captives and animals. 27Then divide them into two parts, half for the soldiers and half for the other people. 28-29The soldiers are to give to Eleazar for the LORD one of every 500 captives and animals. 30From their half the Israelites are to give to the Levites, who are in charge of the tabernacle, one of every 50 captives and animals." 31Moses and Eleazar did just as the LORD directed them to do.

32The list of what the soldiers took from the Midianites included 675,000 sheep,

[33]72,000 cattle, [34]61,000 donkeys, [35]and 32,000 young women who were virgins. [36-37]So from the soldiers' portion they gave to the Lord 675 out of 337,500 sheep, [38]72 out of 36,000 cattle, [39]61 out of 30,500 donkeys, [40]and 32 out of 16,200 women. [41]Moses gave these to Eleazar as the LORDs' share.

[42-47]From the portions for the people, Moses set aside one of every 500 animals and virgins and gave them to the Levites, as the Lord had commanded.

[48]The army officers said to Moses, [49]"Not one soldier is missing. [50]So we want to give to the LORD all the gold jewelry we took from the Midianites—armbands, bracelets, rings, earrings, and necklaces—as a substitute payment for sin." [51]Moses and Eleazar accepted all this jewelry from the officers, [52]and this gift to the LORD weighed about 420 pounds, [53]not counting anything the soldiers kept for themselves. [54]Moses and Eleazar accepted the gold and placed it all in the tabernacle as a memorial to the LORD for His help.

Lord, You gave Your people victory in battle because they honored and obeyed You. Teach me the necessity of obedience and may I enjoy its pleasure. Amen.

Numbers 32

Two Tribes Remain East of the Jordan River

[1]The tribes of Reuben and Gad, who had many sheep, saw that the lands of Jazer and Gilead were good sheep country. [2]So they said to Moses and Eleazar and the other tribal leaders,[3-4]"The LORD helped us conquer the people around Ataroth, Dibon, Jazer, Nimrah, Heshbon, Elealeh, Sebam, Nebo, and Beon, and this is good land for livestock. [5]If it is okay with you, we would like to stay here on this east side of the Jordan River."

[6]Moses said, "Are you suggesting that you want to stay here while other Israelites cross the Jordan and do all the fighting? [7]That would discourage them from crossing the Jordan and taking what the Lord has given them. [8]A similar thing happened when I sent 12 men into the Canaan from Kadesh Barnea to explore the land. [9]When they returned from the Eschol Valley, they discouraged the people from going in. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [10]This made the LORD angry, [11]and He said, 'No one who was 20 years old or older at the time will enter the land promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, [12]except Caleb and Joshua, because they obeyed Me completely.'

[13]"The LORD in His anger made us wander in the desert 40 years until everyone who had sinned had died. [14]Now you sinners are doing the same thing, and the LORD is even more angry now than then. [15]If you turn from the LORD, He will leave His people in the desert, {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} and it will be your fault."

[16]The Reubenites and Gadites responded, "What we would like to do is build pens for our sheep and goats and towns for our wives and children. [17]But we will cross the Jordan ahead of our fellow Israelites and

see that they get settled in, but first we'll need to build fortified cities for our wives and children. 18We won't go home till all the other tribes have settled in. 19And we won't want any land on the other side of the Jordan, since the land here east of the river will be ours."
20Moses said, "Okay. If you do what you say—prepare for battle, cross the Jordan, and 21help your fellow Israelites defeat their enemies—{517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 22then you may return to your land east of the Jordan. 23But if you don't keep your word, you will have sinned against the LORD, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} and He will punish you. 24So go ahead and build cities for your families and pens for your flocks."
25The people of Reuben and Gad said, "We will do what you have said. 26Our wives and children and our flocks and herds will stay here in Gilead. 27But our men will be ready for battle as you said."
28Moses then said to Eleazar, Joshua, and the tribal leaders, 29"If the men of Reuben and Gad help you defeat the Canaanites, as they've promised, then after the battles, the land of Gilead will be theirs. 30But if they don't keep their promise, they must be given land on this side of the Jordan."
31The men of Reuben and Gad said, "We will do what the Lord has commanded. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 32We will fight for the LORD in Canaan, and then we will inherit land on this east side of the Jordan." 33So Moses gave the tribes of Gad, Reuben, and East Manasseh the land of Sihon, king of the Amorites, and Og, king of Bashan. 34The Gadites built up the cities of Dibon, Ataroth, Aroer, 35Atroth-Shophan, Jazer, Jogbehah, 36Beth-Nimrah, and Beth-Haran, and built pens for their sheep. 37The Reubenites built Heshbon, Elealeh, Kiriathaim, 38Nebo, Baal-Meon, and Sibmah. The Reubenites renamed some of these cities.
39The Makir clan of the tribe of East Manasseh conquered Gilead, drawing out the Amorites. 40So Moses gave Gilead to the Machirites, and they settled there. 41Jair, another clan of the Manasseh tribe captured a number of towns in Gilead and called their area Harroth-Jair. 42Nobah captured the town of Kenath and surrounding villages and named it Nobah, after his own name.

Lord, I read in this chapter the issue of obeying You in all decisions. May I always consider You as I make any decision in my life, whether great or small. Amen.

Numbers 33

The Journey from Egypt to Moab

1This is the itinerary the Israelites followed when Moses and Aaron led them out of Egypt. 2Moses wrote down the places where they traveled, as the LORD had told him to do. 3They left the Egyptian city of Ramses on April 15, the day after Passover the night before. As the Egyptians were burying their firstborn sons, they watched the Israelites leave their country. 4The LORD had defeated the gods of Egypt!

[5]Leaving Ramses, the Israelites camped at Succoth, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [6]then at Ethan at the edge of the desert, [7]then they turned back toward Pi Hahiroth, near Baal-Zephon, and then camped at Mount Migdol. [8]After crossing the Red Sea, they traveled for three days into the Etham Desert and camped at Marah. [9]Then they camped at Elim, where there were 12 springs of water and 70 palm trees. [10]Leaving Elim, they camped by the Red Sea [11]and then in the Sin Desert. [12]Next they camped at Dophkah, [13]Alush, [14]and Rephidim, where there was no water. [15]From there they went to the Sinai Desert [16]and then to Kibroth Hattaavah. [17-37]Their other stops included Hazeroth, Rithmah, Rimmon-Parez, Libnah, Rissah, Kehelathah, Mount Shepher, Haradah, Makheloth, Tahath, Terah, Mithkah, Hashmonah, Moseroth, Bene-Jaakan, Hor-Haggidgad, Jotbathah, Abronah, Ezion-Geber, Kadesh (in the Zin Desert), and Mount Hor near Edom.

[38]At Mount Hor the LORD told Aaron to climb that mountain where he would die. On July 15, 40 years after leaving Egypt, [39]Aaron died at the age of 123. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[40]The Canaanite king of Arad, who lived in the Southern Desert, heard that the Israelites were coming toward his people. [41-44]The Israelites went from Mount Hor and camped at Zalmonah, Punon, Oboth, Iye-Abarim, at the border of Moab. [45-47]From there they went to Dihon-Gad, Almon-Diblathaim, and near Mount Nebo in Abarim, [48]and then to the plains of Moab beside the Jordan River. [49]They camped along the Jordan River, from Beth-Jeshimoth to Abel-Shittim.

[50]The LORD told Moses [51]to tell the people, "When you cross the Jordan into Canaan, [52]you must force all the people out. Destroy their idols, carved stones, and altars, and demolish their hilltop shrines. [53]Then settle in the land I have given you. [54]"Distribute the land according to the size of your tribes. Larger tribes should be given more land than smaller tribes. [55]If you don't get rid of the people living there, they will be like barbs in your eyes and thorns in your sides. [56]I will destroy you as I had planned for you to destroy them."

Lord, this chapter gives details of Israel's travels and struggles. Thank You that they followed You in small details. May that be true of my life. Amen.

Numbers 34

Boundaries of the Promised Land

[1]The LORD told Moses to tell the people, [2]"When you come into the land, these will be the boundaries of your land. [3]The southern border is to be the Zin Desert at the northwest part of Edom; beginning at the Dead Sea. [4]It is to continue south past Scorpion Pass toward Zin and to include Kadesh-Barnea, and from there it is to go to Hazar-Adar and Azmon. [5]It is to follow the brook of Egypt down to the Mediterranean Sea.

[6]"The western boundary is to be the Mediterranean Sea.

7"The northern border is to begin at the
Mediterranean Sea and extend out to
Mount Hor, 8and from there to Lebo-Ha-
math, 9Zedad, Ziphron, and Hazar-Enan.
10"The eastern border is to begin at Haz-
ar-Enan 11and extend south to Shepham
and on to Riblah east of Ai, and along the
eastern hills of the Sea of Galilee. 12Then
the border is to go along the Jordan River
to the north end of the Dead Sea."
13Moses said, "This is the land you are to
divide by casting lots for the nine and a
half tribes. 14-15The land east of the Jordan
has already been assigned to the other two
and a half tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East
Manasseh."
16The LORD said to Moses, 17"Eleazar and
Joshua are to divide the land, {160 Fam-
ily-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 18and
one leader from each tribe is to help them.
19-28These are their names: Caleb from
Judah, Shemuel from Simeon, Elidad
from Benjamin, Bukki from Dan, Hanniel
from Manasseh, Kemuel from Ephraim,
Elizaphan from Zebulun, Paltiel from
Issachar, Ahihud from Asher, and Pedahel
from Naphtali." 29These are the names of
the men the Lord chose to help Eleazar
and Joshua divide the land of Canaan for
the tribes.

Lord, You are concerned with both what Your people did and how they did it. May I follow that pattern in my life. Be glorified in both what I do and how I do it. Amen.

Numbers 35

The Levites Are Given Land

1On the plains of Moab by the Jordan
River across from Jericho, the LORD told
Moses to tell the Israelites, 2-3"You are to
give land to the Levites for them to live in,
with pasturelands for their animals. 4The
pasturelands are to be 1,500 feet out from
the city walls. 5And each pasture is to be
3,000 feet on each of four sides, with the
towns in the center.
6"Give the Levites six Towns of Refuge. If
a person accidentally kills someone, he can
run to one of these towns for safety. Also
give the Levites 42 other towns, 7for a total
of 46. 8The larger tribes are to give more
towns than the smaller tribes."
9The LORD then told Moses 10to tell the
people, "When you are settled in Canaan,
11choose these 46 Towns of Refuge, where
a person can go for protection if he acci-
dentally kills someone. 12That way a per-
son will be protected from anyone who
might try to kill him before a trial is held.
13-14Three of the six towns are to be on each
side of the Jordan. 15The towns will be
places of protection for the Israelites and
foreign residents who might kill someone
accidentally.
16-19"If anyone strikes someone with a
piece of iron, or a huge stone, or a wooden
object, and the person dies, it is murder,
and the murderer is to be put to death
by one of the victim's relatives. {269 Jus-
tice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 20-21If anyone kills
a person out of hatred by shoving him,
throwing something at him, or hitting
him, he is a murderer {269 Justice-Prayer,

Ps. 7:17} and is to be put to death by one of the victim's relatives.
22-23"If anyone accidentally kills another by shoving him, throwing something at him, or dropping a stone on him, but not in anger, 24then the people are to decide whether he is guilty. 25If they decide the death was accidental, then the person is to be protected from the victim's relative by staying in one of the Towns of Refuge until the high priest dies.
26"If the person leaves the Town of Refuge, 27and a relative of the victim kills him, the relative is not guilty of murder. 28So the accused should stay in the town until the priest dies. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} Then he can go home. 29This is a permanent law.
30"Any murderer is to be put to death, but at least two witnesses must testify of his guilt. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 31No money is to be paid to free a murderer from death. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 32Nor is money to be paid by a person in a Town of Refuge to allow him to return home before the high priest dies. 33This will keep the land from being polluted by murder. The only thing that can keep the land pure is putting the murderer to death. A sacrifice for him is not enough. 34So avoid defiling the land where you and I dwell. Yes, I, the LORD, dwell among you."

Lord, just as Israel had Towns of Refuge for those who sinned unintentionally, so Jesus is my "Town of Refuge" when I sin ignorantly. I claim the promise, "the blood of Jesus Christ...cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7, NKJV). Amen.

Numbers 36

Land Is Given to the Daughters of Zelophehad

1The heads of the Gilead clan of the Manasseh tribe went to Moses and the heads of other Israelite families, 2and said, "When the LORD told you to divide the land among the tribes, He said for you to give Zelophehad's land to his five daughters. 3But if they marry men from other tribes, the daughters' land will go to their tribes. The daughters' land will no longer be part of our tribe's inheritance, 4and it can't be returned to the original owner even in the Year of Jubilee."
5Moses gave the people this answer from the Lord: "These men from the Manasseh tribe are right. 6These daughters may marry anyone, so long as the men are in the Gilead clan of the Manasseh tribe. 7No land is to pass to another tribe; it is to remain with the tribe that originally inherited it. 8Any daughter who inherits land is to marry someone from her own tribe. 9This will help keep inherited land moving from one tribe to another."
10Zelophehad's daughters did as the Lord commanded. 11Mahlah, Tirzan, Hoglah, Milcah, and Noah married cousins on their father's side. 12By marrying within the clans of the Manasseh tribe, their land stayed in their father's clan.

[13]Those are the commands and regulations the LORD gave to Moses and the Israelites while they were camped in the plains of Moab by the Jordan River across from Jericho.

Lord, Israel did the right thing when faced with a practical problem of oversight. *{76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}* *May I always do the right thing when faced with any oversight I have done. Amen.*

Deuteronomy

Ch 1: Moses Speaks to the People of Israel 259
Ch 2: The People Wander in the Desert 261
Ch 3: Israel Defeated Og, King of Bashan 263
Ch 4: Obey God's Commands 264
Ch 5: The Ten Commands 266
Ch 6: Love the LORD Your God 268
Ch 7: The Lord's People 269
Ch 8: Always Remember the LORD 270
Ch 9: The Israelites Did Not Obey 271
Ch 10: The Second Set of Stone Tablets 273
Ch 11: The Importance of Obedience 274
Ch 12: The One Place for Worship 276
Ch 13: Worship the One True God 278
Ch 14: Clean and Unclean Foods 279
Ch 15: Forgive Debtors Every Seven Years 280
Ch 16: Three Festivals Each Year 281
Ch 17: Judgement of Evil and Rules for the King 282
Ch 18: A Share Given to the Priests and Levites 283
Ch 19: The Towns of Refuge 284
Ch 20: How to Make War 285
Ch 21: Unsolved Murders 286

Ch 22: Miscellaneous Instructions 287
Ch 23: Banned People 289
Ch 24: Divorce and Other Matters 290
Ch 25: Additional Laws 291
Ch 26: Give God Your Best 292
Ch 27: The ALtar at Mount Ebal 293
Ch 28: The Blessings for Being Obedient 294
Ch 29: The Covenant Renewal 297
Ch 30: God's Promise Remains Constant 298
Ch 31: Joshua Becomes the New Leader 299
Ch 32: Moses' Song 301
Ch 33: Moses Blesses Israel 303
Ch 34: The Death of Moses 304

DEUTERONOMY

Key Words: *Ye shall* (Deuteronomy 11:31)

Key Verse: "For ye shall pass over Jordan to go in to possess the land which the LORD your God giveth you, and ye shall possess it, and dwell therein. And ye shall observe to do all the statutes and judgments which I set before you this day" (11:31, 32).

Theme: Deuteronomy means "second giving of the law." As Israel was camped on the east side of the Jordan River—ready to enter the Promised Land—Moses repeated the law and a history of the wilderness wandering because this generation was under 20 years of age when God delivered them from the Egyptian bondage. This book includes five sermons reminding Israel "you shall" obey the Lord and worship Him in integrity.

Deuteronomy is a picture of what we must do to enter God's promises today and how we must walk in fellowship with Him. *Lord, I don't look back to my sin and failure but I look to You for redemption and fellowship. Amen.*

Deuteronomy 1

Moses Speaks to the People of Israel

1 This book records the speeches Moses gave to the Israelites while they were in Moab east of the Jordan River, {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} camped near Suph between Paran on one side and Tophel, Laban, Hazeroth, and Dizahab on the other. 2 (Traveling by foot from Mount Horeb to Kadesh-Barnea by the Mount Seir Road normally takes only 11 days.) 3 Moses gave these speeches from the Lord on February 15th, 40 years after the Israelites left Egypt. 4 Earlier Moses had defeated King Sihon of the Amorites, and King Og of Bashan, who reigned at Ashtaroth, near Edrei. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 5 So Moses addressed the Israelites in Moab east of the Jordan River, giving them God's laws. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 6 "At Mount Horeb (Sinai) the LORD told us, 'You have stayed here long enough. 7 Break camp and go to the land of the Amorites, and the people in the Jordan River Valley, the hill country, the Southern Desert, the Mediterranean coast, the land of Canaan and Lebanon, and all the way to the Euphrates River. 8 I am giving all this land to you. So go take it, because it is what

I promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and their descendants.' {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12}
9"At that time I told you I couldn't lead you by myself, {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 10because the LORD has made us as numerous as the stars. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 11And I pray He will increase our numbers many times more and bless us, as He promised. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 12No one man can solve all your problems and settle all your disputes. 13So I suggested you choose wise and respected leaders from each tribe, and I would make them official leaders. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
14"You agreed to this idea. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} 15So I supported them as leaders in charge of thousands, hundreds, fifties, and tens. 16Also I told the judges to hear disputes and to judge cases fairly, 17without showing any partiality toward the rich. They are not to be afraid of anyone, for they are judging as God's representatives. If they feel some cases too difficult to settle, then I will hear them. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 18And I gave you other instructions for them too.

Lord, just as Moses delegated to others, may I learn to do what only I can do and delegate what others can do. Amen.

19"Then we left Mount Horeb and went toward the Amorite hill country. As we traveled through the terrible desert, we reached Kadesh-Barnea. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 20Then I said to you, 'We have reached the land the Lord is giving us. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 21Go take the land He, the God of our ancestors, told us to take. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} Don't be afraid or discouraged.' 22But you suggested we send 12 men to inspect the land and bring back a report and tell us what roads we should take and what the towns are like. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}
23"This seemed like a good idea, so I chose 12 men, one from each tribe. 24They explored the hill country, and at the Eshcol valley 25they gathered some fruit and brought it to us. They told us the land is good. 26But you rebelled against the Lord and refused to go in. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 27You grumbled in your tents and said, 'The LORD must hate us by bringing us here from Egypt to be destroyed by the Amorites. 28The men who inspected the land have discouraged us by saying that the people are taller and stronger than we are and the cities are large with high walls, and some of the people are giants, descendants of Anak.'" {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Lord, keep the pessimism of others from ruining my trust in You. Amen.

29"Then I said to you, 'Don't be afraid. 30The Lord our God will lead the way, and He will fight for you just as He did in Egypt and in the desert. {528 Warfare-Prayer,

Rev. 12:7} 31You now know the LORD took care of you, just as a father cares for his child.' {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
32"But you still refused to trust the LORD your God, 33who led you by a flaming fire at night and a cloud in the daytime to show you where to camp and where to travel." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Lord, may Your past provision in my life contribute to greater faith in You. Amen.

34"So the LORD in His anger said, 35'No one of you evil people will be allowed to enter the Promised Land, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 36except for Caleb. He will enter the land because he obeyed Me completely. I will give him some of the very land he walked on in exploring the land.' {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
37"The LORD was angry with me too and He told me, 'You people will not enter the Promised Land either. 38But Joshua will. So encourage him as he leads the people in. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 39You thought your children would be taken as captives. But they will enter the land and conquer it. 40So you may as well turn around and go back through the desert toward the Red Sea.' {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 41Then you confessed that you sinned against the LORD and you said you would go in and fight. So you put on your weapons, thinking it would be easy to conquer the area.
42"But the LORD told me to tell you not to do it because He would not be with you, and your enemies could defeat you. 43I told you what the LORD said, but you wouldn't listen. You rebelled and in your pride you went in to the hill country. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 44Then the Amorites chased you like bees from Seir all the way to Hormah."

Lord, may I never face the enemy without Your presence. Amen.

45"You wept before the LORD, but He paid no attention. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 46So you stayed at Kadesh-Barnea for a while."

Lord, I know I have to die, but I don't want to. May I have an easy death. I know I have Christ as my Savior, so I'll go to live with Him at my death. Teach me to use wisely the time I have left so I can glorify You in my life, and I'll leave fruit after I'm gone. Amen.

Deuteronomy 2

The People Wander in the Desert

1"Then we went back into the desert toward the Red Sea and spent a long time in the area of Mount Seir near Edom. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 2Then the LORD said, 3"You have been here long enough. So now turn north. 4Tell the people, You will soon go through the land of the Edomites, descendants of Esau who live in Seir. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} They will be afraid of you. But be careful. 5Don't start a war because I have given them all the

hill country of Seir. [6]Pay the Edomites for whatever food or water you use.' {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [7]The LORD has blessed us and watched over us in our journey of 40 years in the desert, and we have had everything we need." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, I will obey when You say "turn around." Amen.

[8]"So we passed through the territory of our relatives, the descendants of Esau. We followed the Arabah Road that starts in the south at Elath and Ezion-Geber and traveled north on the desert road that leads to Moab. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [9]The LORD warned us not to attack the Moabites either, because He would not give us any of their land since He had given it to Lot's descendants. [10]The Emites who used to live there were as tall as the Anakites. [11]The Emites and the Anakites are often called Rephaites, but the Moabites called them Emites. [12]The Horites used to live in Seir, but the Edomites drove them out, just as Israel would drive the Canaanites from the land the LORD would give them.

[13]"The Lord told us, 'Cross the Zered Valley at the southern border of Moab,' and we did. [14]This was 38 years after we left Kadesh-Barnea, and by then all the Israelite soldiers had died, as God had said. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [15]The LORD was against them until they all finally died.

Lord, I fear You because You keep Your word of judgment. Amen.

[16]"After these men all died, [17]the Lord said to me, [18]'Today go past Ar and cross Moab's northern border into Ammon. [19]Don't start a war with the Ammonites. I won't give you any of their land because I have given it to Lot's descendants.'

[20]"That territory used to belong to the Rephaites, and the Ammonites called them the Zamzummites. [21]They were strong, numerous, and tall like the Anakites. But the LORD helped the Ammonites defeat them, and the Ammonites settled there. [22]The Lord helped them as He had helped the descendants of Esau defeat the Horites. [23]Similarly the Caphtorites from Crete destroyed the people of Avvim in villages as far south as Gaza.

[24]"Then the Lord said, 'Cross the Arnon River, and I will help you defeat Sihon the Amorite, king of Heshbon. Attack him and possess his land. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [25]I will cause people everywhere to be afraid of you.' {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [26-27]So I sent messengers to Sihon, asking him to let us pass through his country. 'We will stay on the main road.'"

Lord, I fear You because You keep Your word of judgment. Amen.

[28]"'We will pay for whatever food or water we take. [29]The Edomites and Moabites have let us cross their land. We want to

cross the Jordan River and get into the land the LORD our God is giving us.' {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12}
30"But Sihon refused to let us cross his land, because the LORD had made him stubborn. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 31But the LORD said, 'I will help you defeat Sihon and take his land.' {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} 32Then Sihon and his army met us at Jahaz, 33and the LORD helped us defeat them. 34We completely destroyed their towns and killed every man, woman, and child. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 35We kept their livestock and everything of value. 36The LORD helped us destroy every town from the Arnon Valley north to Gilead. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 37But as the LORD told us, we stayed away from the Ammonite towns in the hill country and near the Jabbok River."

Lord, teach me where to go, and where I should not go. Amen.

Deuteronomy 3

Israel Defeated Og, King of Bashan

1"When we turned toward Bashan, King Og attacked us at Edrei. 2But the Lord told us not to be afraid. He said, 'I will give you victory over him, and give you his land. You will defeat him just as you defeated Sihon, king of the Amorites in Heshbon.' {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 3The LORD helped us destroy Og and his army, leaving no survivors. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 4And we conquered all 60 of his towns in the Argob region, 5towns with high walls and barred towns, and many unwalled villages. 6We destroyed Og's kingdom—every man, woman, and child—just as we had done with Sihon's kingdom in Heshbon. 7We kept the livestock and loot for ourselves.
8"We now possessed all the territory of the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan all the way from the Arnon River to Mount Hermon in the North. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 9(Mount Hermon is called Sirion by the Sidonians, and it is called Mount Senir by the Amorites.) 10We conquered all the towns on the plateau and all of Gilead and Bashan as far as Selecah and Edrei, two of Og's towns. 11Og was the last of the giant Rephaites. His iron bed, more than 13 feet long and six feet wide, is still in the town of Rabbah of Ammon." {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

Lord, I pray for modern-day Israel as she struggles to possess the land You promised to her centuries ago. Amen.

12"To the tribes of Reuben and Gad I gave land, extending north from Aroer by the Arnon River to the southern half of Gilead. 13To the tribe of East Manasseh I gave the rest of Gilead and all of Bashan, Og's kingdom. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} The whole region of Argob in Bashan was called the land of the Rephaites. 14Jair, of the tribe of East Manasseh, took this

region of Argob east to the borders of Geshur and Maacah. The people started calling that country Havvoth-Jair (meaning "Jair's Villages"). [15]Then I gave Gilead to the Makir clan of Manasseh. [16]The land I gave to Reuben and Gad extended from the Jabbok River in Gilead down to the Arnon River, [17]and their western border was the Jordan River from the Sea of Galilee to Mount Pisgah east of the Dead Sea (also called the Sea of the Arabah). [18]I told the tribes to the east of the Jordan, 'The Lord has given you this land. But first your men in the army are to cross the Jordan and help the tribes there. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [19]Your wives, children, and livestock are to stay in their tribal territories [20]until your fellow Israelites have conquered the land I am giving them. Then you can go back home.'

[21]"I told Joshua, 'You saw what the Lord did to Sihon and Og. He will do the same with the nations west of the Jordan. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [22]Don't be afraid, because the LORD your God will fight for you.'"

Lord, I will build my future on the past victories You've given me. Amen.

[23]"Then I asked the LORD, [24]'You have shown me your greatness and power. No god can do the great things you have done. [25]Please let me cross the Jordan to see the good land there and the hills and the Lebanon Mountains.' {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

[26]"But the LORD was angry with me because of you people. He said, 'Don't say anything more about this. [27]You may go to Mount Pisgah and view the land in every direction, but you are not to cross the Jordan.'" {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18}

Lord, I understand why Moses prayed this request. Help me learn when Your "no" means "no never." Yet in the midst of Your "no" I see glimpses of Your grace. Amen.

[28]"'Appoint Joshua to lead the people across the Jordan, and encourage him. He will help them conquer the land.' {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [29]So we stayed in the valley of Beth-Peor."

Deuteronomy 4

Obey God's Commands

[1]"Listen now, Israel, to the laws I will teach you, and obey them so you can conquer the land the Lord is giving you. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [2]Don't add any laws or subtract any. Instead obey them as from the Lord. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [3]You saw that the LORD killed everyone at Baal-Peor for worshiping the idol Baal. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [4]But you who were faithful to the LORD are alive today. {88 Continue in Prayer, Luke 11:8-10} [5]These are the laws from the LORD that you are to obey in the land. [6]Obey them carefully and other nations will say you are a wise people. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [7]No other

nation has a god near them as the LORD our God is near us when we pray to Him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [8]And no other nation has such upright laws as we have.

[9]"But be careful that you don't forget what you have seen God do for you. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} And tell your children and grandchildren about these things. [10]Remember when you stood before the LORD at Mount Horeb and He said, 'Gather My people together so they will learn to reverence Me all their lives and will teach My words to their children.' {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [11]As you stood at the foot of Mount Horeb, it was surrounded by black clouds and thick darkness, and flames shot into the sky. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [12]Then when the LORD spoke to you, you heard Him but you didn't see Him. [13]He said He was making an agreement with you, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and that you are to obey the Ten Commands, which He wrote on flat stones. [14]At that time He told me to give you the laws and commands you are to obey in the land you will conquer west of the Jordan River.

[15]"When the LORD spoke to you from the fire at Mount Horeb, you saw no form. So be careful. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [16]Don't make and worship idols whether shaped like a man, woman, {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [17]animal, bird, [18]moving creature, or fish. [19]And when you see the sun, moon, and stars in the sky, don't bow down and worship them. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} These things in the sky are for the benefit of all nations."

Lord, thank You for Your laws, I will obey them. Keep me from idols. Amen.

[20]"You belong to the LORD because He took you out of the furnace of Egypt to be His people.

[21]"The LORD was angry with me because of your sin, and He told me I could not enter the land He would give to you. [22]He told me I will die here, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} but you will cross the Jordan River and take the land. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [23]Always remember the agreement you have with the LORD, and don't make an idol in any shape. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [24]The LORD wants you to worship only Him. And if you don't, He can be like a fire consuming everything in its path. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[25]"In the future, when you have children and grandchildren and you have been in the land a long time, don't make an idol of any kind. If you do this evil thing, the LORD will be angry with you. [26]And heaven and earth will be witnesses of your idolatry, and you will die in the land. Your days there will be brief; you will be destroyed. [27]The LORD will scatter you into other countries, and only a few of you will survive there. [28]There you will worship idols made of wood and stone, idols that can't see, hear, eat, or smell." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, I hate idolatry, just as You do. Amen.

29"But if you seek the LORD with all your heart and soul, you will find Him. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}
30"So when these difficult days come, return to the LORD and obey Him. 31He is a God of mercy. He won't leave you or destroy you, and He won't forget the agreement He made with your ancestors and which he confirmed by an oath. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}
32"Think of all of history, and check everywhere to see if anything as great as this has ever happened: 33Has any nation heard God speaking out of fire, as you have, and lived to tell about it? 34Has any other god ever taken a nation out from another nation by trials, miracles, war, great power, and awesome deeds, right before your very eyes? {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
35"God did all this so you would realize that the LORD is God, and that there's no one like Him. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}
36You heard His voice from heaven, and on earth you saw the great flame of fire and you heard His voice. 37Because He loved your ancestors and chose to bless their descendants, {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} He brought you out of Egypt with great power. 38You now face nations greater and stronger than you, but He will bring you into the land and give it to you as your inheritance. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}
39"Remember that the LORD is God both in heaven and on the earth, and there is no other. 40If you obey His laws and commands, which I am passing on to you now, all will be well with you and your children, and you will enjoy long life in the land the Lord is giving you." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, Your promises are awesome! Amen.

41Then Moses chose three towns of refuge east of the Jordan. 42If someone killed a person unintentionally and without anger, he could run to one of these towns and be safe living there. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 43The towns were Bezer in the desert for the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead for the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan for the tribe of East Manasseh.
44-45When the Israelites had come out of Egypt, Moses gave them their laws and regulations. 46This was east of the Jordan where the Israelites had defeated Sihon king of the Amorites, who reigned in Heshbon, 47and Og king of Bashan. 48This land extended from Aroer by the Arnon River north to Mount Siyon (another name for Mount Hermon), 49and included the land east of the Jordan down to Mount Pisgah east of the Dead Sea (also called the Sea of the Arabah).

Deuteronomy 5

The Ten Commands

1Moses called the people together and said, "Listen to all the laws and regulations

I am giving you today. Learn them and be sure to obey them. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 2The LORD our God, made an agreement with us at Mount Horeb. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 3That wasn't just for our ancestors; it was for all of us here today. 4The LORD Himself spoke to you out of the fire on the mountain. 5You were afraid of the fire and didn't go up the mountain. So I stood between the LORD and you, and I passed His words onto you. He said, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 6"I am the LORD your God who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. 7Do not worship any god except Me. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} 8Do not make idols of anything shaped like birds, animals, or fish. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 9Never bow down to them or worship them. Why? Because I am the LORD your God and I want your complete worship. If you hate Me, I will punish the sins of future generations. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10But I will always love those who love and obey Me.

11"Don't use My name disrespectfully. If you do, I will punish you. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 12Observe the Sabbath Day, keeping it holy. 13You have six days each week in which to do your work, 14but on the seventh day you are to honor Me. No one is to work on that day, including your family members and slaves, and even animals and foreigners living in your cities. 15Don't forget that I brought you out of slavery in Egypt with great power, and that's why you should keep the Sabbath. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7}

16"Respect your parents. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} If you do, you will have a long life in the land I am giving you. 17Don't murder. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 18Don't commit adultery. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 19Don't take what doesn't belong to you. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 20Don't tell lies in court. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 21Don't desire to have what belongs to someone else, including someone's wife, slaves, animals, or anything else.'" {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

Lord, You gave us these 10 Commands to tell us how You expect us to guard ourselves from sin. Give me an obedient heart and willing hands and feet to obey You. Amen.

22"There on the mountain the LORD gave these commands in a loud voice from the fire to all of you, as you were surrounded by the great cloud and heavy darkness. The LORD gave only these commands, and He wrote them on flat stones and gave them to me. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 23When you heard the voice and saw the fire on the mountain, the tribal leaders came to me {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} 24and said, 'We have seen His glorious majesty and heard His voice. This shows that people can live if God speaks to them. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 25But if He speaks to us again from the fire, we will die. 26Who

can survive, as we have, after hearing God speaking from the fire? [27]You go and listen to what God says. Then come back and tell me and we will listen and obey.' {298 Many Ways to Pray, Heb. 2:1-4}

[28]"'The LORD heard you and said, 'Moses, I have heard what the people said. [29]But I wish they would always revere Me and keep My commands. Then they and their children would prosper. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [30]Tell them to return to their tents. [31]But you come back so I can give you all My commands, laws, and regulations, which you are to teach them to obey, in the land I will give them.'" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[32]So Moses said to the people, "Carefully obey the LORD's commands in every detail. [33]Stay on the path He has given, and you will have long, prosperous lives in the land you will enter." {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10}

Lord, I will be careful in both little and big things. The essence is obedience; I will obey. Amen.

Deuteronomy 6

Love the LORD Your God

[1]"These are the commands, laws, and regulations the LORD has me to teach you so you can obey them in the land I am giving you after you cross the Jordan. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [2]I'm giving you these so that you, your children, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} and grandchildren will revere the LORD by obeying these laws. Then you will enjoy a long life. [3]So listen closely and obey them so that all will go well with you and you will become a great nation in the land of much milk from cows and much honey from bees, just as the LORD has promised. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[4]"Israel, listen. The LORD our God is the only true God. [5]So love Him completely, with all your heart, soul, and strength. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [6]Think about them all the time, {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} [7]and tell them over and over to your children. Talk about them when you are at home or walking along the road, and at bedtime and when you get up in the morning. [8]Tie copies of them on your hands and foreheads, {546 Written-Prayer, 1 Chron. 4:10} [9]and write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your city gates. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}

[10]"The LORD your God promised your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} that He would give you this land. The LORD has large cities you didn't build, [11]houses full of good things, wells you didn't dig, and vineyards and olive orchards you didn't plant. When you enjoy this food [12]don't forget that the LORD is the one who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

[13]"Worship the LORD your God and serve only Him. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} When you take an oath, use only His name. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [14]Don't worship any of the gods of

nations around you, [15]because the LORD wants you to worship only Him. In His anger He may wipe you off the face of the earth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [16]Don't try His patience as you did at Massah. [17]Be sure to obey all the LORD commands, laws, and regulations. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [18]Always do what is right and good in His sight. Then all will go well with you [19]and you can go take this land from your enemies just as the LORD promised your ancestors. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

[20]"When your children ask why the LORD gave you all these commands, laws, and regulations, [21]tell them, 'We were slaves in Egypt, but the Lord brought us out by His great power. [22]We saw Him perform miracles and do terrible things to the Egyptians. [23]He brought us out of Egypt so He could bring us into this land He promised to our ancestors. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [24]He has told us to obey all these laws {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} and to revere Him, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} so that He can prosper us and keep us alive, as we are now. [25]We are righteous when we obey His commands.'"

Lord, You drew a line at Mount Sinai that separated God-worshipers from idol-worshipers. It was a line that has been repeatedly drawn through the ages. I will get on Your side of the line while the rest of unbelieving humanity lines up on the other side with false gods. Lord, You are my only God. Amen.

Deuteronomy 7

The Lord's People

[1]"When the LORD your God brings you into the land, He will destroy the Hittites, the Girgashites, the Amorites, the Canaanites, the Perizzites, the Hivites, and the Jebusites. [2]These nations are larger and stronger than you, but when you defeat them, destroy them completely. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} Don't make any treaties with them, and show them no mercy. [3]Don't let your sons and daughters marry any of them. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [4]If they do, these people will influence your sons to worship other gods, and the LORD will be very angry with you, and He will quickly destroy you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[5]"Break down their altars, smash their sacred stones, cut down the poles they rise in worshiping Asherah, and burn their idols in the fire. [6]You are a holy people, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} dedicated to the LORD your God, who has chosen you to be His special treasure. [7]Why did the LORD choose to love you? Not because you are larger than other nations, for you are the smallest. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [8]His choice of you was simply because of His love and His promise to your ancestors. That's why He rescued you with great power from slavery in Egypt. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [9]Remember that the LORD your God is the faithful God who will keep His agreement for a thousand generations with those who love and obey

Him. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 10Those who hate Him will be destroyed by Him and quickly. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11So obey these commands, laws, and regulations I am giving you today. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

12"If you are careful to obey these laws, the LORD your God will keep His part of the agreement with you, as He promised your ancestors. 13He will love you and bless you, giving you many children, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and many crops of grain, grapes, and olives, and many calves and lambs. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 14You will be more blessed than any other nation; your men and women and livestock will not be barren. 15You will be healthy and not suffer the horrible diseases you had in Egypt; {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} instead God will cause your enemies to suffer from them. 16You must destroy your enemies without pity. And do not worship their gods; if you do, they will trap you. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

17"You may think, 'How can we destroy these nations that are stronger than us?' But don't be afraid. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 18Just remember what the LORD your God did to Pharaoh and all Egypt. 19You saw how the LORD used His great power to work mighty miracles and bring you out of Egypt. He will do the same against the nations you fear. 20Some enemies may hide, but the LORD will send hornets against them. 21So don't be afraid of these nations, because the LORD your God is great and awesome. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

22"The LORD will force them out little by little. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} You won't be able to get rid of them all at once, for if you did there would not be enough people to kill all the wild animals, and this would be a dangerous situation. 23But the LORD will hand them over to you, by causing them to be confused and destroyed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 24You will defeat their kings, and no one will even remember their names. No one will be able to stand against you as you destroy them all. 25Burn their idols, and don't take the silver and gold from their idols, for idolatry is disgusting to the Lord. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 26If you bring an idol into your home and worship it, {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} you will be destroyed. Hate such detestable things, for they are doomed to be destroyed."

Lord, my house will be clean, my body will be clean, and my mind will be clean. Come cleanse me with the blood of Christ, and then fill me with the Holy Spirit to keep me clean. Amen.

Deuteronomy 8

Always Remember the LORD

1"Be careful to obey all the commands I am giving you today. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} If you do, you will live, become a great nation, and take over the land

the LORD promised to your ancestors. 2Remember how the LORD led you through the desert for 40 years, {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} humbling you and checking to see if you would obey His commands. 3He caused you to go hungry and then fed you manna, which you and your ancestors had not heard of. He wanted you to realize that you need more than food; {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} you need every word God has spoken to you. 4In those 40 years your clothes didn't wear out, and your feet didn't swell. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 5Yet the LORD has been disciplining you just as a father disciplines his son. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

6"Obey the commands the LORD has given you by following and revering Him. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} 7The LORD is bringing you into a good land, with streams flowing from springs in the valleys and hills. 8The land has wheat, barley, vineyards, fig trees, pomegranates, olive trees, and honey. 9Food will be plentiful and you will lack nothing. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} Iron is common in the rocks, as is copper in the hills. 10When you have eaten and are full, praise the LORD for giving you this good land. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

11"Be careful {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} and don't forget the LORD your God. Be sure to obey His commands, laws, and regulations. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12When you have plenty to eat, are settled in nice houses, 13and your flocks and herds are growing, and you have more silver and gold, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 14don't be proud and forget the LORD your God who brought you out of slavery in Egypt. 15Remember how He led you through the huge and dreadful desert with its dangerous snakes and scorpions. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} There was no water, but He brought water out of a rock. 16He gave you manna to eat, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} which your ancestors never heard of. He was testing you to make you humble and put your trust in Him. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 17When you are tempted to think you got rich by your own power, 18remember that the LORD your God has given you the ability to become rich. This is to keep the agreement He made with your ancestors.

19"If you ever forget the LORD and worship other gods, you will be destroyed, 20just as He destroyed other nations you fought." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I will not forget all You've done for me. Give me good remembrance so I'll live a grateful life of obedience to You. Amen.

Deuteronomy 9

The Israelites Did Not Obey

1"Listen, Israel. You will soon cross the Jordan River to go into the land and defeat the nations that are greater and more powerful than you. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Their large cities have high walls, 2and some of the people are giants,

descendants of Anak. You have heard that no one can defeat them. 3But the LORD your God will destroy them like a fire. And you will defeat them quickly, as the LORD promised. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
4"After the LORD has done this for you, don't think you are such good people. No, the LORD will defeat them because they are so wicked."

Lord, keep me humble when You use me. Amen.

5"Again, He will do this because of their wickedness, not your goodness and honesty, and because of His promises to your ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 6Not because of your goodness will the LORD give you this land; in fact you are a stubborn people. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
7"Don't forget how you made the LORD angry in the desert. You have rebelled against Him from the day you left Egypt until now. 8In fact at Mount Horeb (Sinai) He was so angry that He was ready to destroy you." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, forgive every sin of mine. Amen.

9"This was when I was on the mountain for 40 days and nights with nothing to eat or drink. 10From the fire on the mountain the Lord gave me two flat stones with the Ten Commands written on them while you watched below. 11So at the end of 40 days, when the LORD gave me the flat stones, 12He told me to go down right away because you had disobeyed Him by making an idol from gold. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
13"The LORD said to me, 'These people are so stubborn. 14Let Me alone. I will destroy them {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and no one on earth will remember them. But your descendants, Moses, will become an even bigger and more powerful nation than Israel.' 15So I went down the mountain, carrying the two flat stones."

Lord, help me learn from the sin and judgment of others. Amen.

16"I immediately saw the idol you had made in the shape of a calf, and I was amazed at how quickly you turned from the LORD. 17So I threw down the stones and smashed them as you looked on." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, give me righteous indignation against sin, just as Moses had. Amen.

18"For 40 days and nights I lay prostrate before the LORD {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and ate and drank nothing all that time. I was so concerned about your terrible sin, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} which aroused the LORD's anger. 19I was concerned that the Lord was angry enough to destroy all of you. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} But He listened to me. 20And even

though the LORD in His anger was about to kill Aaron, I prayed for Aaron. 21Then I burned the idol you had made. I took the gold, ground it into powder, and threw the powder into the stream flowing down the mountain. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

22"You also made the LORD angry at Taberah, Massah, and Kibroth-Hattaavah. 23Then at Kadesh-Barnea when the LORD told you to take the land, you rebelled and didn't trust or obey the LORD. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 24In fact you have been rebelling against the LORD ever since I have known you." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, forgive my past sins, and keep me from sin in the future. Amen.

25"That is why I lay prostrate before the LORD for 40 days and nights. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 26I prayed, 'Sovereign LORD, please don't destroy Your people, the treasure You rescued from Egypt in Your great power and strength. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 27Remember the promise You made to Your servants Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and overlook the people's stubbornness, wickedness, and sin. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 28If you don't, the Egyptians will say, "HiviThe LORD wasn't powerful enough to bring His people into the land He promised them. In fact He hated them, and so He put them to death in the desert." 29But, LORD, they are Your people who belong to You, and You brought them out of Egypt by Your great power and strength.'" {262 Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Heb. 7:24-25}

Lord, I will be an intercessor for Your people, just like Moses. Amen.

Deuteronomy 10

The Second Set of Stone Tablets

1"Then the LORD said to me, 'Get two flat stones like the ones I gave you earlier. Also make a wooden chest. 2And I will write on the stones the Ten Commands that were on the first stones. And keep these in the chest.'

3"So I made a chest of acacia wood and chiseled two stones like the ones I broke. I carried the stones up the mountain, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4the hand of the LORD wrote on them, the Ten Commands, which were the same as what He had given before from the fire on the mountain as you watched below." {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}

Lord, thank You for grace and mercy. Thank You for a second chance to serve You after I've failed. Amen.

5"I came down the mountain and put the stones in the sacred chest, as the LORD had told me to do and they are there now. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

6"We traveled from the wells of the Jaakanites to Moserah, where Aaron died and was buried, {276 Leave the

Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} and Eleazar his son became high priest. 7From there we went to Gudgodah and on to Jotbathah, where there are streams of water. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} 8The LORD chose the tribe of Levi to carry the sacred chest and to serve Him in the tabernacle, which they still do. 9The Levites have no territory allotted to them because the Lord is their inheritance. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

10"After I had stayed on Mount Horeb another 40 days and nights, {88 Continue in Prayer, Luke 11:8-10} the LORD again heard my prayer {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} and said He would not destroy you. He said, 11'Go lead these people into the land I promised their ancestors.' 12Now, Israel, what does the LORD your God want you to do? He wants you to reverence Him, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} follow Him, love Him, {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} and serve Him with all your heart and soul, 13and to obey His commands and laws that I am giving you today. All this is for your own good. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

14"Everything belongs to the LORD, including the heavens and the earth and everything on it. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 15And yet He loved your ancestors and chose them and you, their descendants, above anyone else, as is evident today. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 16Therefore cleanse your sinful hearts and stop being stubborn. 17The LORD your God is the God of gods and LORD of lords. As the mighty and awesome God, He is impartial and He takes no bribes from anyone who might try to change His mind. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 18He defends the rights of orphans and widows, and He cares for foreigners and sees that they have food and clothing. 19You too must love foreigners, for you yourselves were foreigners in Egypt. 20Reverence the LORD your God and serve Him. Cling to Him and make promises only in His name. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 21Make Him the object of your praise because as your God He performed great miracles for you. 22When your ancestors went to live in Egypt, there were only 70 of them, and now the LORD your God has made you as many as the stars in the sky."

Lord, the greatest inheritance of all is You, Yourself. Beyond the Ten Commands and every other directive, my greatest gift is Yourself. Amen.

Deuteronomy 11

The Importance of Obedience

1"Love the LORD your God, and always keep His regulations, commands, and laws. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 2You, not your children, were the ones who were disciplined by the LORD when you saw His majesty, {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} great power and strength. 3They didn't see the miracles the Lord performed in Egypt against Pharaoh and his entire nation. 4Nor did

they see how the LORD drowned the Egyptian army and his horses and chariots in the Red Sea as they were chasing us. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5You, not your children, saw how He cared for you in the desert. 6Also you saw what He did to Dathan and Abiram, Eliab's sons, in causing them to fall into a huge crevice with their families and belongings. 7You, not your children, saw all these wonderful things the LORD did for you. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

8"So obey all the commands I am giving you today from the LORD. If you do, then you will have strength to take the land {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} you are about to enter after crossing the Jordan River. 9And if you obey these commands, you will live a long time in the land the LORD promised and your ancestors and their descendants, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} this land with lots of milk and honey. 10The land you are about to enter is not like Egypt, where you had to plant seeds and then irrigate them as in a vegetable garden. 11The hills and valleys in the land where you are going are watered by rain. 12The LORD your God cares for this land; {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} He keeps His eyes on it all the time. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7}

13"So if you obey all the LORD's commands, love Him, and serve Him with all your heart and soul, 14He will send rain in the fall and spring, so that you will have plenty of grain, grapes, and olive oil. 15You will have good pasture land for your cattle, and you yourselves will have plenty to eat. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

16"Beware that you don't turn from the Lord and worship other gods. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} 17If you bow down to them, the LORD will be angry and He will hold off the rain, you will have no crops, and you will die. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18So keep these words in your mind, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and tie copies of them on your hands and foreheads. 19Teach them to your children, talking about them at home, when you are walking along the road, at bedtime, and when you get up in the morning. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} 20Write them on the doorposts of your houses and on your city gates. 21That way as long as the sky is above the earth you and your children will live long lives in the land the LORD promised to your ancestors. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

22"Obey all the commands I am giving you. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Love the LORD, follow His ways, and cling to Him. 23Then He will force out of the land the nations that are larger and stronger than you. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 24Wherever you go the land will be yours, {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} from the desert in the south to Lebanon in the north and from the Euphrates River to the Mediterranean Sea. 25No one will be able to defeat you. The LORD your God will make everyone afraid of you, as He promised." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

Lord, I say "amen" to Your promises. Amen.

[26]"I am giving you a choice: [27]You will be blessed if you obey the LORD's commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [28]or you will be cursed if you disobey and worship other gods. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [29]When you are in the land, you are to announce the blessings on Mount Gerizim {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and the curses on Mount Ebal. [30]As you know, these mountains are west of the Jordan River near the great oak tree of Moreh where the Canaanites live near Gilgal. [31]You will soon cross the Jordan River and conquer the land the LORD your God is giving you. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} When you have settled there, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [32]be sure you obey the commands and laws the Lord is giving you today." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, You chose the land of promise for Israel, and it was just dirt, rocks, and trees. But how greater is Your choice of me and Your care for me. The land of promise was just a place You loved, but I am Your redeemed born-again child. I love You and will serve You with all my heart. I worship You for Your greatness of care that You extend to someone lowly as me. Amen.

Deuteronomy 12

The One Place for Worship

[1]"These are the commands and laws you must obey in the land that the LORD, the God of your ancestors, is giving you. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [2]After you capture the land, destroy all the places where the nations worship their gods, including those on mountaintops, on hills, and under large trees. [3]Tear down these altars, smash their sacred stones, and burn the poles involved in their worshiping the goddess Asherah. Destroy these idols and even rename those places. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [4]Don't worship the LORD your God the way these people worship their gods.

[5]"When you are in the land, you are not to worship the LORD anywhere you choose, as the nations do. Instead He will choose the place for His tabernacle. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} And you are to [6]bring your offerings and sacrifices, tithes, and gifts, offerings to fulfill a vow, freewill offerings, and the firstborn of your cattle, sheep, and goats. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]There you and your families will eat your sacrifices and rejoice in all the LORD has done for you. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

[8-9]"You now do as you please, but things will be different when you arrive in the place of rest the LORD your God will give you. [10]When you cross the Jordan and settle in the land, {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} the LORD will give you rest and you will be safe. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [11]Bring your burnt

offering, sacrifice, tithes, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} and other gifts to the place the LORD your God will choose. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} 12Rejoice there with your families, servants, and the Levites, who, as you know, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} will have no tribal land of their own. 13You are not to sacrifice your burnt offerings {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} anywhere you choose. 14You are to offer them only at the place the LORD will choose. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

15"However, you may kill an animal for food anywhere you choose, just as you do when hunting gazelles or deer. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} And anyone can eat the meat, whether he is ceremonially clean or unclean. 16But do not eat the blood; drain it out on the ground. 17You are not to eat in your hometowns any of your offerings including the tithe of your grain, grapes, and olive oil; the firstborn of your cattle, sheep, or goats; or anything you have vowed to give to the Lord, or freewill offerings, or special gifts. 18Instead eat them before the LORD at the place He will choose for you, your families, servants, and Levites. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} And rejoice in everything you do. 19And don't forget the Levites.

20"When the LORD your God gives you more land, and you would like some meat to eat, you may eat as much as you want. 21But some of you may not be able to travel from your homes to the tabernacle. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} So when you need meat, you may butcher some of your cattle, sheep, or goats in your towns and eat as much as you want. 22This is the same as eating meat from gazelles or deer that you hunt, and it can be eaten by the ceremonially clean or unclean. 23But don't eat the blood because it is the animal's life. 24Drain out the blood on the ground. 25Don't eat the blood so that all will go well with you and your children. In this way you will be doing what pleases the LORD your God. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

26"Take your sacrifices and offerings to fulfill a vow to the place the LORD will choose. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 27When you sacrifice the meat and blood of your burnt offerings on the altar of burnt offering, you may eat the meat, but be sure to drain out the blood beside the altar. 28Obey these laws, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and as I said, all will go well with you and your children, and you will be doing what the LORD your God says is good and right. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 29When the LORD your God destroys these nations and you settle in the land, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 30don't be trapped into following their gods. And don't think, 'We should worship the same way they worship their gods' 31Don't do that. Why? Because they worship their gods in terrible ways that I hate, even burning their sons and daughters to their gods. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 32Obey all that I command you. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Don't add any or subtract any."

Lord, today I go to meet You, to Your place, the church. I will tithe to You. Lord, I will fellowship with You in my church. Lord, I commit myself to worship in Your special place. Amen.

Deuteronomy 13

Worship the One True God

1"If someone claims to tell by dreams what will happen in the future or says he has performed a miracle, 2and the miracle takes place and he says, 'Let's worship these other gods,' 3don't listen to him. The LORD is checking to see if you love Him wholeheartedly. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} 4Follow and reverence the LORD your God. Obey His commands serve Him, and cling to him. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 5Put that dreamer to death. Why? Because he tried to get you to rebel against the LORD your God, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} the one who brought you out of slavery in Egypt and to keep you from following Him." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Lord, I will reject anyone who pulls me away from You. Amen.

6"Suppose a close relative or friend says, 'Let's worship their other gods' 7(gods of nations around you), 8don't give in and don't pity him or protect him. {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} 9Stone him to death, 10and if you are the one he tried to influence, then you be the first to throw a stone followed by other Israelites. He deserves to be stoned because he tried to turn you from the LORD your God, who rescued you from slavery in Egypt. 11When the people hear of this, they will be afraid, and this will keep everyone from ever doing such a terrible thing again.

12"Suppose you hear a rumor 13that some wicked men are in one of your towns encouraging the people there to worship other gods. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 14You are to see if that rumor is true. And if it is true, 15then you are to kill everyone in that town and all their livestock. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 16Pile all the loot in the town square, and burn the loot and the town itself as a burnt offering to the LORD your God. And don't ever rebuild the town, 17and don't keep any of the loot for yourselves. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Then the LORD will no longer be angry. He will be merciful and compassionate, and make you a great nation, as He promised your ancestors. 18But this will depend on your obeying all the commands the LORD your God is giving you today and your doing what is right." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I put to death all evil lust within my life. I will not tolerate anything that You hate. Amen.

Deuteronomy 14

Clean and Unclean Foods

1"You are God's children, so don't cut
yourselves (as people in other nations do
when they worship their gods), or shave
your foreheads when you mourn the dead.
2That's because you are holy to the LORD
your God, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter
1:16} and of all the nations He has chosen
you to be His special people. 3Don't eat
any animal that is unclean. 4But you may
eat the meat of cattle, goats, 5deer, gazelles,
roebucks, wild goats, ibex goats, ante-
lopes, and mountain sheep. 6You may eat
meat of any animal that has split hooves
and chews the cud. 7You are not to eat
the meat of camels, rabbits, or rock bad-
gers, because they chew the cud but don't
have split hooves. They are ceremonially
unclean. 8And don't eat pigs; they have
split hooves, but they don't chew the cud.
In fact, don't even touch a dead pig. {430
Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
9"You may eat any fish that has fins and
scales. 10But you are not to eat any other
water creatures that don't have fins and
scales. 11"You may eat any clean bird. {430
Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 12But you
are not to eat the meat of any of these:
eagles, vultures, 13kites, falcons, 14ravens,
15horned owls and screech owls, gulls,
hawks, 16little, big, and white owls, 17desert
owls, osprey, cormorants, 18storks, herons,
hoopoes, and bats. 19You are not to eat any
flying insects, 20but you may eat certain
kinds of winged insects.
21"You are not to eat any dead animal you
find. You may give it to a foreign resident
and he may eat it, or you may give it to a
foreigner who is visiting you. But you are a
people set apart to the LORD your God.
{223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} Don't
boil a young goat in its mother's milk.
22"Every year set aside a tenth of all your
crops. 23Also bring a tenth of your grain,
grapes, and olive oil, and the firstborn of
your cattle, sheep, and goats to the place
the Lord will choose for His tabernacle.
{182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
You may eat these there, and this will
help you learn to respect the LORD your
God. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}
24But if the tabernacle is too far away from
where you live and you can't take all your
tithe there, 25then sell your tithe and take
the money to the tabernacle. 26There you
may buy cattle, sheep, fermented drinks,
and feast in the LORD's presence with
joy. 27Let the Levites celebrate with you,
since they have no tribal territory of their
own. 28Every third year store your tithe of
that year's produce in your towns. 29That
way food will be available for foreigners,
orphans, and widows in your towns. Then
the LORD your God will be pleased and
will bless you." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen.
49:28, KJV}

Lord, You own everything because You've created all things, yet You allow us to possess things and even own things. Then You allow me to give back to You some of the belongings I own. Accept my gifts to You and use them for Your glory. Amen.

Deuteronomy 15

Forgive Debtors Every Seven Years

1"As the end of every seven years, you must
cancel your debts. 2Every creditor is to tell
his fellow Israelites that the debt is can-
celed and no more payment is to be made
on the loan. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:10} 3However, this does not apply
to foreigners with a debt. 4No one will
become poor because of this, because the
LORD your God will bless you in the land
{47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 5if
you obey Him and follow His commands
that I'm giving you today. {327 Obedi-
ent-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 6Because of His bless-
ings you will make loans to other nations
but you won't have to borrow from any
of them. Also you will rule over many
nations, but none of them will rule over
you." {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

Lord, I will use my money and resources for Your influence. Amen.

7"If there is a poor Israelite in any of the
towns in the land the LORD your God
is giving you, don't be uncaring and self-
ish with your money. {184 Gifts with
Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 8Instead be generous
and lend him whatever he needs. 9Don't
think, 'Well, the seventh year is coming
soon, so if I loan him something now, I
won't get it back.' If you loan him noth-
ing, he may tell this to the LORD, and
He may say you are guilty. 10Give him
a generous loan without complaining
about it. Then the LORD your God will
bless you and give you success in every-
thing you do. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen.
49:28, KJV} 11Since some of your Isra-
elites will always be poor, be generous
toward them.
12"If you buy an Israelite as a servant, you
are to set him free after six years. 13Don't
send him away empty handed; 14give him
sheep and goats and grain and wine. The
more the Lord has blessed you, the more
you should give to him. {409 Reward-
Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 15Don't forget that
you were slaves in Egypt, and the Lord
rescued you. {416 Salvation-Prayer,
Luke 18:13} 16But if your servant says
he doesn't want to leave you because he
loves you and your family and enjoys
being with you, {292 Love-Abounding
Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 17then push a sharp tool
through one of his earlobes. He will then
belong to you the rest of his life. Do the
same for female servants. 18Don't com-
plain when you set a servant free. After
all, you got his service for half the cost
of hiring someone. {47 Blessing-Prayer,
Gen. 49:28, KJV}
19"Give to the LORD your God {103
Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} every
firstborn male cow, sheep, or goat. Don't
work the firstborn cattle in your fields and
don't shear your firstborn sheep. 20Each
year you are to take these firstborn animals
to the tabernacle, and you and your family
are to sacrifice them there and eat the meat
from them. {541 Worship-Prayer, John
4:23} 21But if an animal is lame or blind or
has some other defect, you are not to sac-
rifice it to the LORD your God. 22Instead
you are to eat it at home. Anyone may

eat it whether he is ceremonially clean or unclean, just as anyone may eat a gazelle or deer killed in your hunting. [23]But be sure never to eat the blood; drain it out on the ground." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}

Lord, I want to be Your servant; I never want to leave You. I'll be Your servant forever. Amen.

Deuteronomy 16

Three Festivals Each Year

[1]"Celebrate the Passover of the LORD your God in the month of April, the month that the LORD your God brought you out of Egypt at night. [2]Sacrifice to Him a cow, sheep, or goat at the place where He will choose to be worshiped. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [3]Eat it with bread without yeast, and eat that kind of bread for seven days, as you did when you left Egypt in a hurry. Eat this bread—the bread of suffering—{465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} because you left Egypt in a hurry. [4]Don't have any yeast in your house for seven days, and don't leave any leftovers till morning. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

[5]"Don't sacrifice the Passover in any town where you live. [6]It must be offered and in the place the LORD your God will choose to be worshiped. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} Kill the sacrificial animal at sunset, at the time of day you left Egypt. [7]Roast the lamb, and eat it and then return to your tents in the morning. [8]Eat bread without yeast for six days. Then on the seventh day meet together to worship the LORD your God, and don't do any work.

[9]"Seven weeks after the beginning of your grain harvest, [10]celebrate the Harvest Festival by giving a freewill offering, with the size depending on the size of the harvest the LORD has given you. [11]Make this a time of joy with your family, {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} your servants, the Levites in your towns, foreign residents, orphans, and widows. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [12]Obey these laws, remembering that you were slaves in Egypt. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[13]"At the end of the harvest season celebrate the Festival of Shelters for a week. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [14]This too is to be a joyful time, with the same people who were with you for the Harvest Festival. [15]This festival is to be for a week at the tabernacle, to be located at the place the LORD will choose. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} You will have good harvests, and this will give you much joy.

[16]"Three times every year each man is to go to the tabernacle at the place the Lord will choose for the Festival of Bread without Yeast, the Harvest Festival, and the Festival of Shelters with a gift to the LORD. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [17]The size of the gift is to depend on the way the LORD your God has blessed you. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[18]"In every town in the land the LORD your God is giving you appoint judges and officials for each of your tribes, who

are to judge fairly. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} 19They must never twist justice or be partial. And they must not accept bribes, because bribes can keep wise people from seeing the truth and can wrongly influence their decisions. 20To live and enjoy the land the LORD your God is giving you, be sure you always treat everyone with justice. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

21"When you build the altar of burnt offering for the LORD your God, never set up next to it a wooden pole dedicated to the goddess Asherah, 22and don't set up a sacred stone, because the LORD your God hates these." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, may I never forget Your suffering at Passover that brought me to this hour. Thank You for Pentecost when the Holy Spirit came. Lord, thank You for Your harvest in my life. Amen.

Deuteronomy 17

Judgment of Evil and Rules for the King

1"Don't sacrifice to the LORD your God any cow or sheep with a physical defect because He despises such offerings. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 2If someone sins before the LORD your God {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 3by worshiping other gods and bowing down to them or to the sun, moon, or stars, 4you must see if this is true. If it has been proved that this terrible thing has been done in Israel, 5then take that person to the city gate and stone him to death, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6but only if two or three witnesses confirm his guilt. 7The witnesses must be the first ones to throw stones. In this way you will help get rid of evil among your people." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I will be harsh with sin in my life because You do not tolerate evil of any kind. Amen.

8"In some legal cases it may be difficult to know if someone is guilty or not, to know if he is guilty of murder or manslaughter, or an injury intentionally or not. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 9Take the problem to the Levites and to the judge who is in office at the time, and he will decide the case. 10Then follow their decision, doing whatever they tell you to do. 11Carry out the verdict they give you, and don't change it in any way. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12If the defendant shows disrespect for the judge's decision or the priest, he must be put to death. In this way you will help get rid of evil among your people. 13When the people hear about this, they will be afraid and won't challenge the court's decision again.

14"When you are settled in the land and you say you want a king as other nations have, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 15be sure to appoint the man the LORD your God chooses. He must be an Israelite, not a foreign resident. 16Also the

king is not to have many horses, and he must not send people back to Egypt to get horses. The LORD has told you never to go back there again. 17Also the king is not to have many wives, because they will lead him away from the Lord. And he must not become unusually rich with silver and gold. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

18"When the man becomes a king, he is to go to the priests and write for himself a copy of the law, 19and he is to read from it every day. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} This will help him reverence the LORD his God {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} and follow carefully all these laws and commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 20The law will keep him from thinking he is better than everyone else, and it will keep him from turning away from the law in even the smallest way. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Then he and his descendants will reign over Israel for many years."

Lord, I will hold the Scriptures in my heart and obey them constantly. Amen.

Deuteronomy 18

A Share Given to the Priests and Levites

1"Since Levites, including the priests, are to have no tribal territory, they are to eat from the sacrifices brought by the people to the LORD, for that is their inheritance. 2They are to have no tribal territory of their own, because the LORD Himself is their inheritance as He promised. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

3"When you sacrifice a bull or a sheep, the priests are to receive the animal's shoulder, jaws, and stomach. 4You are also to give the priests the first part of your grain, wine, and olive oil, and the first wool you shear from your sheep. 5This is because the LORD your God has chosen them and their descendants from all your tribes to serve Him always. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

6"If a Levite moves from his hometown to the place where the tabernacle will be set up, 7he may serve his fellow Levites in representing the LORD his God. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 8He may have received money from the sale of family belongings, but he should still receive the same amount of food from the sacrifices as other Levites." {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14}

Lord, thank You for ministers today. I will take care of Your servants. Amen.

9"When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you, don't copy the horrible customs of the nations there. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 10Don't any of you sacrifice your son or daughter in fire, or practice fortune-telling or witchcraft, or interpret omens, 11or cast spells, or be a medium pretending to contact the dead, or a psychic pretending to tell the future or to talk with the dead. {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} 12Anyone

who does any of these is disgusting to the Lord, and that is why He will help you destroy these nations. [13]By contrast you must be completely blameless before the LORD. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [14]The nations you are about to displace practice magic and witchcraft, but the LORD your God will not allow you to do such things." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I will flee all dark, evil practices. Amen.

[15]"The LORD your God will raise up for you a prophet from among you who will be like me, and you must listen to him and obey him. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [16]Remember that at Mount Horeb (Sinai) you said you didn't want to hear the voice of the LORD your God or see the terrible fire again or you would die. [17]Then the LORD said to me, 'Okay, when I want to speak to them, I will choose one of you to be a prophet. [18]I will tell him what to say, and he will tell you what I said. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [19]If anyone doesn't listen to the prophet he will have to deal with Me. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [20]And if a prophet claims to give a message from Me, but I didn't give it, or if he claims to have a message from another god, he must be put to death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [21]'But how will you know if a message is from Me? [22]If what he says will happen does not occur, that message is not from Me. He has made up the message. So you don't need to be afraid of him.'"

Lord, I will believe only those who speak for You if they speak exactly what the Scriptures say. Amen.

Deuteronomy 19

The Towns of Refuge

[1]"After the LORD your God has destroyed the nations {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} in the land He is giving you and you are settled in, [2]choose three towns as Towns of Refuge. [3]Divide the land into three districts with a Town of Refuge in the center of each district, with roads leading to each town. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

[4]"This is the rule to follow if a person kills someone unintentionally without any previous hatred toward him, and runs to a Town of Refuge for safety. [5]For example suppose a man goes into a forest with a friend to cut wood, and as he swings his ax the ax head comes off the handle and hits his friend and kills him. He may run to one of these three towns and be safe. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [6]If the distance to the town is not too great, a relative of the dead man might catch up with the innocent 'murderer' and kill him. [7]That's why it's important to have these Towns of Refuge. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [8]If the LORD your God expands your territory as He promised to your ancestors, and gives you this land, [9]then set aside three more Towns of Refuge. (Of course this depends on your obeying His commands and loving Him and following

Him.) {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 10This will help keep innocent people from being killed in your land and keep you from being guilty of murder.

11"But if someone hates his neighbor and attacks and kills him, and then he runs to a Town of Refuge, 12the leaders of his hometown are to take him back home and hand him over to a relative of the victim, who will put him to death. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 13Don't show any mercy for the murderer. Getting rid of anyone who murders an innocent person is for the good of your nation.

14"Your ancestors set up stones to mark the boundaries of properties in the land the LORD your God will give you. So don't move these stones.

15"Never convict someone of a crime based on the words of one witness. Guilt or innocence must be determined by two or three witnesses.

16"If a false witness accuses a man of a crime, 17both men are to face the priests and judges in the Lord's presence. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 18The judges are to see if the witness is lying. If he is lying, 19punish him the way he wanted the man to be punished. This will be for the good of your nation. 20In fact when people hear that this is what happens to witnesses who lie, they will never again lie in court. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 21Don't show any pity for the liar. His punishment will be taking his life if he took someone else's life, a gouging out one of his eyes if he gouged out someone's eye, or a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, a foot for a foot." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

Lord, I have a city of refuge for when I sin unintentionally, it is Jesus Christ. Amen.

Deuteronomy 20

How to Make War

1"When you go to war and you see horses and chariots with an army bigger than yours, don't be afraid. The LORD your God, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} who brought you out of Egypt, will be with you. 2Before you go into battle, the priest is to speak to the soldiers. 3He will say, 'Listen to me. As you go into battle today, don't be discouraged or afraid, and don't panic when you see them. 4The LORD your God will go with you, will fight for you, and will give you victory.' {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

5"The officers will tell the soldiers, 'Has anyone just built a house and hasn't dedicated it? You may go home, because if you die in battle, someone else will dedicate it. 6Has anyone planted a vineyard and not yet eaten any grapes from it? You may go home, because if you die in battle, someone else will enjoy your grapes. 7Has anyone become engaged but isn't yet married? You may go home, because if you die in battle someone else will marry her. 8If you are afraid or terrified, you may go home, so you won't discourage the other soldiers.' 9When the officers finish giving these words, they are to appoint unit

commanders. {464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30}
10"As you come to a town to attack it, first offer peace to the people there. 11If they accept your offer, they are to open their gates and to become your servants. 12But if they reject your offer and fight against you, attack the town. 13The LORD your God will help you capture the town, and you are to kill all the men there. 14Take the women, children, livestock, and everything of value for yourselves. 15This is how you are to treat all the towns at a distance from you, towns not in the land the LORD your God is giving you. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 16But in the towns you are receiving as an inheritance from the LORD your God, kill every living being. 17Completely destroy the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, as the LORD your God has told you to do. 18If you don't, they will influence you to worship their detestable gods, and you will be sinning against the LORD your God. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}
19"When you attack a town and the battle continues on don't chop down its fruit trees. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} The townspeople aren't your enemies. 20But you may cut down trees that aren't fruit trees. You may use wood from those trees to build equipment you need to capture the town."

Lord, thank You for spiritual victory in Christ. I will completely separate myself from sin and defilement. Amen.

Deuteronomy 21
Unsolved Murders

1"Suppose the body of a murder victim is found in a field in the land the LORD your God gave you, and you don't know who the murderer is. 2Leaders and judges in the town near the body are to find out which town is closest to the body. 3Then the leaders of the closest town are to take a heifer that has never been put to work or worn a yoke, 4and they and the priests are to take her to a valley where there is a stream where the land hasn't been plowed. There they are to break the heifer's neck. 5(The priests are those whom the LORD your God has chosen to be His servants, to pronounce blessings, and to settle legal cases.) 6The town leaders are to wash their hands over the cow's dead body 7and say, 'We did not commit this murder, and we don't know who did. 8Lord, please accept this heifer as a substitute payment for sin for your people, and don't hold your people guilty of this crime.' {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 9If you do this, following the LORD's orders, you will be forgiven of the alleged crime and not be guilty.
10"When you go to war and the LORD your God helps you defeat an enemy, 11one of the prisoners you take may be a beautiful woman whom you want to marry. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 12Bring her home, have her shave her head and trim her nails, 13and get rid of the clothes she wore as a foreigner. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} After she has mourned for her parents for a month,

{530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} then you may marry her. 14Later, if you are not pleased with her, you may divorce her and let her go free. You may not sell her or treat her as a slave because you have humiliated her.

15"Suppose a man has two wives and he loves one more than the other. 16If both wives have sons, then the firstborn of the son of the wife he loves less is to receive a double share of the father's property. 17This is because he is the firstborn son.

18"Suppose parents have a stubborn and rebellious son who refuses to obey even after he has been punished. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 19His parents are to take him to the elders at the town gate 20and tell the elders, 'This son of ours is stubborn and rebellious, doesn't obey us, and is a wicked drunkard.' 21Then all the men of the town are to stone the son to death. Getting rid of him will be for the good of the nation, because when your people hear about this, they will be afraid. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

22"If a criminal is executed and you hang his body on a tree, 23don't leave it there overnight. Bury it the same day, because any dead body is under God's curse. Don't make unclean the land the LORD your God is giving you as your inheritance."

Lord, Jesus became guilty of all the sins of Israel, in fact the sins of all the world. He was hanged on a tree (cross) for me. Thank You for forgiveness. Amen.

Deuteronomy 22

Miscellaneous Instructions

1"If you see a cow or sheep wandering around lost, take it back to its owner. 2If the owner lives far away, or if you don't know who the owner is, take the animal with you and care for it. Then when the owner comes looking for it, give it to him. 3Do the same if you find someone's donkey or his clothing or anything he loses. Don't pretend you don't have them. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

4"If you see someone's donkey or ox fallen on the road, don't ignore it. Help it get back on its feet.

5"A woman is not to wear men's clothing, and a man is not to wear women's clothing. The LORD your God hates anyone who does this.

6"If you see a bird's nest in a tree or on the ground, and the mother bird is in the nest with her eggs or baby birds, 7you may take the eggs and the young, but let the mother go free. The Lord will bless you, and you will have a long life.

8"If you build a house, put a railing around the flat roof. This will keep you from being guilty if someone falls off the roof and dies. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

9"If you plant a vineyard, don't plant any other crops with it. If you do, the grapes and other crops will be ruined. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 10Don't plow with an ox and a donkey hitched together. 11Don't make clothes of wool and linen together. 12Sow tassles on the four corners of your cloaks.

13"Suppose a man marries a woman and then after sleeping with her doesn't like her,

Lord, You expect us to have "common sense." Help me learn as much as I can, about living practically and wisely. You gave me a good mind at birth help me live wisely and practically. Lord, there are so many ways to get hurt, or lose something or suffer an accident. Help me look out for myself and others. Amen.

14and gives her a bad reputation by accusing her of not being a virgin when they married. 15The bride's parents are to bring to the town's elders at the city gate proof that she was a virgin when she got married. 16The girl's father is to say to them, 'I gave my daughter to be this man's wife, 17and now he hates her and is accusing her of not being a virgin. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} But here is proof that she was.' 18The parents are to show them the sheet bed from their daughter's wedding night. 19Then the elders are to punish him and have him pay his father-in-law 100 silver pieces. And the man is not to divorce her.

20"However, if the man was right and there is no proof that she was a virgin when she married, 21the men of the town are to stone her to death at the front door of her father's house. She has done a disgraceful thing by sleeping with someone before she got married. You must get rid of this evil from your nation. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

22"If a man is caught having sex with another man's wife, put to death both him and the woman. You must get rid of this evil from your nation too. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 23-24If a man is caught having sex with an engaged woman, stone to death both of them at the city gate. This is because she was in town and didn't scream for help and he violated another man's wife. You must get rid of this evil too. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

25"If a man raped an engaged woman out in the country, the man is to die. 26Don't punish the woman because she has done nothing that deserves death. She is like being a murder victim, 27because though she screamed no one heard her there in the country. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

28"If a man rapes a virgin who is not married and they are caught, 29he is to pay her father 50 pieces of silver, and marry the girl and not divorce her as long as he lives. 30"A man must not marry a woman who is already married to his father, for this would be a disgrace to his father."

Lord, there are many laws about having sex. I know You have commanded us to have sex only within marriage. Lord, I commit myself to be sexually pure, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and I pray for all my friends and relatives that they will make that same commitment. Amen.

Deuteronomy 23

Banned People

1"If a man's private parts are crushed or cut
off in connection with pagan worship, he
may not worship with the LORD's peo-
ple. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
2No one born outside a legal marriage may
worship with the LORD's people, nor
may his descendants for ten generations.
3"No Ammonite or Moabite may worship
with God's people, nor may his descen-
dants for ten generations. 4They refused
to give you food and water when you left
Egypt. And they hired Balaam son of Beor
in northern Syria to put a curse on you.
5However, because the LORD your God
loves you, He refused to listen to Balaam
and turned his curse into a blessing. {47
Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 6So
don't sign a peace treaty with the Ammo-
nites or Moabites or try to help them in
any way. 7But don't hate the Edomites,
because Edom is your relative. {160 Fam-
ily-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} And
don't hate Egyptians because you lived as
foreigners in Egypt. 8Let the great-grand-
children of the Egyptians who came with
you worship with you.
9"When you are encamped when at war
with your enemies, stay away from every-
thing impure. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter
3:1} 10For example if a man has a noctur-
nal emission at night, he is ceremonially
unclean and is to go outside the camp and
stay there during the day. 11Late afternoon
he is to take a bath, and at sunset he may
return to the camp. 12Set up a place out-
side the camp as a toilet area. 13When you
relieve yourself, use a shovel to dig a hole,
and bury the waste in the hole. 14Because
the LORD your God is in your camp to
protect you and help you defeat your ene-
mies, keep your camp holy and clean. If He
sees something indecent among you, He
will turn away from you. {389 Purity-Pray-
ing, 2 Peter 3:1}
15"If a slave escaped from his master and
comes to you, don't force him to return.
{76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-
14} 16Let him live in whatever town he
chooses, and don't mistreat him. 17No Isra-
elite man or woman is to become a temple
prostitute. 18And don't bring to the taber-
nacle of the LORD your God any earn-
ings from prostitutes or homosexuals even
if it is to pay a vow, because the LORD
your God despises them both. {389 Puri-
ty-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
19"Don't charge interest on loans you make
to another Israelite, whether it is money,
food, or anything else. 20You may charge a
foreigner interest, but don't charge interest
from a fellow Israelite so that the LORD
your God will bless you in everything you
do in the land you are about to take. {47
Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
21"If you promise to give a gift to the
LORD your God, do it promptly. {521
Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} If you don't you
will be guilty of sin. 22However, it is not
a sin not to make a vow. 23But if you do
choose to make a vow be careful to do as
you have said in making the promise to the
LORD your God.
24"You may eat as many of your neigh-
bor's grapes as you want, but don't take
any away with you. {76 Common-Sense

Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 25It is the same with someone else's grain. You may pick some heads of grain, but don't cut down any grain with a sickle."

Lord, these practical instructions are based on Your wisdom. I will do to others as you would have them do to me. Lord, help me live wisely and practically with others. Amen.

Deuteronomy 24

Divorce and Other Matters

1"Suppose a man finds something disgraceful in his wife and he divorces her and sends her away. 2Then she marries another man 3and later he too divorces her or he dies. 4Then her first husband is not allowed to marry her again after she has had sex with her other husband. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} That would be disgusting to the LORD and would pollute the land the LORD your God is giving you.

5"If a man has been married less than a year, he must not be drafted into the army or given any related duties. He is to stay home and make his wife happy. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

6"When you loan money to someone, don't take a millstone of his as a guarantee that he will pay back the loan. That's because he needs millstones for grinding grain into flour to make bread. Without his millstones he may starve. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

7"Don't kidnap a fellow Israelite and treat him as a slave or sell him. If you do, you will die. Get rid of this sinful practice.

8"If someone has leprosy, he must do exactly what the priests tell him to do, following the instructions I have given them. 9Don't forget what the LORD your God did to Miriam after you left Egypt. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

10"When you loan something to a neighbor, don't go into his house to get a guarantee that he will pay you back. 11Wait outside, and let him bring it to you. 12If the man is poor, and the only thing he can give you as a guarantee of his repayment is his coat, don't keep it overnight. 13Take it back to him before sunset, so he can sleep in it. He will thank you, and the LORD your God will see that you have done a good thing. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

14"Never take advantage of poor people you have hired to work for you, whether they are Israelites or foreign residents. 15Pay them their wages at the end of each day because they are poor and need the pay to survive. If you don't they will tell the Lord, and you will be guilty. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

16"Don't put parents to death for crimes their children committed, and don't put children to death for crimes their parents committed. Each person is to be put to death for his own sin, not someone else's. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 17Treat foreigners and orphans fairly. If you lend money to a widow, don't take her coat as a guarantee that she will pay you back. 18Don't forget that you were slaves in Egypt

and that the LORD your God rescued you from there. You know what it was like to be treated badly there, so treat your widows fairly. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}
19"When you are harvesting in your field and you forget to bring in a stack of harvested grain, don't go back for it. Leave it for foreign residents, orphans, and widows, so that the LORD your God will give you success in all you do. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} 20And when you knock down olives from your olive trees, don't go back over the branches again. Leave the remaining olives for foreign residents, orphans, and widows. 21When you pick grapes from your vineyard, go over them only once and leave the rest for foreign residents, orphans, and widows. 22Remember that you lived in poverty as slaves in Egypt, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and that's why the LORD your God is giving you these commands."

Lord, teach me the "sympathy side" of Your law. I want to treat everyone fairly. I want to obey Your law accurately. But I have a sinful nature that distorts the way things really are. Lord, I will be gracious to other needy people, so someone will be gracious to me. Amen.

Deuteronomy 25

Additional Laws

1"If two men have a dispute and they go to court, the judges are to decide who is innocent and who is guilty. 2If the guilty man deserves a beating, the judge is to make him lie down and be beaten with the number of lashes his guilt deserves. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 3But he is not to be given any more than 40 lashes, because that would humiliate him.
4"Don't put a muzzle on an ox while it is threshing grain. Let him be free to eat some of the grain.
5"If two brothers are living together, and one of them dies without a son, his widow must not marry outside the family. Instead she is to marry her brother-in-law. 6The first son she has with him is to carry on his dead brother's name. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 7But if the man does not want to marry his sister-in-law, she is to go to the town's elders and explain that he refuses to carry on his brother's name. 8Then the elders are to talk with him. If he doesn't change his mind, 9she is to take off one of his sandals, spit in his face, and say, 'This is what happens to a man who won't provide offspring for his dead brother.' 10From then on the man's family will be called 'The family of the man whose sandal was taken off.'
11"If two men are fighting, and the wife of one of them tries to rescue her husband by grabbing the other man's private parts, 12you are to cut off her hand, showing her no pity.
13"Don't have two different sets of weights, one that is heavy when you are buying things, and one that is light when you are selling things. 14And don't have two different measures, one that is large for buying, and one that is small for selling. 15If you

use accurate weights and measures, you will live long in the land the LORD your God is giving you. 16He despises anyone who is dishonest. 17"Remember what the Amalekites did to you after you left Egypt. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 18They attacked your people who were tired and couldn't keep up with the others. Obviously they had no respect for God. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 19The LORD your God will give you rest in the land He is giving you. But don't forget to destroy the Amalekites completely."

Lord, thank You for telling us how to interpret the laws You've given to us. The way Moses interpreted these laws are a pattern of how to interpret them all. Lord, I want to keep all Your laws as best I can. Give me strength and wisdom to always do right. Give me mercy and grace when I fail. Amen.

Deuteronomy 26

Give God Your Best

1"When you enter the land the LORD your God is giving you and have conquered it and settled down, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 2put the first crops of your harvest in a basket. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} Then go to the tabernacle at the place the LORD your God will choose. 3Tell the priest, 'I thank the LORD for bringing us to the land He promised to our ancestors.' 4The priest is to take the basket and place it in front of the altar of burnt offering. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} 5Then you are to say, 'My ancestor Jacob was a wandering Aramean, who went to live in Egypt with a few people. But they became a great and powerful nation with many people. 6The Egyptians were cruel to us, making us work hard. 7We prayed to the LORD, the God of our ancestors, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and He heard us and saw our hardship and troubles. 8He brought us out of Egypt with great power and strength. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} And He terrified the Egyptians with marvelous miracles. 9He brought us here to a land with lots of milk from cows and lots of honey from bees. 10And now I bring to You the first of the crops from the soil You, the LORD, have given me.' {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

"Place the basket before the LORD your God as you bow down before Him. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 11Then you, the Levites, and foreign residents are to be glad for all the good things the LORD your God has given you and your family.

12"Every year you are to give 10 percent of your harvest to the Lord. Then every third year you are to give this 10 percent {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} to the Levites, foreign residents, orphans, and widows so they will have enough to eat. 13Then pray, 'I have given the 10 percent of my harvest to the Levites, foreign residents, orphans, and widows as You have commanded. I haven't forgotten any of Your commands. 14Nor have I eaten any of this tithe while I was

in mourning, nor touched any of it when I was unclean, nor offered any of it as a sacrifice to the dead. I have fully obeyed Your commands, the LORD my God. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 15Now please look down from heaven, Your holy dwelling, and bless us Your people {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} and the land You promised to our ancestors, a land with lots of milk and honey.'

16"'The LORD your God is commanding you today to obey these laws {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and commands with all your heart and soul. 17You have said you will follow the LORD, obey His laws, commands, and regulations. 18And He has said today that you are His people, His special treasure, as He promised. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 19He will make you greater than any other nation, and you will receive praise, fame, and honor above them all. And you will be set apart to the LORD your God as He promised." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

Lord, I was a sinner lost in my sin. Jesus died for me to forgive every charge against me. Jesus brought me into a new transformed life. Now I give to You, Lord, a portion of what You have allowed me to earn. Amen.

Deuteronomy 27

The Altar at Mount Ebal

1Moses and Israel's elders told the people, "Keep all these commands I am giving you today. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 2When you cross the Jordan River into the land the LORD your God is giving you, set up some large stones, cover them with white plaster. 3Write on them these laws when you have crossed into the land with lots of milk and honey. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 4Set the stones on Mount Ebal, 5and build an altar of stones to the LORD your God. Don't use any iron tools on the stone; use only uncut stones. 6And on this altar offer burnt offerings to the LORD your God. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 7Also offer fellowship offerings there and eat the meat with joy in the presence of the LORD your God. 8Write all the words of this law clearly on the stone."

9Then Moses and the priests said to Israel, "Be quiet and listen. Today you have become the people of the LORD your God, so {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} 10obey Him and follow His laws and commands." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

11That same day Moses told the people, 12"After you have crossed the Jordan, go to Mount Gerizim and Mount Ebal. Have the tribes of Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Ephraim, West Manasseh, and Benjamin go up on Mount Gerizim and bless the people. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 13Then have the tribes of Reuben, Gad, Asher, Zebulun, Dan, and Naphtali go up on Mount Ebal, and pronounce the following curses. 14The Levites are to shout these curses to the people. 15'Cursed is anyone who makes an idol from wood or metal which the LORD hates, and worships it, even secretly. 16Cursed is anyone who disrespects his parents. 17Cursed is

anyone who moves his neighbor's boundary stones to extend his own territory. [18]Cursed is anyone who leads a blind person in the wrong direction. [19]Cursed is anyone who is unjust to a foreign resident, an orphan, or a widow. [20]Cursed is anyone who has sex with his father's wife, for this man shows no respect for his father's marriage. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [21]Cursed is anyone who has sex with an animal. [22]Cursed is anyone who has sex with his sister, or half-sister. [23]Cursed is anyone who has sex with his mother-in-law. [24]Cursed is anyone who murders someone in secret. [25]Cursed is anyone who accepts money to murder an innocent person. [26]Cursed is anyone who refuses to obey these laws." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} To each of these curses the people are to say, "Amen."

Lord, it does me good to repeat Your prohibitions, because I will never forget them, or carelessly do them. Lord, keep me from outwardly sinning against You, and keep me from secret sin. Amen.

Deuteronomy 28

The Blessings for Being Obedient

[1]"If you fully obey the LORD your God and carefully keep all His commands, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} He will make you the greatest nation in the world. [2]The following blessings will be yours if you obey the LORD your God. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [3]He will make you successful whether you live in a town or in the country. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [4]You will have many children, {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} and abundant crops, and your cattle and sheep will have many calves and lambs. [5]You will have much fruit and plenty of bread to eat. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [6]You will be blessed wherever you go, when you come in and when you go out. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

[7]"The LORD will defeat your enemies. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} They may come at you in one direction, but they will run from you in seven directions. [8]The LORD will fill your barns with large crops, and He will prosper you in everything you do. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [9]The LORD will set you apart as His special people, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} if you obey His commands and follow Him. [10]Everyone will see that you belong to the LORD and they will be afraid of you. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [11]He will prosper you with many children, animals, and crops in the land He promised to your ancestors. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

[12]"He will open His storehouse of clouds to give you plenty of rain at the right time {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} and to give you success in everything. You will have plenty of goods to lend to other nations, but you won't need to borrow any. [13]The LORD will make you a leader among nations and not a follower, if you obey the commands of the LORD your

God and follow them carefully. You will always be powerful, not weak. [14]But this means you must not turn aside from His commands and must not worship and serve other gods. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[15]"If you don't obey the LORD your God and follow His laws and commands, these curses may come on you: {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [16]You will be cursed whether you live in the city or the country. [17]You will have very little food. [18]Your children will be few, your crops will not be large, and your cows and sheep won't have many calves and lambs. [19]You will be cursed whether you are coming or going. [20]You will be confused and frustrated in everything you try to do, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and you will suddenly perish because of your sin in rejecting the Lord. [21]The LORD will send terrible diseases on you which will cause all of you to die. [22]Diseases will cause you to lose weight, and you will have burning fevers and swelling. Your land will have terrible heat and drought, with diseases and mildew on your plants, all of which will lead to your deaths. [23]The sky above you will give no rain, and it will seem hard as bronze, and the ground beneath you will be dry, and as hard as iron. [24]Instead of rain you will have dust storms and sandstorms, and they will ruin your crops. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[25]"Your enemies will defeat you. You may attack them in one direction, but you will run from them in seven directions. Other nations will be horrified at what is happening to you. [26]When birds and animals eat your carcasses, no one will scare them away. [27]The LORD will give you boils, tumors, running sores, and itching, with no cures just as he did to the Egyptians. [28]You will become insane and blind and confused. [29]In bright sunshine you will grope like a blind person in the dark. You will fail in everything you try to do. Every day you will face troubles and be robbed, with no one to help you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[30]"You will be engaged, but before you are married, someone will rape your fiancé. You will build a house, but you won't get to live in it. If you plant a vineyard, you won't be around later to eat some grapes. [31]Your ox will be slaughtered by someone while you watch, but you won't eat any of it. Someone will steal your donkey, and you won't get it back. Your sheep will be given to your enemies, and no one will help you get them back. [32]Your own children will be taken captive to a foreign country while you look on, unable to do anything. [33]Foreigners you haven't even heard of will eat what you worked hard to produce, and you will have only trouble the rest of your life. [34]Seeing tragedies all around you will cause you to go insane. [35]You will have painful, incurable boils on your legs and knees. And they will even cover your entire body. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[36]"The LORD will let you and your king be taken captives to a nation you don't even know. There you will worship idols of wood and stone. [37]Nations will be horrified when they see you, and they will make fun of you.

38"When you plant a lot of seeds, you will
have only a small harvest, because locusts
will eat your crops. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 39When you plant vineyards,
you won't have any grapes or make any
wine, because worms will eat the grapes.
40You will have many olive trees in the
land, but you won't have any olive oil,
because unripe olives will fall off. 41You
won't even be able to keep your own chil-
dren, because they will be taken away as
captives. 42Locusts will strip your trees of
their leaves and eat all your crops. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
43"Foreign residents will become wealthy
while you become poor. 44You will be so
poor you will have to borrow from them.
They will be leaders, and you will be
followers.
45"These problems will overtake you and
destroy you if you do not obey the LORD
your God {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
and keep His commands and regulations.
46These will be warnings to you and your
descendants. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5} 47If you don't serve the LORD your
God with joy when He prospers you, {431
Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 48then
you will serve your enemies and you will
experience hunger, thirst, and poverty and
have nothing to wear. Your enemies will
work you so hard it will be like having an
animal's iron yoke around your neck until
you are destroyed. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5}
49"The LORD will cause a nation that
speaks a different language to attack you
like an eagle swooping on its prey. 50These
fierce-looking people will have no respect
for elderly people or pity for children.
51They will take your calves and lambs and
your crops, and leave you with no grain,
grapes, or olive oil. 52You may feel safe in
your cities but they will attack you and
tear down your high city walls. {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 53During these
attacks you will get so hungry you will eat
your own sons and daughters whom the
LORD your God gave you. 54-55Because of
his hunger even a gentle, kind man will eat
his own children and will refuse to give any
of the meal to his own brother or wife or
children. 56-57The most tender woman who
lives in such luxury she doesn't have to put
her feet to the ground to do any work, will
secretly eat her own newborn children and
the afterbirth and not share any with her
husband or other children. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
58"If you can't carefully follow all these
words and if you don't reverence the
LORD your God, {406 Reverent Praying,
Ps. 111:10} 59He will send on you and your
descendants awful disasters and serious
prolonged disease. 60Even the diseases you
feared in Egypt will stay with you.
61"The LORD may bring on you other
kinds of illnesses and disasters not
even mentioned here until they destroy
you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
62Though you were as numerous as the
stars, only a few of you will survive. 63The
LORD was pleased to prosper you and
help your nation grow, {194 Good-Things
Praying, Heb. 13:21} but it will also please
Him to destroy you and pull you up by the
roots from the land you are entering. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

64"The LORD will scatter you among the nations far and wide. There you will worship idols of wood and stone that neither you nor your ancestors have known. 65In those nations you will have no rest. You will be filled with anxiety, with eyes longing for home, and a heart of despair. 66You will live in constant fear, all day and night. 67Every morning you will wish it were evening, and every evening you will wish it were morning, all because of the terrible things you will see. 68The LORD will send you back to Egypt even though He said He would never send you there again. There you will try to sell yourselves as slaves, but no one will even want to buy you." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I tremble at the curses You promised to Your people Israel. Lord, You kept these promises when You sent Nebuchadnezzar to destroy the Promised Land and take Israel captive to Babylon. Lord, You did it again when Your people rejected Jesus as their Messiah. It is a terrible fate, but You warned the Jews to worship You only. Lord, one day "all Israel will be saved," and Your people will return to their land, to live happily with You. May I learn from Israel's disobedience, and always obey and worship only You. Amen.

Deuteronomy 29

The Covenant Renewal

1These are the words of agreement Moses told the Israelites in Moab, in addition to the agreement the LORD made with them at Mount Horeb (Sinai). {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 2Then Moses called the people together and said, "In Egypt you saw everything the LORD did there to Pharaoh, his officials, and the land, 3including His great trials, miracles, and amazing wonders. 4Yet even now after 40 years you still don't understand. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 5When He led you through the desert, your clothes and sandals didn't wear out. 6You ate no bread and drank no wine, but He gave you special food so you would realize He is the LORD your God. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

7"When we camped here, Sihon king of Heshbon and Og king of Bashan attacked us, but we defeated them. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 8We took their land and gave it as an inheritance to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh. 9Therefore obey the terms of this agreement {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} so that you will succeed in everything you do.

10"You are all standing here in the LORD's presence, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} including leaders, elders, officials, 11parents and children, and foreign residents who cut wood and carry water for us. 12You are standing here today to enter into an agreement with the LORD your God, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} an agreement He is confirming with an oath. 13This will confirm that you are His people and He is your God, {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} just as He promised to your ancestors, Abraham,

Isaac, and Jacob. [14]He is making this agreement not only with you, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [15]but also with your descendants. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[16]"You remember how we lived in Egypt, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and then as you traveled through the lands of enemy nations, [17]you saw their awful idols of wood and stone, silver and gold. [18]So be sure not one of you turns from the LORD our God to worship the idols of those nations. Be sure you don't become like a root of a plant that produces bitter, poisonous fruit. [19]Don't think someone can go his own way and still expect the LORD to bless him. That will lead to your land being ruined; [20]His wrath will be against him. {509 Unpardonable-Sin Prayer, Matt. 12:30-32} In fact the curses of this book will be on him, and the LORD will remove him from Israel's tribes. [21]The Lord will focus on him, and bring on him the curses written in this book.

[22]"Your descendants and foreign residents from distant lands will see the disasters and diseases the LORD has brought on your land. [23]The land will be a burning waste of salt and sulfur, where nothing is planted, nothing sprouts, and nothing grows. It will be like Sodom, Gomorrah, Admah, and Zeboiim, which the LORD destroyed in His anger. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [24]People in other nations will wonder why the LORD did this in His burning anger. [25]The answer they will receive is this: {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 'This is because His people rejected the agreement the LORD made with them when He brought them out of Egypt. [26]They worshiped gods they did not know. [27]And so the LORD was very angry with them and brought on them the curses recorded in this book. [28]In His anger the LORD pulled up Israel by the roots and threw them into another land, where they are today. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[29]"Some secret things belong to the LORD our God, {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} but the things He has revealed belong to us and our children to obey forever." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I will do all You show me. Amen.

Deuteronomy 30

God's Promise Remains Constant

[1]"When all these blessings {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and curses happen to you, you will think about them while you are in the nations where the LORD your God will send you into captivity. [2]If you and your children then return to Him and obey Him with all your heart, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [3]then He will rescue you and bring you back from captivity with His love. He will restore you from the nations where you will be scattered. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [4]Even from the most remote countries [5]He will bring you to this land of your ancestors and make you more successful and numerous than they were

before. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
6"The LORD your God will make your hearts {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} and the hearts of your descendants fully devoted to Him so that you will love Him with all you heart and soul, and enjoy life. 7The LORD your God will place the curses on your enemies who hate you and persecute you. 8Then you will obey the LORD {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and His commands, 9and He will help you prosper in all you do and give you many children, and livestock, and abundant crops. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} He will be pleased to bless you in this way, just as He did for your ancestors. 10But you must obey the LORD your God and all His laws and commands and turn to Him with all your heart and soul. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I love You with my whole being. Amen.

11"What God is telling you to do isn't impossible. 12Since His commands aren't in heaven, you can't say, 'Who will go to heaven and get them for us?' 13And since they aren't beyond the ocean, you can't say, 'Who will cross the ocean and get them for us?' 14No, His commands are close by, even in your mouth and heart, so you can easily obey them. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12}
15"You have a choice: You can choose life and prosperity or death and disaster. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 16If you love the LORD your God, {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} follow Him, and obey His laws, commands, and regulations, then you will enjoy life and increase in numbers, {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} and the LORD your God will bless you in the land you will enter.

Lord, I want Your blessings. Amen.

17But if you reject Him and disobey him and you worship other gods, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18you will be destroyed and you won't live long in the land. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}
19"Heaven and earth know that God is giving you a choice between life and death, between being blessed and cursed. So choose life so you and your children can live, 20and so you can love the LORD your God, {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} hear His voice, and be faithful to Him. He can give you life with many years in the land He promised to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob."

Lord, I choose life. Amen.

Deuteronomy 31

Joshua Becomes the New Leader

1Moses said to the people, 2"I am now 120 years old, and I can no longer lead you. The LORD has told me I won't be able to cross the Jordan. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} 3But He Himself will lead you across the river and

destroy the nations there so that you can occupy the land. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Joshua will lead across, [4]and the LORD will destroy your enemies there just as he destroyed Sihon and Og, two Amorite Kings. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [5]Do to them exactly what I told you to do. [6]Be strong and brave, without any fear of them because the LORD your God is with you and will never leave you." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Lord, thank You for Your promises to me. Amen.

[7]Moses said to Joshua in front of all the people, "Be strong and brave {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} as you lead these people into the land and divide it among the tribes. [8]The LORD will lead you and be with you {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and will never leave you. So don't be afraid or discouraged."

Lord, thank You for leaders like Joshua. Amen.

[9]Moses wrote down all these laws and gave the copy to the priests. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} [10-11]Then Moses told the priests, "Every seven years, when you cancel people's debts, in the Festival of Shelters, you are to read these laws when the people assemble at the gate of the tabernacle. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [12]Men, women, children, and foreign residents are to listen and respect the LORD your God {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and obey these laws carefully. [13]Also when children in the future are born, they are to listen and respect the LORD your God {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} as long as they are in the land."

Lord, I will teach Your commands to children. Amen.

[14]Then the LORD said to Moses, "You will soon die, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} so bring Joshua to the tabernacle and I will appoint him as leader of the people." So Moses and Joshua went to the tabernacle. [15]The LORD appeared there in a heavy cloud over the tabernacle entrance, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} [16]and He said to Moses, "You will soon die, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and these people will worship gods in the land where they are going, and they will break the agreement I made with them. [17]I will become so angry that I will not answer their prayers, and they will be destroyed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Terrible disasters will help them realize I am no longer with them. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [18]I will ignore them because they will sin in worshiping gods."

Lord, I fear Your absence from my life. Amen.

[19]"Write the words of this song and teach it to the people as warning. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [20]When I bring them into the land of milk and honey that I promised to their ancestors, they will have

plenty to eat, {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} but then they will worship other gods and reject Me and break My agreement. 21When they face terrible disasters, this song will remind them {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and their descendants that these are because they have rejected Me. I know that they are inclined to turn from Me." 22So Moses wrote down the words of the song and taught it to the people.

23The Lord told Joshua, "Be strong and brave, {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} because you will lead the people into the land, and I will be with you."

Lord, be with me as You were with Moses and Joshua. Amen.

24After Moses wrote down all these laws, 25-26he told the Levites to place them in the sacred chest. 27Then he said, "I know how rebellious and stubborn you are. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} You have been rebellious while I am alive; so I'm concerned that you will be worse after I die. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 28So call together the tribal leaders so I can speak to them with heaven and earth as my witnesses. 29After I die you will become corrupt and turn from the LORD. When you sin, you will face disaster, and I will be angry with you for making idols." 30Moses taught the people the following words for a song. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

Deuteronomy 32

Moses' Song

1"Listen, sky and earth to my words. 2My teaching will be as gentle as rain and as pleasant as dew.

3"I praise God for His greatness. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 4He is like a firm rock, and all He does is right. He is faithful, He does no wrong, and He is just and fair. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

5"People have been dishonest, and instead of being like His obedient children, they are twisted and crooked in their ways. 6Foolish, unwise people treat the LORD unfairly. But He is their Father, the One who created them. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

7"Think about past generations. Your parents or elders will tell you. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 8When God gave land to each nation, dividing up the human race, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 9He made Israel His people.

10"He found Israel in the barren desert, and cared for him and protected him like protecting His very eyes, {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 11and like an eagle carrying its young on her wings. 12He alone did this without the help of any false god. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

13"God will help Israel capture the best of the land, and will give him crops, honey from rocks, and olive oil from trees growing in a cliff. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} 14God will give Israel curds and milk from their herds and flocks, and meat from lambs and goats and rams in

Bashan, along with the best wheat and grape juice.
15"Jeshurun (that is, Israel), grew fat and was bloated, and then rebelled against God. He left God his Creator and rejected God, who like a rock can give security and safety. 16God wanted Israel to worship only Him not foreign gods; their disgusting idols made Him angry. 17Israel even offered sacrifices to demons, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} to gods his ancestors never knew. 18You turned from God who was strong like a rock and who created you, and you forgot Him.
19"Because Israel, God's children, rejected Him, He was angry. 20He said, 'I won't listen to them. Why? Because they are wayward and unfaithful. 21I wanted them to worship only Me; their worthless idols made Me angry. Now in turn a cruel and foolish nation will make you envious and angry.
22'My anger burns like a fire in the world of the dead, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} consuming crops and setting mountains on fire. 23I will bring disasters on them, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} striking them with arrows, 24starvation, diseases, wild beasts, and poisonous snakes. 25Children, young people, and older people will perish in the streets and their homes. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
26'I wanted to scatter them to other nations so no one would remember you. 27But I didn't want your enemy to say they defeated you with no help from Me.
28'Israel doesn't have good sense or understanding. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 29If they were wise, they would realize what would happen. 30How could one enemy soldier chase 1,000 Israelites, or how could two soldiers pursue 10,000? Only if the Lord gives up on them. 31Even our enemies know their gods are not like God, our Rock. 32They are like vines from Sodom and Gomorrah; their grapes are poisonous and bitter. 33Their wine is like the deadly poison of cobras.
34'I am storing up these facts. 35I will repay Israel for her spies, and her doom will come. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
36"The LORD will have compassion on His people {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} when He sees that the strength of both slave and free is gone. 37He will say, 'Where are the gods they relied on? 38Since they received the fat of sacrifice and drank drink offerings, they should be able to help you and protect you.
39'I am the true God. There is no other god. I am the only One who can bring life and death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I wound and I heal, and no one can stop me. 40As sure as the fact that I am alive, 41I can sharpen My sword and punish My enemies who hate Me. 42My arrows will be covered with the blood of captives and enemy leaders.'
43"All nations should be glad with God's people, because He will take revenge on His enemies and make substitute payments for the sins of His land and people." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
44Moses and Joshua spoke the words of this song to the people. 45Then when Moses finished, he said, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 46"Think about all these words so that you can encourage your children to

obey the law. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 47These are not mere words. They can give you long life in the land you will conquer." {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

Lord, my heart's desire, "Sing them over again to me, wonderful words of life." Amen.

48Later that day the LORD told Moses, 49"Go up to Mount Nebo in the Abarim Range in Moab, and view Canaan, which I am giving to your people. 50You will die there on the mountain just as your brother Aaron died on Mount Hor. 51Both of you disobeyed Me at Meribah-Kadesh in the Zin Desert by not promoting My holiness to My people. 52So you will see the land from a distance, but you will not enter the land I am giving to the people." {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

Lord, I want to die very simply in Your presence just as Moses died with You. In the flesh I resist my physical death, but in my spirit I seek You. Amen.

Deuteronomy 33

Moses Blesses Israel

1Before Moses died, he blessed the tribes of Israel with these words: {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 2"The LORD came from Mount Sinai and dawned on us from Mount Seir, and His glory was shining from Mount Paran. Thousands of His angels were with Him. 3You, O Lord, love Your people and Your angels. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} They bow down in worship and receive instruction from You 4in the law Moses gave us. 5You were king over Jeshurun (Israel) when the leaders and tribes met together.

6"Reuben will live even though his tribe is small. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 7About Judah Moses said, 'LORD, hear Judah's cry and bring him home, and help him defeat his enemies.' {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 8About Levi Moses said, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 'The Urim and Thummin belong to Levi. You tested him at Massah and Meribah. 9He had less concern for his immediate family than for his agreement with the Lord. 10Levi teaches Your laws to Israel and offers up incense and burnt offerings. 11Bless all He does, and attack and defeat his enemies.' {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

12"About Benjamin Moses said, 'Benjamin, the LORD loves you and protects you so you can be secure and rest on Him.' {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

13"About Joseph, Moses said, 'May the LORD bless your land with dew and water from wells, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 14with the best crops growing in the sun and with fruit every month, 15with the best crops on the mountains and hills, and 16with the best gifts from the earth and the favor of God who appeared in the burning bush. May these blessings be on Joseph, a prince among his brothers. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 17You are strong like a young bull, defeating your enemies no matter

where they are, like a wild ox goring them with his horns. These are the blessings of all those in Ephraim and Manasseh.

18"About Zebulun and Issachar, Moses said, "May you, Zebulun, be joyful wherever you go, and may you, Issachar, be joyful when you are home. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 19You will ask people to offer sacrifices on the mountains, and you will enjoy eating fish and treasures from the sand.'

20"About Gad Moses said, 'The Lord will bless you with more land and you will defeat your enemies like a lion tearing at its victim. 21You chose good land for your tribe. And when your tribal leaders met, you followed the LORD's will.' {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

22"About Dan Moses said, 'You are like a lion's cub, leaping out from Bashan.'

23"About Naphtali Moses said, 'You are enjoying the LORD's blessings. You will inherit land to the south toward the Sea of Galilee.' {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

24"About Asher Moses said, 'Asher, you are well liked by your brothers. You will have plenty of olive oil, 25your town gates will be strong with iron and bronze, and you will be strong as long as you live.'

The KJV reads, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. 33:25b). Lord, teach me to live for today, and trust You for strength for today. I'm not responsible for a day I haven't lived and You won't give me strength till I need it. Lord, I'll fill each day with work and faithfulness, knowing You'll give strength for that day. I'll not worry about tomorrow till it gets here, teach me to live for You day by day. Amen.

26Moses continued, "No one is like the God of Jeshurun (Israel), who rides in majesty on the clouds to help you. 27The eternal God is your refuge, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and He carries you in His arms. He brings out your enemy and tells you to destroy him. 28You will be safe and secure, {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} with lots of grain and wine because of much dew. 29Israel, you are so blessed. No one has been saved as you have. He protects you as with a shield, and He is like a great sword. Your enemies will bow before you in fear, and you will trample down their hilltop shrines where they worship their false gods." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

Deuteronomy 34

The Death of Moses

1Later Moses climbed from Moab to Mount Pisgah to the peaks of Mount Nebo, east of the Jordan River and across from Jericho. The LORD showed Moses all the land from Gilead and Dan in the north, {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} 2and the land that would become the territories of Naphtali, Ephraim, Manasseh, and Judah west to the Mediterranean Sea. 3He also showed Moses the Southern Desert and the region from Jericho ("the City of Palm Trees") south to Zoar. 4Then the LORD said, "This is the land I promised

to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob and their descendants. You have seen it, but you won't enter it." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

5Moses, God's servant, died there, just as the LORD had said. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 6God buried him in a valley in Moab near Baal-Peor, but no one knows where his grave is. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 7Moses died at the age of 120, yet his eyesight was still good and he was still strong. 8The people of Israel mourned and wept for him for 30 days.

9Before Moses died, he had made Joshua the leader of the people, and God gave Joshua wisdom. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} The people listened to Joshua and obeyed the commands God had given Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

10No one else has ever been a prophet like Moses. The LORD spoke to him closely as to a friend, {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} 11and He sent him to do amazing miracles in Egypt before Pharaoh, his officials, and the entire nation. 12No other person has ever shown such power and performed such amazing deeds as Moses did before all the people of Israel. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16}

Lord, all of us must die, including me—if the rapture doesn't come—so prepare me for that inevitable day. I don't like pain, so make it as easy as possible. I don't want to be a burden on anyone, so make it as quick as possible. I want to live and serve You as long as possible. Yet I love You and want to come live with You. Amen.

Joshua

Ch 1: God Appoints Joshua as the New Leader .. 309
Ch 2: Rahab Helps the Two Spies 310
Ch 3: The Miraculous Crossing 311
Ch 4: The Twelve Stones 312
Ch 5: Circumcising the Jewish Men 313
Ch 6: The Fall of Jericho 314
Ch 7: The Sin of Achan 316
Ch 8: Ai Is Captured and Destroyed 317
Ch 9: The Gibeonites Trick Joshua 319
Ch 10: The Amorites Are Defeated 320
Ch 11: The Northern Cities Are Defeated 322
Ch 12: The Kings Defeated by Moses 324
Ch 13: The Unconquered Land 325
Ch 14: The Division of Canaan 326
Ch 15: Dividing Up the Promised Land 327
Ch 16: Ephraim and Manasseh's Share 329
Ch 17: Property and Territories Given Out 330
Ch 18: The Rest of the Land is Divided 331
Ch 19: Simeon's Share 332
Ch 20: The Towns of Refuge 334
Ch 21: The Towns of the Levites 335
Ch 22: The Eastern Tribes Are Sent Home 336
Ch 23: Joshua Speaks to the Leaders of Israel ... 338

Ch 24: Joshua's Farewell Speech at Shechem.....339

JOSHUA

Key Word: *Success* (Joshua 1:8)

Key Verse: "This book of the law shall not depart out of thy mouth; but thou shalt meditate therein day and night, that thou mayest observe to do according to all that is written therein: for then thou shalt make thy way prosperous, and then thou shalt have good success" (1:8).

Theme: The book begins, "Moses my servant is dead" (1:2), and Joshua takes over to lead Israel "out" of its wilderness wanderings, and "into" the Promised Land. God promises Israel success—victory over pagan nations—as they obey and follow Him. "And the LORD gave unto Israel all the land which he sware to give unto their fathers; and they possessed it, and dwelt therein" (21:43).

Joshua is a picture of the victorious Christian life promised to believers today. Victory doesn't come without obedience to God (1:8), plus our struggling or fighting against our spiritual enemy. Victory comes with preparation, discipline, and trust in God. *Lord, I want to live victoriously over sin; I want You to be glorified in my life. Amen.*

Joshua 1

God Appoints Joshua as the New Leader

1 After Moses, the LORD's servant, died, the LORD said to Joshua, son of Nun, Moses' assistant, 2"Now that Moses is dead, you are to lead My people across the Jordan River into the land I am giving them." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord, may I be spiritually ready for the greatest day of my life, as Joshua had to prepare for the greatest challenge of his life. Amen.

3"As I promised Moses, so I promise you that the land will be yours wherever you go. {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} 4It will extend from the Southern Desert in the south to Lebanon in the north on to the Euphrates River in the east and the Mediterranean Sea on the west, including all the land of the Hittites. 5I will be with you as I was with Moses,

{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and no one will be able to defeat you. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} I will never leave you on your own or abandon you.
6"Be strong and brave as you lead My people into the land I promised your ancestors. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 7I repeat, be strong and brave. And obey all the laws Moses gave you. If you follow them carefully, you will succeed wherever you are. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 8Your success depends on your studying them, thinking about them all the time, {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} and obeying them. 9As I've said, be strong and brave. Don't be afraid or discouraged; just remember I will be right there with you wherever you go." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, I need to see You in the Scriptures. I'm reaching now for my Bible. Amen.

10Joshua then told the leaders 11to tell the people to get ready because in three days they would cross the Jordan and possess the land. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 12Then Joshua reminded the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh 13that they could have the land to the east side of the Jordan, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 14but that their troops must first cross the Jordan ahead of the other tribes while their wives and children and livestock stayed home. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 15Then when the troops help the other tribes conquer the land, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} they may return to their homes east of the Jordan. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
16The men said, "We will do whatever you say and go wherever you tell us to go. 17We will follow your orders just as we followed Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} And may the LORD be with you as He was with Moses. 18If anyone rebels against you and doesn't obey you, we will put him to death. So be strong and brave." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

Joshua 2

Rahab Helps the Two Spies

1Joshua sent two men as spies from Shittim to look over the land, especially Jericho. So when they were in Jericho, they decided to stay overnight in the house of Rahab, a prostitute. 2Someone heard about them and told Jericho's king that some Israelite spies had come there. 3So he sent word to her to turn the men over to him. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 4But Rahab had hidden the men. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} She told the soldiers, "Yes, they came here, but I don't know where they are from. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} 5They left just before sunset and just before the city gates were closed. I don't know where they went, but if you hurry maybe you can catch them." {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} 6She had hidden them under some stalks of flax on the roof. 7So the king's men went down to the

Jordan River, and as soon as they left the city, the city gates were closed. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
[8]Rahab went up to her roof and said to the spies, [9]"I know the LORD has given you this land; and we are all terribly afraid. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [10]Word has spread that the LORD dried up the Red Sea when you came out of Egypt, and that you completely wiped out Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]Our hearts have melted in fear and we are totally discouraged, knowing that the LORD your God is the one who is over heaven and earth. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [12]Promise me that you will be kind to my family in return for my being kind to you. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [13]And don't kill my parents and siblings and their families." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[14]The men said, "We'll defend your lives with our lives. If you don't tell what we are doing, we will be kind to you when the Lord gives us this land." [15]Rahab's house was built on top of the city wall, so she let them down by a rope through a window. [16]She told them, "Go hide in the hills where the king's men can't find you. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} Then after three days you can be on your way." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}
[17]The men said to her, "We'll guarantee your safety {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [18]only if you tie this red rope in the window and if your parents and siblings and their families are here in your house. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [19]If anyone leaves your house, he will be killed. [20]Also, if you tell others about our spying, we will not keep this promise." {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [21]She agreed to those terms, sent them on their way, and put a red rope in the window. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[22]The spies left and hid in the hills for three days. The soldiers looked for them everywhere along the roads, but didn't find the men. So the soldiers returned to Jericho. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [23]Then the two spies crossed the Jordan River and told Joshua everything that had happened. [24]They said, "The LORD will certainly give us the land because all the people are scared to death of us." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

Lord, thank You for people like Rahab who hid the spies. Thank You for all the people who have helped me in my Christian walk. I especially thank You for those who helped me when I couldn't help myself. Amen.

Joshua 3

The Miraculous Crossing

[1]Early in the morning Joshua and all the Israelites left Shittim and went to the Jordan River, where they camped. [2]Three days later leaders went through the camp [3]with these instructions: "When you see the priests carrying the sacred chest, {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} you are to follow it. [4]Since you haven't been this

way before, the priests will guide you. But stay back from the sacred chest about half a mile." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
5Joshua told the people, "Dedicate yourselves {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} to the LORD because tomorrow He will do some amazing things for us." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 6Joshua told the priests to take the sacred chest and cross the Jordan. So they did and went on ahead of the people. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 7The LORD told Joshua, "Today the people will begin to appreciate you as their leader. They will know that I am with you just as I was with Moses. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 8Tell the priests who are carrying the sacred chest to go a few steps into the Jordan and stand there."
9Joshua told the people, "Listen to what the LORD your God will do. 10You will know that the living God is with you when He forces out of the land the Canaanites, Hittites, Hivites, Perizzites, Girgashites, Amorites, and Jebusites. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 11The sacred chest, which belongs to the Lord of all the earth, will go into the Jordan ahead of you. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
12First, choose one leader from each tribe. 13Then the very minute the priests carrying the sacred chest step into the Jordan, the water upstream will stop flowing." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
14So the people left their camps, and the priests with the chest went first. 15In the spring the Jordan's banks were overflowing. But as soon as the priests' feet touched the river, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 16the water stopped flowing. It piled up {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} a great distance north at the town of Adam near Zarethan. And the water, south of where the Israelites were, flowed into the Dead Sea so that the riverbed of the Jordan was completely dry. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 17The priests carrying the sacred chest stood on dry ground in the middle of the Jordan while all the people crossed over. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24}

Lord, I've got a big river to cross. It's a barrier that keeps me from doing what You want me to do. Give me faith to trust You for a solution. Lord, Here I come into the waters. Make a way for me. Amen.

Joshua 4

The Twelve Stones

1After all the people crossed over, the LORD said to Joshua, 2"Tell the 12 men, one chosen from each tribe, 3each to take a large rock from the river where the priests are standing and to set these rocks up as a monument at the place where you will stay tonight." {251 Interchange with God, Gen. 18:23-33}
4So Joshua told these men, 5"Go into the riverbed near the sacred chest, and each of you is to pick up a large rock and put it on your shoulder, one stone for each tribe, 6and set them up as a memorial. Then when your children ask what this pile of rocks means, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11}

7tell them that they are to remind us that the Jordan River stopped flowing when the sacred chest was in the river. These rocks are to be a permanent reminder of this miracle." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
8The Israelites did as Joshua told them, taking 12 rocks from the middle of the Jordan, as God had told Joshua. They carried them to their camps and put them up together as a memorial. 9Joshua also built another memorial of 12 stones right in the middle of the Jordan where the priests with the sacred chest were standing when the people crossed over. This memorial is still there. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
10The priests with the sacred chest stood in the dry riverbed until all the people crossed. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14}
11After all the people crossed, the priests went to the other side of the Jordan. {325 Non-Anxiety Prayer, Phil. 4:6, 7}
12The troops from Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 13340,000 of them, went across ahead of the other tribes and were ready for battle near Jericho.
14From that day on the people appreciated Joshua, just as they had appreciated Moses. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
15Then the LORD told Joshua to 16tell the priests with the sacred chest to come out of the Jordan. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} 17So Joshua told them. 18As soon as the priests came out of the river, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} the water of the Jordan filled in and its banks overflowed as before. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}
19On April 10 the people crossed the Jordan and camped at Gilgal, east of Jericho. 20At Gilgal Joshua set up the monument of rocks that were taken from the Jordan. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 21He told the people, "In the future when your children ask why this pile of rocks is here, tell them, 22'Our ancestors crossed the Jordan on dry ground. {336 Organized-Corporate Prayer, Luke 19:46} 23The LORD your God did this so we could cross over on dry ground, just as He had done to the Red Sea. 24He did this because He wants everyone to know that He is powerful {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} and that people should respect Him as the LORD your God.'" {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

Lord, teach me the lesson of memory "stones." You've done wonderful things for me in the past. Don't let me forget Your past "works." I trust You to do "miracles" for me in the future, just as You've done in the past. Amen.

Joshua 5

Circumcising the Jewish Men

1When the Amorite kings west of the Jordan and the Canaanite kings along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea heard how the Lord had dried up the Jordan River so the Israelites could cross over; their hearts melted in fear and they were totally discouraged from facing the Israelites. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[2]The LORD told Joshua to make some flint knives to circumcise the Israelite males. This was the second time this was done in Israel. [3]So Joshua did, and he named the place Gibeath Haaraloth (meaning "Hill of Foreskins").
[4]But why was this done? Because all the men 20 years of age and older who left Egypt had died in the desert. [5]They had been circumcised but all the males born in the desert had not. [6]During the 40 years the Israelite men had died in the desert because they had disobeyed the Lord. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} So the LORD promised them that He would not let them enter the Promised Land He promised to our ancestors. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [7]Moses then circumcised their sons. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [8]After all the men in Joshua's day were circumcised, the Israelites stayed near Gilgal while the men healed.
[9]The LORD told Joshua, "Today I have rolled away the disgrace of My people being in Egypt." So the Israelites named the place Gilgal (meaning "To Roll Away"). [10]On the evening of April 14 the Israelites celebrated the Passover near Gilgal. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [11]The next day they ate bread without yeast and also ate roasted grain. [12]After they ate this food, {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} no more manna ever appeared again.
[13]One day when Joshua was near Jericho, he saw a man standing in front of him with a sword in hand. When Joshua asked him if he was on his side or the enemy's side, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [14]He said, "I am Commander of the LORD's army." Joshua fell with his face to the ground {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} and asked, "Do you have a message for me?" {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [15]The Commander said, "Take off your sandals because this is holy ground." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} And Joshua did so.

Lord, just as You came to help Joshua fight his battles, come help me fight my battles against sin and satan. Show me Your promises in Scripture, and help me claim them. Give me victory. Amen.

Joshua 6

The Fall of Jericho

[1]The people of Jericho had been locking up their city gates because they were afraid of the Israelites. No one was allowed to go in or out. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [2]The LORD said to Joshua, "I will give you Jericho with its king and soldiers. Here's what you are to do: [3]Have your entire army march around the city once a day for six days. {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} [4]Also have seven priests walk in front of the sacred chest, blowing trumpets. On the seventh day the soldiers and priests are to walk around the city once a day seven times, with the priests blowing their trumpets. [5]When the priests play one long blast, all the people are to shout loudly. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} Then the walls will fall down, and you can run right into the city."

6So Joshua told the priests to carry the sacred chest and have seven priests march ahead of it carrying trumpets. 7In front of them an armed guard was to march, leading the people around the city. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 8Then the seven priests marched blowing their trumpets, with the sacred chest behind them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9The armed guard went ahead of the priests, and a rear guard followed the sacred chest. 10Joshua commanded, "Don't say anything till I tell you to shout." {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} 11The people circled the city once {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} and then returned to their tents for the night.

12Early the next morning the seven priests took the sacred chest and 13blew their trumpets. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Soldiers went in front of them and a rear guard followed. 14Then they all returned to their tents for the night. And they did this for six days. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}

15On the seventh day they got up early and marched around the city seven times. 16The seventh time around, the priests played a long blast on their trumpets, and Joshua said, "Get ready to shout. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} The LORD has given you the city. 17Destroy everything in the city as an offering to the LORD. Kill everyone except Rahab and all her relatives in her house, because she helped our two spies. 18Don't take away anything that is set apart for destruction, or you will be destroyed and you will bring disaster on the land. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 19Silver, gold, and objects of bronze and iron are to be dedicated to the LORD and put in His treasury." {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

20Then the priests played a long blast on their trumpets, the people shouted, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and the walls collapsed, and the soldiers ran in and took the city. 21They destroyed every living thing in the city—men, women, young and old, cattle, sheep, and donkeys. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

22Joshua told the two spies, "Go into Rahab's house and bring her and her relatives out, as you promised to do." 23So the spies brought her and her relatives to a safe place outside the Israelites' camp. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 24The soldiers burned down the entire city, but they put in the LORD's treasury anything of silver, gold, bronze, or iron. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 25Joshua spared Rahab and her relatives and her belongings {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} because she had helped Israel's two spies. And they still live with the Israelites.

26Joshua then pronounced a curse on anyone who rebuilds Jericho. He said, "If he lays the foundation, his firstborn son will die, and if he tries to build the city gates, his youngest son will die." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 27The LORD was with Joshua and his name became well known throughout the land. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, I have a battle; help me see Your plan for victory, then give me patience to follow

Your instruction. When the conflict finally comes, give me courage to win the victory. Lord, I'm ready. Amen.

Joshua 7

The Sin of Achan

[1]The LORD had said that everything in Jericho was to be set apart for destruction. But Achan of the tribe of Judah, took some things for himself, and this made God very angry. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [2]Joshua sent some men to Ai east of Bethel to spy out the land. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [3]When they returned to Joshua, they said, "Two or three thousand men can take Ai because it's a small town. You don't need to send the whole army against Ai." [4]So three thousand men attacked Ai, but the men of Ai chased the Israelites [5]down to the stone quarries, killing about 36 of them. The Israelites melted in fear and they became discouraged. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}

[6]Joshua and the leaders tore their clothes in grief, fell facedown to the ground before the sacred chest, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and threw dust on their heads all day. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [7]Joshua asked, "O Sovereign LORD, why did You bring us across the Jordan {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} to let the Amorites kill us? We would have been okay on the east side of the Jordan. [8]What can I say now that our army has run from the enemy? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [9]When the Canaanites and other nations hear about this, they will surround us and wipe us out. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} How will this affect Your reputation?" {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[10]The LORD answered, "Stand up. You needn't be lying face down. [11]Israel has sinned {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} by stealing some of the things that were to be destroyed. After stealing these things, they lied and have hidden the objects. [12]That is why the Israelites were defeated. I can't help you anymore unless you do what I have said. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

[13]"Tell the people, 'Tomorrow set yourselves apart to God. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} He knows that you have taken things that should have been destroyed. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} So if you want to defeat your enemies, you must get rid of these things. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3}

[14]"In the morning come to Me tribe by tribe, {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} and I will show you which tribe is guilty. Then the clans in that tribe are to present themselves, followed by all the families in that clan. Then the men in that clan are to present themselves, and I will point out which man is guilty. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [15]This is because he did a terrible thing in breaking the agreement our people had with Me." {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}

16Joshua got up early next morning. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} When each tribe came to the tabernacle, God pointed out the tribe of Judah. 17Then the clan of Zerah was guilty, followed by Zimri's family. 18When each man in Zimri's family was brought to the LORD, He showed that Achan, Carmi's son, was the guilty one. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

19Joshua said, "Achan, my son, give glory to the LORD by telling the truth. Tell me what you have done and don't try to hide anything." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} 20Achan replied, "It is true. I have sinned against the LORD. 21I stole a beautiful Babylonian robe, 200 pieces of silver that weighed about 5 pounds, and a gold piece that weighed more than a pound. I hid them in the ground under my tent." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}

22Joshua sent some men to Achan's tent. They ran there and found the items with the silver underneath the other objects. 23They brought them to Joshua and the Israelites, and put them on the ground before the LORD. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 24Then Joshua and all the people took Achan, the silver, the robe, the gold piece, his sons and daughters, his cattle, donkeys, and sheep, his tent and all his belongings to Achor Valley. 25Joshua said, "Because you have caused a lot of trouble for Israel, the Lord is bringing a terrible disaster on you." The people stoned Achan and his family to death, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and burned their bodies. 26They piled rocks on their corpses, and that pile is still there. Then the Lord was no longer angry with Israel. Ever since then the place has been called Achor Valley (meaning "Trouble Valley"). {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20}

Lord, I will retreat to You when facing defeat and destruction. I am terrified to stand in Your presence with sin in my life without the covering of the blood of Christ. I will always confess my sin. Amen.

Joshua 8

Ai Is Captured and Destroyed

1The LORD told Joshua, "Don't be afraid or discouraged about Ai. Take the army and attack Ai. I will help you defeat Ai and his army and capture the city. 2Do to them as you did to Jericho and its king. But you may keep the treasures and livestock. Set up an ambush behind the city." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

3So Joshua and his army prepared to attack Ai. He chose 30,000 of his best soldiers and told them, 4"While it is dark set up an ambush behind the city. Get close to the city and be on the alert. {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} 5I and the rest of the army will attack the city. Then when the Ai army comes against us, we will run. 6They will think we are running from them like before. So when they have all left the city in pursuing us, 7you are to jump up from your hiding, {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 8capture the town, and set it on fire, as the LORD has commanded. These are

your orders." {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}
9The 30,000 soldiers went into ambush near Bethel, west of Ai, and Joshua stayed with the people in the camp that night. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 10Early the next morning Joshua got his army ready, and he and the leaders of Israel went ahead of them to Ai. 11The troops set up camp north of Ai, with the valley between them and Ai. 12Joshua had sent 5,000 troops to the west of Ai. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 13So part of the troops were north of Ai, and some were west of the town. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}
14When Ai's king saw Joshua's army, he sent out troops early in the morning against them, not knowing an ambush was behind the city. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 15Joshua and his troops ran from the city to the desert, pretending to be beaten. 16As the men of Ai chased after Joshua's army, 17no man was left in Ai or Bethel, so the city was undefended. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}
18Then the LORD said to Joshua, "Point your sword toward Ai, {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} for I will give you the city." 19So as soon as Joshua did this, his troops who were in ambush ran into the town, captured it, {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} and set it on fire. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}
20When the men of Ai saw smoke rising from their town, they knew they had no way of escape because Joshua's soldiers whom they had been chasing into the desert had turned back against them. 21And when Joshua saw the smoke, he and his troops attacked the men of Ai. 22The Israelite men from the ambush went out of the city and attacked the men of Ai, who were then caught in a trap. All the soldiers of Ai died; no one survived or escaped. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23The Israelite troops captured the king of Ai and brought him to Joshua.
24When the Israelite soldiers killed all the men of Ai in the fields and the desert, they went back to the city and killed everyone there. 25Everyone in Ai—12,000 in all—died that day, 26as Joshua was pointing his sword toward the city. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 27The Israelite soldiers took all the animals and other belongings in the city, {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} as the LORD had said they could do. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}
28Ai became a permanent mound of ruins, desolate as it still is. 29The king of Ai was killed and his body was hung on a tree all day. At sunset they took down his body and tossed it by the city gate. They covered his corpse with a big pile of rocks, which is still there. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
30Then Joshua built on Mount Ebal an altar to the LORD, the God of Israel, 31as Moses had said was to be done. On the altar, which was made of stones that were uncut and were never shaped by iron tools, they sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 32As the Israelites watched, Joshua carved the law on stones. 33Then all the Israelites,

including foreign residents, leaders, officials, and judges, stood in two groups, with half of them in front of Mount Gerizim and half in front of Mount Ebal, facing the sacred chest and the priests who were in the middle. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [34]Then Joshua read the blessings and curses from the law. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [35]He also read to everyone, including women and foreign residents all the commands Moses had given. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14}

Lord, when I am defeated by sin, I will not give up, nor turn back. I will face that enemy again and by Your power; I will be victorious. I know I cannot win this battle in my own strength. I claim Your power for victory. Amen.

Joshua 9

The Gibeonites Trick Joshua

[1-2]When the kings west of the Jordan heard what happened to Ai, they quickly combined their forces to attack Joshua and Israel. Those kings were from the hill country and foothills to the west, along the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, and all the way north to Lebanon. These were the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

[3]When the people of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, [4]they decided to trick the Israelites {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} by having some of their men pretend to be messengers from a distant country. They loaded their donkeys with old sacks and old patched wineskins. [5]The men wore old and patched sandals and worn-out clothes. And all their bread was dry and moldy. [6]Arriving at the Israelite camp at Gilgal, the men said to Joshua and the Israelite men, "We have come from a far country to ask you to make a peace treaty with us." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[7]The men of Israel said, "But maybe you live near us. If so, we can't make a treaty with you." [8]The Gibeonites said, "If we make a treaty, we will be your servants." Joshua asked, "Who are you and where are you from?" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [9]They responded, "We are from a country far from here. We have heard that the LORD your God is famous, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and we have heard of all He did in Egypt [10]and to Sihon and Og, the two Amorite kings east of the Jordan. [11]So our leaders told us to go on this journey and tell you we are your servants and ask you to make a peace treaty with us. [12]This bread was fresh when we left home, but you can see that it is now dry and moldy. [13]And these wineskins were new, but you see how they are now cracked and patched. And our clothes and sandals are worn out." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[14]The Israelites tried some of the food to see if it really was spoiled. But they did not ask the LORD about the matter. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1,

2} [15]They went ahead and made a peace treaty, promising not to kill their people. And Israel's leaders promised they would keep the treaty. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[16]Three days later the Israelites found out that they were neighbors. [17]So the Israelites went to their towns of Gibeon, Kephirah, Beeroth, and Kiriath-Jearim, arriving on the third day of their trip. [18]The Israelites went to those towns but not to attack them, because the leaders had promised they wouldn't. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} The Israelite people complained about their leaders' decision not to attack these towns. [19]But the leaders explained that they promised before the LORD, God of Israel, that they would not harm them. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [20]They said, "We told them we would let them live, so that God wouldn't be angry with us for breaking our promise. [21]We also told them we would make them chop wood and carry water for all of us." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}
[22]Joshua met with some of the Gibeonites and said, "Why did you lie to us, saying you live far away when you actually live close to us? [23]You are now under a curse, and your people will now have to chop our wood and carry water to our tabernacle." [24]They responded, "We heard that the LORD your God told Moses to kill everyone here and occupy all this land. So we were afraid for our lives. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [25]What you do to us is up to you. So do what seems right." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
[26]Joshua kept the Israelites from killing these neighbors. [27]And that day he made the Gibeonites wood-choppers and water-carriers for the Israelites and for the altar of burnt offering, wherever the LORD would choose for it. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} And they still do that work.

Lord, teach me how to deal with people who come to seek my help. I will pray to seek Your will. I will examine the facts carefully, to follow the principles of Scripture. I will love people, follow Your leading, and try to glorify You in all my relationships. Amen.

Joshua 10

The Amorites Are Defeated

[1]Adoni-Zedek, Jerusalem's king, heard that Joshua had destroyed Ai and Jericho, killing the king of each town. He also heard that the Gibeonites had made a peace treaty with Israel. [2]He and his people were afraid, because they knew that Gibeon was a large town, as great as the royal cities and larger than Ai, and Gibeon's men were excellent fighters. [3]So Adoni-Zedek wrote to several other kings: Hoham of Hebron, Piram of Jarmuth, Japhia of Lachish, and Debir of Eglon. [4]He said, "Come help me destroy Gibeon because the Gibeonites have signed a peace treaty with Joshua and the Israelites." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}
[5]So these five Amorite kings moved all their troops together and attacked

Gibeon. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
6The Gibeonites sent men to Joshua at
Gilgal with these words: "Don't forget
me. Come help us quickly, {112 Des-
perate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} because five
Amorite kings together are attacking us."
7When Joshua and his army, with his best
fighting men, left Gilgal, 8the LORD said,
"Don't be afraid of the Amorites. {82 Con-
fident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} I will give you
victory over them."
9Marching all night from Gilgal to
Gibeon, Joshua made a surprise attack.
{429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6,
12} 10The LORD caused the Amorites to
panic in surprise, and the Israelite soldiers
killed many people in Gibeon, and chased
and killed others who were escaping to
Beth-Horon, Azekah, and Makkedah.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
11As the Amorite troops ran down the road
from Beth-Horon to Azekah, the Lord
made huge hailstorms that killed more of
the enemy than those who died in battle.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
12That day Joshua prayed loud enough for
everyone to hear, {251 Interchange with
God, Gen. 18:23-33} "Sun, stand still over
Gibeon, and moon, stand still over Aijalon
Valley." 13So the sun and moon stopped
while Israel was defeating its enemies. {466
Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} This
prayer is written in the Book of Jashar. The
sun stopped at noon and didn't go down
for 24 hours. {253 Interventional-Prayer,
Matt. 17:20} 14On no day before or after
this has the LORD ever done anything
like this, all in answer to the prayer of one
man. Obviously the LORD was fighting
for Israel. 15Then Joshua and all his army
returned to Gilgal. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:14}
16The five Amorite kings had escaped and
hid in a cave near Makkedah, about 25
miles away. 17When Joshua heard about
this, 18he told his men to roll big stones
over the cave's entrance, and to post men
to guard it. 19To the other soldiers he said,
"Keep chasing your enemies and don't let
them reach their cities. Remember that
the LORD your God is helping you." {493
Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 20So
almost all the soldiers of the five kings
were killed, {268 Judgmental-Praying,
Acts 5:4, 9} except for a few who reached
their cities. 21The army returned safely to
Joshua at Makkedah, and because of this
great victory {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps.
4:8} no one said anything bad about Josh-
ua's troops.
22Joshua told his men to remove the rocks
from the cave's entrance and to bring the
five kings out to him. 23So they did—the
kings of Jerusalem, Hebron, Jarmuth,
Lachish, and Eglon. 24Joshua called all
the Israelites together and {493 Triu-
mphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} told his com-
manders to put their feet on the kings'
necks. 25Joshua then said, "Don't ever be
afraid or discouraged. Be strong and brave.
This is what the Lord will do to all the ene-
mies you will fight." {463 Strength-Prayer,
Gen. 17:1}
26Joshua killed the five kings {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and hung the
corpse of each one on a tree. At sunset 27he
told his troops to take down the bodies
and throw them in the cave where they

had been hiding. They covered the cave entrance with big rocks, and those rocks are still there now.
[28]Later Joshua and his men attacked Makkedah, killed the kings, and destroyed everything in it, just as they had done at Jericho. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [29]Then they attacked Libnah [30]and killed the king and everyone in it, just as they had done at Jericho. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [31]From there they went to Lachish and attacked it, [32]and took it on the second day of battle. They killed everyone there, just as they had done at Libnah. [33]King Horam of Gezer went to help Lachish, but Joshua and his troops defeated him and killed all his soldiers. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[34]From Lachish Joshua and The Israelites went to Eglon [35]and captured it, killing everyone and destroying everything in it, just as they had done at Lachish. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [36]From there they attacked Hebron and nearby villages, [37]killing everyone there including its king. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [38]Next they attacked Debir and its nearby villages, [39]killing everyone and destroying everything in it, just as they had done with Hebron and Libnah. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[40]So Joshua conquered the whole region, including the people and kings of the hill country, the Southern Desert, and the western foothills and mountain slopes toward the Dead Sea. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} He killed everyone, just as the LORD, the God of Israel, had told him to do. [41]He killed people from Kadesh-Barnea to Gaza and from the region of Goshen to Gibeon. [42]Joshua and his army took these kings and their land in one campaign, because the LORD, the God of Israel, fought for them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [43]Then Joshua and the Israelite army returned to their camp at Gilgal.

Lord, so Joshua defeated the entire country just as You the God of Israel had commanded. He captured all the kings and their lands in a single campaign. (According to Unger, there were 25 city-states in Canaan when Israel entered it, and by 1390 B.C., Israel had swallowed up most of them. The Tel-Amarna letters show that only four city-states were left [Merrill F. Unger, Unger's Commentary on the Old Testament, Joshua (Chicago: Moody Press, 1981), 296.]). This is because You the LORD, the God of Israel, were fighting on behalf of Israel. Give me victory in every area of my personal life just as You gave Joshua victory. Amen.

Joshua 11

The Northern Cities Are Defeated

[1]When King Jabin of Hazor heard about Joshua's victories, he sent messages to many kings, asking them to join him in fighting Israel. He sent these messages to Jobab of Madon, the kings of Shimron, and Achshaph, [2]the kings in the northern mountains, the kings of the Jordan River Valley south of Lake Galilee, and the kings in the western foothills and in

Naphoth-Dor on the west, [3]to the kings of the Canaanites in the east and the west, to the kings of the Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, and Jebusites in the hill country, and to the Hivite kings below Mount Hermon in the region of Mizpah. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [4]All these kings and their troops with their huge number of horses and chariots seemed more numerous than grains of sand on a beach. [5]They met together at the Waters of Merom and set up camp there. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

[6]The LORD said to Joshua, "Don't be afraid of them, because in 24 hours they will all be dead. Cut the leg muscles of their horses, and burn their chariots." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [7]So Joshua and his army made a surprise attack at the Waters of Merom, [8]and the LORD helped Israel defeat the enemy. The Israelite soldiers chased them all the way to Greater Sidon in the north, to Misropheth-Maim to the northwest and the Mizpah Valley in the northeast, leaving no survivors. [9]Joshua and his men did as the Lord told them to do; {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} they cut the leg muscles of the enemies' horses and burned their chariots.

[10]Then Joshua captured Hazor and killed its king Jabin, who had controlled all those cities. Joshua [11]and his army killed everyone in Hazor and anything that was alive, and they burned up the town of Hazor. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[12]Joshua captured these royal towns and killed all their kings, totally destroying them as God had told them to do. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [13]But he did not burn any of these towns built on small hills except Hazor. [14]The soldiers carried off the animals and valuables in these cities, but they killed all the people and anything that breathed. [15]This is what the LORD told Moses to do, and what Moses told Joshua to do, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and this is what Joshua did. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

[16]Joshua and his army conquered the entire land—the hill country, the Southern Desert, the Goshen region, the western foothills, the Jordan River Valley, and Israel's mountains and foothills [17]from Mount Halak near Edom, to Baal-Gad in the Lebanon Valley south of Mount Hermon in the north. He captured and put to death all their kings. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [18]Joshua was at war with these kings for a long time, [19]but he finally defeated them all except for the Hivites in Gibeon. [20]The LORD made these people stubborn so that He might destroy them completely without mercy, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} as He had commanded Moses to do. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[21]Joshua also killed all the descendants of Anak who lived in the hill country of Hebron, Debir, and Anab, and all the hill country of Judah and Israel. [22]No Anakites were left in Israelite territory, except some who survived in Gaza, Gath, and Ashdod. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

[23]Joshua conquered the entire land, as the LORD had told Moses would happen, and he divided the land {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} among the tribes.

Then the land finally had rest from war. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, Joshua took control of the entire country, just as You had told Moses to do long ago. Joshua gave the land as an inheritance to Israel and divided up the land by their divisions and by their tribes. Then Israel had rest; there was no more war. I want the same peace in my life. Deliver me from the evil one. Amen.

Joshua 12

The Kings Defeated by Moses

[1]The Israelites had killed two kings east of the Jordan River and took over their territory all the way from the Arnon River Gorge in the south to Mount Hermon in the north, including the eastern side of the Jordan River Valley. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [2]The first king to be defeated was Sihon the Amorite king who reigned in Heshbon. His kingdom extended from Aroer on the Arnon River Gorge north to the Jabbok River, which is the border of the Ammonites. His kingdom included half of the Gilead region. [3]Sihon also ruled over the eastern half of the Jordan River Valley south from Lake Galilee to Beth-Jeshimoth at the northwest corner of the Dead Sea south to the slopes of Mount Pisgah.
[4]Og, king of Bashan, one of the last of the Rephaites, reigned in Ashtaroth part of each year and in Edrei the rest of the year. [5]His territory extended from Mount Hermon in the northeast to Slecah, and included the land of Bashan west to Geshur and Maacah. He ruled over the northern half of Gilead.
[6]Moses, God's servant, had conquered Sihon and Og and had given their land to the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [7]Later Joshua and the Israelites defeated the kings on the west side of the Jordan, from Baal-Gad in the Lebanon Valley in the north to Mount Halak near Edom in the south. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [8]This region included the hill country, the foothills, the Jordan River Valley, and its western slopes, and the Southern Desert. This included the lands of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. [9]The Israelites defeated the kings of these towns: Jericho, Ai (near Bethel), [10]Jerusalem, Hebron, [11]Jarmuth, Lachish, [12]Eglon, Gezer, [13]Debir, Geder, [14]Hormah, Arad, [15]Libnah, Adullam, [16]Makkedah, Bethel, [17]Tappuah, Hepher, [18]Aphek, Lasharon, [19]Madon, Hazor, [20]Shimron Meron, Acshaph, [21]Taanach, Megiddo, [22]Kedesh, Jokneamon on Mount Carmel, [23]Dor in Naphath-Dor, Goyim in Gilgal, and [24]Tirzah. There were 31 kings in all.

Lord, I must conquer my old nature so I can conquer the world, the flesh, and the devil. Fight for me as You fought for Israel. Protect me from evil when I can't protect myself. Lord, work through me as I fight against evil and satan's work. Amen.

Joshua 13

The Unconquered Land

[1]Years later when Joshua was old, the LORD said, "You are getting old, but still Israel has not taken all sections of the land. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [2]This includes the regions of the Philistines and Geshurites, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [3]which extends from the Shihor River east of Egypt north to Ekron. This Canaanite territory includes the Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashdod, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. Also the land of the Avites in the south is yet to be conquered. [4]And the area to the north has not been conquered. This includes the land of the Canaanites from Mearah (which belongs to the Sidonians) north to Aphek at the boundary of the Amorites, [5]the land of the Gebalites and all the Lebanon Mountains area to the east from Baal-Gad south of Mount Hermon to Lebo-Hamath, {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [6]and the Sidonians in the hill country from Lebanon to Misrephoth Maim. I will help Israel force out all the people who live in these areas. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [7]And you are to divide the land among the nine tribes and the tribe of West Manasseh as I have instructed you. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[8]Moses had given the land east of the Jordan River to East Manasseh and the tribes of Reuben and Gad. [9]That region extended from Aroer at the Arnon River Gorge and from the town in the middle of the gorge and it included the plateau of Medeba to Dibor. [10]This region also included the towns of Sihon, the Amorite king, who ruled in Heshbon. Some of Sihon's towns were east to the Ammonite border.

[11]This region also included Gilead, the territory of Geshur and Maacah, all of Mount Hermon and all Bashan as far as Salecah. [12]This was the region of Og, who reigned in Ashtaroth and Edrei and was one of the last Rephaites. Moses had defeated Sihon and Og and their people. [13]But the Israelites did not force out the people of Geshur and Maacah, and so they still live among the Israelites.

[14]Moses gave no land to the Levi tribe because God promised them that instead of land they would receive offerings made to the LORD, the God of Israel. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[15]The land for the clans in the tribe of Reuben was as follows: {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [16]The territory from Aroer at the Annon River Gorge and from the town in the middle of the gorge north to the plateau of Medeba [17]to Heshbon and all the towns near it on the plateau including Dibon, Bamoth Baal, Beth-Baal Meon, [18]Jahaz, Kedemoth, Mephaath, [19]Kiriathaim, Sibmah, Zereth Shahar on the hill in the valley, [20]Beth-Peor, the slopes of Mount Pisgah, and Beth- Jeshimoth. [21]These were all the towns on the plateau and in the region of Sihon, who ruled at Heshbon. Moses defeated Sihon and killed him and the Midianite chiefs, Evi, Rekem, Zur, Hur, and Reba, who were allied with Sihon. [22]The Israelites also killed Balaam, son of Beor, who practiced

fortune-telling. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [23]These towns and villages were for the Reuben tribe, and the Jordan River was its western boundary. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[24]The land for the clans in the tribe of Gad was as follows: {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [25]The territory of Jazer, all the towns of Gilead, and half the Ammonite territory to Aroer near Rabbah, [26]and from Heshbon in the south to Ramath Mizpah and Betonim in the north and from Mahanaim and Lidebon farther north. [27]Gad also received four towns in the valley—Beth-Haram, Beth-Nimrah, Succoth, and Zaphon—with the rest of King Sihon's territory up to the Galilee Lake. [28]These regions with their towns and villages were given to the tribe of Gad.

[29]The land for the clans of the East Manasseh tribe {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} was as follows: [30]The territory extending from Mahanaim which included all of Bashan, the realm of Og king of Bashan, the 60 towns of Jair in Bashan; [31]the northern half of Gilead; and Og's two towns of Ashtaroth and Edrei. All this was given to the clans of the tribe of Machir, Manasseh's son.

[32]This is how Moses divided the land east of the Jordan River when he was in the plains of Moab across the Jordan east of Jericho. [33]He gave no land to the Levi tribe, because the LORD, the God of Israel, said He would be their inheritance.

Lord, You had a predetermined place for each Israelite, just as You have a predetermined place for me in this life. You selected for me parents in a prescribed culture, in a specific city and state. Work through me where I am and glorify Yourself through my life. Amen.

Joshua 14

The Division of Canaan

[1]The remaining nine and a half tribes inherited land in Canaan, given to them by Eleazar the priest, Joshua, and the tribal leaders. [2]The land each tribe was to receive was assigned by casting lots, as the LORD had told Moses to do. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [3]Moses had already given land east of the Jordan to two and a half tribes, but no land was given to the Levites. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [4]The tribe of Joseph had become two tribes, Manasseh and Ephraim, and the Levites did not receive any land, but they were given towns to live in with pasturelands for their flocks and herds. [5]So the dividing of the land was as the LORD had told Moses. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

[6-7]While the Israelites were still at Gilgal, some men from the tribe of Judah went with Caleb to see Joshua. Caleb said, "You know that at Kadesh-Barnea the Lord sent you and me when I was 40 years old to explore the land. I brought back a report of what I felt was true, {17 Anointed-Truth

Praying, 1 John 2:27} [8]but the other 10 spies made our people afraid to try to conquer the land. But I trusted the Lord with all my heart. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [9]That day Moses told me {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} that because I trusted the Lord {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} the land I was walking on would belong to me and my descendants forever. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [10]Moses made that promise to me 45 years ago. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} Though I'm now 85, {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [11]I feel as strong and energetic now as I did then. I can still fight as well now as then. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [12]So please give me this hill country that the LORD promised to me. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} You heard the 10 spies talk about the Anakites there in their large, well-fortified cities. But with the LORD's help I will force them out of the land." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[13]So Joshua commended Caleb and told him {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} Hebron would be his. [14]Hebron still belongs to Caleb's descendants, because he trusted the LORD the God of Israel with all his heart. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [15]Hebron used to be called Kiriath-Arba, because Arba was one of the greatest leaders of the Anakites. Then there was peace in the land. {200 Greater-Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:6}

Lord, Caleb trusted You to help him victoriously conquer the mountain that was his lifelong dream. "The Lord helping me I will drive them out" (Josh. 14:12). It's one thing to have a dream, but a dream is only the beginning. It's another step forward when you pray and work for your dream. To capture your dream takes God and man working together. By faith you have to work hard and work smart. And as you work for your dream, you have to know how to work with God. Lord, I'm working on my dream; help me work with all my heart to realize my dream. Amen.

Joshua 15

Dividing Up the Promised Land

[1]The land assigned to the clans of the tribe of Judah extended south to the border of Edom, all the way to the Zin Desert. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [2]Judah's southern border began at the southern tip of the Dead Sea, [3]went west just south of Scorpion Pass, on to Zin and south of Kadesh-Barnea. From there the southern border went past Hezron to Addar and turned toward Karka. [4]Then it passed to Azmon and reached the brook of Egypt, and then ended at the Mediterranean Sea. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[5]Judah's eastern border was the Dead Sea up to where the Jordan River flows into it. The northern boundary began where the Jordan enters the Dead Sea, [6]and went west to Beth-Hoglah, and continued north of Beth-Arabah to the Bohan Rock. [7]The boundary then went to Debir of Trouble

Valley and north to Gilgal, opposite the slopes of Adummim. From there it went to Em Shemesh and Em Rogel [8]and then up the Hinnom Valley along the southern slope of Jerusalem, the Jebusite city. From there the boundary line went to the top of the mountain west of the Hinnom Valley at the north end of the Rephaim Valley. [9]Then the line went west to the Nephtoah Spring to the towns around Mount Ephron and down to Baalah, now called Kiriath-Jearim. [10]The northern border then went west to Mount Seir and then along the northern side of Mount Jearim (also called Kesalon) and down to Beth-Shemesh and to Timnah. [11]The line went to the north side of Ekron, and then turned to Shikkeron, passed by Mount Baalah on to Jabneel. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [12]The western boundary ended at the Mediterranean Sea. The clans of Judah lived within these borders.

[13]Joshua gave Caleb some land in Judah, which included Hebron, also named Kiriath-Arba, because Arba was an ancestor of Anak. [14]Caleb forced three descendants of Anak to leave Hebron. They were Sheshai, Ahiman, and Talmai. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [15]Then Caleb went to Debir, formerly called Kiriath-Sepher, [16]and he said, "My daughter Achsah can become the wife of the man who captures Kiriath-Sepher." [17]Caleb's nephew Othniel captured the town, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and so Othniel married Achsah. [18]One day Achsah urged her husband to ask her father for a field. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} She went to see her father Caleb, and when she got off her donkey, he asked her what he could do for her. [19]She answered, "The land you gave me is in the Southern Desert. But I need some land with springs of water." {186 Goal-Striving Prayer, Phil. 3:10-14} So Caleb gave her the Upper Spring and the Lower Spring.

[20]These are the towns given to the clans of the tribe of Judah: [21]The towns in the Southern Desert near Edom were Kabzeel, Eder, Jagur, [22]Kinah, Dimonah, Adadah, [23]Kedesh, Hazor, Ithnan, [24]Ziph, Telem, Baloth, [25]Hazor Hadattah, Kerioth Hezron (also called Hazor), [26]Amam, Shema, Moladah, [27]Hazar Guddah, Heshmon, Beth-Pelet, [28]Hazar Shual, Beersheba, Biziothiah, [29]Baalah, Iim, Ezem, [30]Eltodad, Kesil, Hormah, [31]Ziklag, Madmannah, Sansannah, [32]Lebaoth, Shilhim, Ain, and Rimmon. This was a total of 29 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[33]The towns given to the clans of the tribe of Judah in the western foothills were Eshtaol, Zorah, Ashnah, [34]Zanoah, En Gannim, Tappuah, Enam, [35]Jarmuth, Adullam, Socoh, Azekah, [36]Shaaraim, Adithaim, and Gederah (also called Gederothaim), a total of 14 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[37]Also the towns included Zenan, Hadashah, Migdal Gad, [38]Dilean, Mizpah, Joktheel, [39]Lachish, Bozkath, Eglon, [40]Cabbon, Lahmas, Kitlish, [41]Gederoth, Beth-Dagon, Naamah, and Makkedah, a total of 16 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

42Other towns were Libnah, Ether, Ashan, 43Iphtah, Ashnah, Nezib, 44Keilah, Aczib, and Mareshah, a total of nine towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
45Also included were Ekron, with its surrounding settlements and villages; 46the area west of Ekron and Ashdod, with their villages; 47Ashdod and its surrounding settlements and villages; and Gaza, with its settlements and villages as far west as the brook of Egypt and along the coast of the Mediterranean Sea. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
48Another of Judah's regions was the hill country with 38 towns and their villages. Shamir, Jattir, Socoh, 49Dannah, Kiriath-Sannah (now called Debir), 50Anab, Eshtemoh, Anim, 51Goshen, Holon, and Giloh were a total of 11 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
52Arab, Dumah, Eshan, 53Janim, Beth-Tappuah, Aphekah, 54Humtah, Kiriath-Arba (now called Hebron), and Zior were a total of nine towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 55Maon, Carmel, Ziph, Juttah, 56Jezreel, Jokdeam, Zanoah, 57Kain, Gibeah, and Timnah were a total of 10 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
58Halhul, Beth-Zur, Gedor, 59Maarath, Beth-Anoth, and Eltekon were a total of six towns and their villages. 60And Kiriath-Baal (also called Kiriath-Jearim), and Rabbah were two more towns with their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
61Six towns and their villages were given to Judah's clans in the desert: Beth-Arabah, Middin, Secacah, 62Nibshan, the City of Salt, and En Gedi. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 63Unfortunately the Israelites could not force out the Jebusites who were living in Jerusalem, so the Jebusites still live there with the people of Judah. {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18}

Lord, remind me that an incomplete victory is also a commitment to future struggles with that same problem. Amen.

Joshua 16

Ephraim and Manasseh's Share

1The southern borders of the land assigned to Joseph began at the Jordan River at Jericho, and went west through the desert into the hill country of Bethel. 2It went from Bethel to Luz and then to the border of the Archites in Ataroth. 3The line went west to the land of the Japhletites as far as Lower Beth-Horan and Gezer, over to the Mediterranean Sea. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 4This is the land given to the descendants of Joseph's sons, Manasseh and Ephraim.
5The boundary of the territory of Ephraim's clan went from Ataroth Addar in the east to Upper Beth-Horon 6in the west and continued to the Mediterranean Sea. The northern border started at Micmethath and went east to Taanath Shiloh, and on to Janoah. 7From there the

boundary line went down to Ataroth and Naarah toward Jericho and to the Jordan River. [8]The line went west from Tappuah to the Kanah Ravine and on to the Mediterranean Sea. [9]Ephraim also had some towns and villages in the territory of the half tribe of Manasseh. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [10]The Ephraimites could not force the Canaanites out of Gezer, so some of them still live with the people of Ephraim. {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18} But now the Canaanite people of Gezer have to work as slaves for the Israelites.

Joshua 17

Property and Territories Given Out

[1]Makir was the firstborn son of Manasseh, who was the firstborn son of Joseph. Makir was the ancestor of the Gileadites, who had received Gilead and Bashan because they were good soldiers. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [2]The half tribe of Manasseh on the west side of the Jordan River received land for the clans of Abiezer, Helek, Asriel, Shechem, Hepher, and Shemida. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[3]Hepher's son Zelophehad had no sons, but he had these five daughters: Mahlah, Noah, Hoglah, Milcah, and Tirzah. [4]They went to Eleazar the priest, Joshua, and Israel's leaders and said, "God told Moses to give our daughters some land just as He gave to our male relatives." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} So Joshua gave them some property with their brothers, as the LORD had commanded. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[5]Manasseh's land west of the Jordan consisted of ten parts. [6]This was in addition to the land of Gilead and Barshan that was given to East Manasseh. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

[7]The territory of West Manasseh extended from Asher south to Micmethath east of Shechem and ran farther south to include En Tappuah. [8]This town itself was in the Ephraim tribe, though Manasseh had the land around Tappuah. [9]The boundary line continued south to the Kanuh Ravine and then went from the north side of the ravine to the Mediterranean Sea. A few towns belonging to Ephraim were north of the ravine, but the land itself north of the ravine belonged to Manasseh. [10]The land on the south belonged to Ephraim, and the land on the north belonged to Manasseh. The western border of the Manasseh tribe was the Mediterranean Sea, and the tribe bordered Asher on the north and Issachar on the east. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[11]In the territories of Issachar and Asher, Manasseh had Beth-Shan, Ibleam, and Dor (also called Naphoth Dor), Endor, Taanach, and Megiddo with their surrounding settlements. [12]But the people of Manasseh could not capture these Canaanite towns. [13]But when the Israelites grew strong, they forced the Canaanites to work as their slaves, but they could not force them out completely. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[14]One day the people of Manasseh and Ephraim said to Joshua, "Why have you

given us only one portion of land when we have so many people?" {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 15Joshua responded, "If you have so many people and not enough land, {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} go clear out land in the forest that belonged to the Perizzites and Raphaites." 16But they answered, "That still wouldn't give us enough land. And even the Canaanites living in Beth-Shan and in the Jezreel Valley have iron chariots." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

17Joshua then said, "True, there are many of you. But you are powerful. I'll give you more land, 18along with the forested area, and when you clear the land, it will be yours. {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} Yes, the Canaanites are powerful people and have iron chariots. But you can force them out." {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}

Lord, I will not look at the might of my enemies even when they've got "iron chariots." I look to Your strength when I'm weak; I need Your strength. When I'm blinded to sin, I need Your illumination. When I'm attacked, I need Your victory. Amen.

Joshua 18

The Rest of the Land Is Divided

1The Israelites all gathered at Shiloh and set up the tabernacle there. The land was under the control of the Israelites, {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 2but seven tribes still had not been given their tribal territories. 3So Joshua said, "Why are some of you waiting to occupy the land the LORD the God of your ancestors has given you? {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} 4Select three men from each tribe, and I will have them survey the land {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 5and write a description of each of the seven parts of the land. The tribe of Judah, of course, is to remain in its territory on the south and the tribes of Ephraim and West Manasseh are to be in their territory to the north of Judah. 6Give me your written descriptions, and I will cast lots to determine which of the remaining seven tribes are to receive which territory. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 7As you know, the Levites are not to receive a portion of land because their service as priests is their inheritance. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} Also Gad, Reuben, and East Manasseh have already received their tribal territories east of the Jordan, land given to them by Moses."

8As the men started out, Joshua said again, "Survey the land and unite on a description of it. Then when you return, I will cast lots here in Shiloh in the LORD's presence." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 9The men did as they were told, writing a report on each town and dividing the land into seven regions, and they returned to Joshua in Shiloh. 10Then Joshua cast lots to see how to divide the land, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and he told the Israelites what their tribal territories

were to be. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}
[11]The tribe of Benjamin was given territory between the tribe of Judah on the south and the tribe of Ephraim and Manasseh on the north. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [12]Benjamin's northern border started at the Jordan River and went west past Jericho and on into the hill country to the desert at Beth-Aven. [13]Then it ran along the ridge south of Luz (also called Bethel), and down to Ataroth Addar on the hill south of Lower Beth-Horon. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [14]From there the boundary line turned south and formed the western boundary at Kiriath-Baal (also called Kiriath-Jearim by Judah). {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[15]The southern border began at Kiriath-Jearim and went east to the Nephtaoh Spring. [16]Then the line went to the foot of the hill that faces the Ben Hinnom Valley. It continued down the Hinnom Valley along the southern slope of Jerusalem on to En Rogel. [17]Then the line curved north and went to En Shemesh, Geliloth which faces the Adummim Pass, and down to the Bohan Rock. [18-19]The line went to the north of Beth-Hoglah and to the north end of the Dead Sea where the Jordan River enters the Dead Sea. [20]The Jordan River was Benjamin's eastern border. These are the borders of Benjamin's tribal land for all its clans. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[21]The tribe of Benjamin had these 12 towns and villages in one region: Jericho, Beth-Hoglah, Emek Keziz, [22]Beth-Arabah, Zemaraim, Bethel, [23]Avvim, Parah, Ophrah, [24]Kephar Ammoni, Ophni, and Geba. The tribe had these additional 12 towns and villages in another region: [25]Gibeon, Ramah, Beeroth, [26]Mizpah, Kephirah, Mozah, [27]Rekem, Irpeel, Taralah, [28]Zelah, Haeleph, Jerusalem (also called the Jebusite town), Gibeah, and Kiriath. This was the tribal territory given to the tribe of Benjamin and its clans. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, thank You for using some people to be fair to all people. Amen.

Joshua 19

Simeon's Share

[1]The second tribe to be selected by casting lots was Simeon. The region for its clans was inside the territory of Judah. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [2]One region included 13 towns and their villages: Beersheba (also called Shebal), Moladah, [3]Hazar Shual, Balah, Ezem, [4]Eltolad, Bethul, Hormah, [5]Ziklag, Beth-Marcaboth, Hazor Susah, [6]Beth-Lebaoth, and Sharuhen. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [7]Another region included four towns and their villages: Ain, Rimmon, Ether, and Ashan. [8]Simeon's land also included villages as far south as Baalath Beer {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} (also called Ramah) in the Southern Desert. [9]Since the tribe of Judah received more land than it needed for its

people, part of its land was given to Simeon. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
10The third tribe to be selected by casting lots was Zebulun. Its boundary started at Sarid. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 11From there it went west to Maralah, near Dabbesheth, and followed the ravine near Jokneam. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 12It went east from Sarid toward the territory of Kisloth Tabor and onto Daberath and Japhia. 13The line continued east to Gath Hepher, Eth-Kazin, and Rimmon and then curved toward Neah. 14The northern boundary went to Hannathon and ended at the Iphtah El Valley. 15Five of the 12 towns were Kattath, Nahalal, Shimron, Idalah, and Bethlehem. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 16This was the tribal territory for Zebulun and its clans.
17The fourth tribe to be selected by casting lots was Issachar. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 18Its territory included these 16 towns and their villages: Jezreel, Kesulloth, Shunem, 19Hapharaim, Shion, Anaharath, 20Rabbith, Kishion, Ebez, 21Remeth, En Gannim, En Haddah, and Beth-Pazzez. 22Tabor, Shahazumah, and Beth-Shemesh. 23These were the towns and their villages for the tribe of Issachar and its clans. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
24The fifth tribe to be selected by casting lots was Asher. 25Its territory included Helkath, Hali, Beten, Acshaph, 26Allammelech, Amad, and Mishal. The western boundary went from Carmel and Shihor Libnath, {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 27and then turned east toward Beth-Dagon, sharing a border with Zebulun along the Iphtah El Valley. Then the line went north to Beth-Emek and Neiel, passing Cabul on the left. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 28From there it went to Abdon, Rehob, Hammon, and Kanah, as far north as the city of Sidon. 29The boundary line then turned west toward Ramah and on to the city of Tyre. From there it turned toward Hosah and ended at the Mediterranean Sea near Aczib, {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 30Ummah, Aphek, and Rehob. Asher has 22 towns and their villages. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 31This was the tribal territory for Asher and its clans. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
32The sixth tribe to be selected by casting lots was Naphtali. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 33Its boundary ran from Heleph and the oak tree at Zaanannim, past Adami Nekeb and Jabneel to Lakkum and ending at the Jordan River. 34The boundary ran west through Aznoth Tabor and ended at Hukkok. The line touched Zebulun on the south, Asher on the west, and the Jordan on the east. 35The cities and their villages were Ziddim, Zer, Hammath, Rakkath, Kinnereth, 36Adamah, Ramah, Hazor, 37Kedesh, Edrei, En Hazor, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 38Iron, Migdal El, Horem, Beth-Anath, and Beth-Shemesh. 39These were the towns and their villages for Naphtali and the tribe's clans. {193

Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}

40 The seventh tribe to be selected by casting lots was Dan. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 41 Its territory included Zorah, Eshtaol, Ir Shemesh, {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 42 Shaalabbin, Aijalon, Ithlah, {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 43 Elon, Timnah, Ekron, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 44 Elteke h, Gibbethon, Baalath, {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 45 Jehud, Bene Berak, Gath Rimmon, {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 46 Me Jarkon, and Rakkon. Dan's land went almost to Joppa. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 47 The Danites had difficulty taking their land, so they attacked Leshem and killed everyone in it. They settled in Leshem and named it Dan after their ancestor. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} 48 These were the towns and villages for Dan and its clans.

49 After all the land was divided among the tribes, the Israelites gave Joshua some land as his inheritance, 50 as the Lord had commanded. He asked for Timnath Serah in Ephraim's hill country, and that is what he received. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} He built up the town and settled there. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

51 These are the tribal territories that Eleazar the priest, Joshua, and the tribal leaders gave to the tribes by casting lots in the Lord's presence at the tabernacle in Shiloh. So the dividing of the land was completed. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Lord, the first shall be last and the last shall be first. Joshua was the last to receive his land-inheritance. Let me be last for I want to serve You the most. Amen.

Joshua 20

The Towns of Refuge

1 The LORD told Joshua, {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27} 2 "Tell the Israelites to choose Towns of Refuge, as I told Moses. 3 If anyone kills a person accidentally, he may run to one of these towns and be protected from a relative wanting to take revenge. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

4 "A person running to one of these towns is to explain to the town leaders at the city gate what happened. They must allow him to live in the town. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 5 If the avenging relative comes to take the man's life, the town leaders must not release the accused man to him, because the death was not done on purpose. {148 Expedient-Prayer, Est. 4:16} 6 He is to stay in the town until a trial has been held and until the high priest dies." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

7 So the Israelites chose three towns west of the Jordan: Kedesh in Galilee in the hill country of Naphtali, Shechem in the hill country of Ephraim, and Kiriath-Arba (also called Hebron) in the hill country of Judah. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} 8 The Israelites chose three towns east of the Jordan: Bezer in the desert in

the tribe of Reuben, Ramoth in Gilead in the tribe of Gad, and Golan in Bashan in the tribe of East Manasseh. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [9]If any Israelite or foreign resident accidently killed someone, he could run to one of these six Towns of Refuge to be safe from an avenger before a trial is held. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

Lord, thank You for looking after those who made a mistake. That means You'll take care of me when I make a mistake. Judge me by what I intend to do, not by those unintentional mistakes I make. Amen.

Joshua 21

The Towns of the Levites

[1]In Shiloh the family leaders of the Levi tribe and other family leaders said to Eleazar the priest and Joshua, {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} [2]"The LORD told Moses that we are to have towns to live in and pastureland for our livestock." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [3]So the Levites received the following towns with pastures. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

[4]The Kohath clans who were descendants of Aaron, were given 13 towns in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. [5]Other Kohath clans were given 10 towns in the tribes of Ephraim, Dan, and West Manasseh. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

[6]The Gershon clans were given 13 towns in the tribes of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and East Manasseh. [7]The Merari clans were given 12 towns in the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. [8]So the Israelites did as the LORD had told Moses in giving the Levites those towns and pastures. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[9]The Israelites gave 13 towns in the tribes of Judah and Simeon [10]to the Kohathite clans of the tribe of Levi. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [11]They received Kiriath-Arba (also called Hebron). Arba was the ancestor of Anak. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [12]And the fields and villages around Hebron were given to Caleb. [13]Besides receiving Hebron, a Town of Refuge, the Kohathites also received these towns in Judah and Simeon: Libnah, {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [14]Jattir, Eshtemoa, [15]Holon, Debir, [16]Ain, Juttah, and Beth-Shemesh with surrounding pasturelands—nine towns in all. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [17]Then in Benjamin the Kohathites received the four towns of Gibeon, Geba, {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [18]Anathoth, and Almon. [19]This was a total of 13 towns. [20]Other Kohathite clans received four towns in the tribe of Ephraim, four in the tribe of Dan, and two in the tribe of West Manasseh. [21]The four towns in the hill country of Ephraim were Shechem, a Town of Refuge, Gezer, [22]Kibzaim, and Beth-Horon. [23]The four towns in the tribe of Dan were Eltekeh, Gibbethon, [24]Aijalon, and Gath Rimmon. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[25]The two towns in West Manasseh were Taanach and Gath Rimmon {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}—
[26]10 towns in all. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[27]The Gershon clans of the Levi tribe received 13 towns with their pasturelands. Two towns in the tribe of East Manasseh were Golan, a Town of Refuge, and Eshtarah. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [28]The four towns in the tribe of Issachar were Kishion, Daberath, [29]Jarmuth, and En Gannim. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[30]The four towns in the tribe of Asher were Mishal, Abdon, [31]Helkath, and Rehob. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [32]And the three towns in the tribe of Naphtali were Kedesh, a Town of Refuge, Hammoth Dor, and Kartan {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [33]—13 in all. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}
[34]The Merari clan of the Levites received 12 towns with their pasturelands. [35]The four towns in the tribe of Zebulun were Jokneam, Kartah, Dimnah, and Nahalal. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [36]The four towns in the Reuben tribe were Bezer, Jahaz, [37]Kedemoth, and Mephaath. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [38]The four towns in the tribe of Gad were Ramoth, a Town of Refuge, Mahanaim, [39]Heshbon, and Jazer {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [40]—12 in all.
[41]The Levites lived in these 48 towns, [42]and had pastureland around each town for their livestock. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [43]The LORD gave Israel all the land He had promised to their ancestors, and they captured the land and settled in. [44]No enemy could defeat them, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} because the LORD helped them defeat all their enemies. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[45]Every good thing the LORD promised to Israel came true. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

Lord, it's wonderful how Israel looked after Your priests back then; may we look after our spiritual pastors and Christian leaders today. Amen.

Joshua 22

The Eastern Tribes Are Sent Home

[1]Joshua called together the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh [2]and said, "You have done everything Moses told you to do {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and you have done all that I've told you to do. [3]This has taken a long time, but you have helped your relatives carry out all the LORD your God told you to do. [4]Now that He has given these tribes rest, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} you should go to your families in the land Moses gave you east of the Jordan River. [5]So be sure to obey the commands and laws Moses gave you. Love the LORD your God, follow Him, obey Him, cling to Him, and serve Him with all your heart and soul." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

6Joshua blessed them and sent them on
their way to their families. {42 Blessing A
Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 7Moses had
given half of the tribe of Manasseh the land
of Bashan east of the Jordan River and the
other half of the tribe the land west of the
Jordan. In his blessing Joshua said, {185
Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom.
12:1} 8"When you get home with your
livestock, silver, gold, bronze, iron, and
clothes, share all this with your relatives."
{409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
9So the soldiers of the tribes of Reuben,
Gad, and East Manasseh left Shiloh and
returned to Gilead, which the Lord had
given them. {317 Natural-Bless Prayer,
Matt. 5:45} 10When the soldiers of these
two and a half tribes arrived at Geliloth
just west of the Jordan River, they built a
large altar there. 11When the rest of Israel
heard about this, 12the men got together at
Shiloh and got ready to attack the two and
a half tribes. {390 Questionable-Praying,
Acts 1:24}
13The Israelites sent Phinehas, Eleazar's
son, 14and ten tribal leaders to meet with
the two and a half tribes in Gilead. 15They
said to them, 16 "All the Israelites want
to know how you could be unfaithful to
the LORD by building an altar? {329
Obstinate-Prayer, 2 Cor. 11:4} Why are
you rebelling against Him? 17Wasn't the
sin of our people at Peor bad enough?
{303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} We are
still suffering because of that sin. 18Why
turn from the LORD again? If you rebel
against the LORD, {494 Trouble-Pray-
ing, 2 Cor. 1:4} He will be angry with all
of us. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4,
9} 19If you don't think your land is good
enough for worshiping the Lord, then
move across the Jordan and worship Him
here at the tabernacle. But don't rebel by
building a separate altar for yourselves.
{159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 20As you
know, when Achan was unfaithful and
stole some things that should have been
destroyed, God was angry with us, and he
and others died because he sinned." {334
Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}
21The leaders of the tribes of Reuben, Gad,
and East Manasseh replied, 22"The LORD
is the great God. {192 God-Recognition
Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} If we had been
rebellious and disobedient to the Lord, we
deserve to die. 23We didn't build an altar
because we were rejecting the LORD. And
we didn't build it so we could offer burnt
offerings, grain offerings, or fellowship
offerings. {192 God-Recognition Prayer,
Eph. 3:20-21} 24No. We built it because we
were concerned that someday your descen-
dants might tell our descendants that {541
Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 25because the
Jordan River separates us {31 Barriers to
Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} we have no share in the
Lord's blessings. {539 Worship-Ministry
Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
26"So we decided to build an altar so that
this would be not for offerings and sacri-
fices, 27but as a reminder to worship the
LORD at the tabernacle. {206 Guarding
Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} Then
your descendants wouldn't tell our descen-
dants that they have no right to worship
the LORD. {182 Geographical-Praying,
Matt. 6:6} {181 Future-Blessing Prayer,
Heb. 11:21} 28If our descendants ever ask

about this, we will simply explain that this altar is not for sacrifices but is a witness between us and you. [29]We are not rebelling against the LORD. This altar is a reminder that we are to worship the LORD only at the tabernacle." {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1}

[30]Phinehas and the leaders of the clans were pleased with what the tribal leaders of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh said. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [31]Phinehas told the men, "Now we know that the LORD is with us {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and that you have not rebelled against Him. In fact you have kept Israel safe from being destroyed by the LORD." {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

[32]Phinehas and the clan leaders went back to Canaan and told the Israelites about their meeting. [33]Everyone was glad and praised the LORD. So they said nothing more about fighting against the tribes of Reuben and Gad. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [34]Then the Reubenites and Gadites named the altar Witness (meaning "A Reminder to Us That the LORD Is God.") {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, rumors divide Your people and lead to fights. May I seek out the truth, and not listen to rumors. Lord, it's good to solve small problems before they become big problems. It's good to live peaceably with the other believers. Amen.

Joshua 23

Joshua Speaks to the Leaders of Israel

[1]Years later after Israel had peace with its neighbors {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} and Joshua was getting old, {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [2]he called a meeting of the elders, leaders, judges, and officials and said, "I am an old man now. [3]You have seen how the LORD has helped you defeat your enemies. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [4]As you know, I have given to each of your tribes land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. But you have not defeated some nations. [5]But the LORD your God will force them out and you will take over their land, as the LORD your God promised. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[6]"So be strong {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} and obey all the laws God gave Moses {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} without turning away from them. [7]Don't have anything to do with these nations that are still in the land. Don't pray to their gods, and don't make any promises using the names of their gods. Don't serve them and don't bow down to them. [8]Continue to cling to the LORD your God. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

[9]"God has forced out these powerful nations, with none being able to stand against you. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]Any one of you can cause a thousand enemy soldiers to run from you because the LORD your God fights for you as He promised. {480 Thanksgiving

for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 11So be very sure to keep on loving the LORD your God. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
12"If you join with the nations that are left in the land and you marry their sons and daughters, and are friends with them, 13then the LORD your God won't defeat those nations when you attack them. They will trip you up and they will be painful to you like whips on your back and thorns in your eyes. Then you will die here in the good land the LORD your God has given you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 14"I am about to die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} You know fully well that the LORD your God has kept all His promises. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 15Every promise He makes comes true. So also when you sin He will carry out His every threat of calamity until you are all destroyed. 16If you don't keep your agreement with the LORD your God and you serve and bow down to false gods, the LORD will be very angry with you and you will soon die in the good land He has given you." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I will separate myself from idols and evil. I will get rid of sin in my life. Amen.

Joshua 24

Joshua's Farewell Speech at Shechem

1Joshua called the tribes of Israel for a meeting at Shechem. He asked the elders, leaders, judges, and officials to meet with him and stand before the Lord. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2He said to them, "The LORD the God of Israel says 'Your ancestors including Terah, the father of Abraham and Nahor lived on the other side of the Euphrates River and worshiped false gods. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 3But I led Abraham to Canaan and gave him many descendants, including his son Isaac 4and Isaac's sons Jacob and Esau. Esau moved to the hill county of Mount Seir, and Jacob and his sons went to Egypt. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
5"Then I sent Moses and Aaron to help you. And I sent terrible disasters on the Egyptians, and I brought your ancestors out of Egypt. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 6Then when you got to the Red Sea, the Egyptians chased you in their chariots. 7Your ancestors prayed to Me for help, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and so I put a dark cloud between them and the Egyptians, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and I brought the sea down on them and drowned them. You saw all this. And then you lived in the desert a long time. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}
8"I brought you into the land of the Amorites east of the Jordan River. They fought against you, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} but I helped you destroy them all, and you took over their land. 9Balak king of Moab decided to fight against you, but first he asked Balaam, Beor's son, to come put a curse on you. 10But I didn't let Balaam curse you. Instead he blessed you several

times. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} And I rescued you from Balak.
11"After you crossed the Jordan River, you fought the people of Jericho, and also the Amorites, Perizzites, Canaanites, Hittites, Girgashites, Hivites, and Jebusites, and I helped you defeat them. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 12I sent hornets ahead of you to drive out the two Amorite kings; they didn't run because you fought with swords and bows and arrows. 13Also I gave you a land you didn't work for with cities you didn't build, and grapes from vineyards and olives from olive trees you didn't plant.'" {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
14Joshua continued "Now reverence the LORD and serve Him and be faithful. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} Get rid of idols your ancestors worshiped on the other side of the Euphrates River and in Egypt, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and serve the LORD. 15You may think it is difficult to serve the Lord, but you need to choose. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} Will you worship the gods your ancestors worshiped? Or do you want to worship the gods of the Amorites since you are living on their land? As for me and my family we will serve the LORD." {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}
16The people answered, "We would never stop worshiping the LORD and worship other gods. 17We know that the LORD our God Himself brought us out of slavery in Egypt by working great miracles. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Other nations were around us, but He protected us all the way. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 18He forced out the Amorites and other nations in the land. You said you will serve the LORD; we will too because He is our God." {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}
19Joshua said, "Are you sure you will serve the LORD? Remember that He is holy {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} and doesn't want you to worship anyone else. He doesn't readily forgive rebellion. 20So if you leave the LORD and serve foreign gods, He will turn against you {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and cause terrible disasters to come on you, even though He has been good to you."
21The people responded, "We promise that we will serve the LORD" {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}
22Joshua said, "Okay. This is your decision, as you yourselves have said." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} They replied "Yes, it is our decision." {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 23Then Joshua said, "Then get rid of every idol you have and give your hearts to the LORD, the God of Israel." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 24The people said, "Yes we will serve only the LORD our God and obey Him." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}
25Then Joshua made an agreement with the people at Shechem. 26He recorded God's laws and commands in the book of the law of God. Then he set up a large rock under the oak tree near the tabernacle. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 27"This rock," he said, "has heard what God has said to us. So if you turn from the LORD, this

rock will bear witness that you rejected Him." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[28]Joshua sent everyone back home. {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49}
[29]Then Joshua died at the age of 110. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [30]He was buried in the hill country of Ephraim at Timnath Serah, north of Mount Gaash. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}
[31]Israel served the LORD throughout the lifetime of Joshua and of other leaders {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} who were still living and had experienced what the LORD had done for Israel. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [32]The Israelites had brought Joseph's bones with them from Egypt {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} and buried them at Shechem in a field Jacob bought from Hamor, founder of Shechem. This field became part of the land given to Joseph's descendants, the tribes of Ephraim and Manasseh.
[33]Eleazar, Aaron's son, died {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and was buried at Gibeah in the hill country of the tribe of Ephraim.

Lord, I have decided to follow You wholly; I will not turn back. Lord, I will gaze into Your face totally; I will not look back. Lord, I will worship You with my whole heart; I will not draw back. Amen.

Judges

Ch 1: More Territory Captured 345
Ch 2: Weeping at Bokim 347
Ch 3: Local Groups Remain Unconquered 349
Ch 4: Deborah's Leadership 350
Ch 5: The Song of Deborah and Barak 352
Ch 6: God's Call to Gideon 353
Ch 7: God Defeats the Midianites 355
Ch 8: Gideon Pursues Zebah and Zalmunna 357
Ch 9: Deception of Abimelech 359
Ch 10: Tola and Jair 362
Ch 11: Jephthah 363
Ch 12: Jephthah Defeats Ephraim 365
Ch 13: Samson's Birth 366
Ch 14: Samson's First Wife 367
Ch 15: More Women Problems 368
Ch 16: Samson at Gaza 369
Ch 17: Micah's Idols 371
Ch 18: Micah and the Tribe of Dan 372
Ch 19: The Levite and His Concubine 373
Ch 20: Israelites Punish the Benjamites for Their Sin 375
Ch 21: Wives for the Benjamites 377

JUDGES

Key Word: *Delivered* (Judges 1:2)

Key Verse: "And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge" (2:18).

Theme: Another key verse in Judges is, "Every man did that which was right in his own eyes" (17:6; 21:25). As a result, there was disunity among the 12 tribes; no one completely followed the Lord, and no tribe completely conquered the territory assigned to them. There was apostasy among the priests, and rebellion and sin among the people.

We see in Judges seven cycles of failure where Israel sinned and worshiped the idols of nations around them. Each spiritual failure led to a military defeat and cultural failures. After each failure, God in His mercy raised up a judge to deliver Israel. Judges were much more than legal arbitrators as seen today; they were spiritual leaders who led in reforms, military leaders who fought, and prophets who spoke for God.

Judges teaches the natural tendency of people to selfish disobedience and sin, but it also shows how God uses human leaders to call His people to repent and return to Him for their prosperity and security. *Lord, I will not drift from You. Use me to call others back to obedience. Amen.*

Judges 1

More Territory Captured

1 After Joshua died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} the Israelites asked the
Lord, "Which tribe should attack the Canaanites first?" 2 The LORD
answered, "Judah; I'll help them take the land." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 3 The
men of Judah went to their relatives of the Simeon tribe, and said, "Come join us in fighting against the Canaanites in our territory. Then we will help you fight against them in your territory." So the troops from Simeon went to help Judah. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

4The LORD helped them defeat the
Canaanites and Perizzites, killing 10,000
men at Bezek. 5They fought against
Adoni-Bezek and defeated the Canaanites
and Perizzites. 6Adoni-Bezek escaped, but
the Israelites chased him and caught him
and cut off his thumbs and big toes. {268
Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 7Adoni-
Bezek admitted, "I cut off the thumbs and
big toes of 70 kings and made them pick
up scraps of food under my table. So now
God has paid me back for what I did." The
Israelites took him to Jerusalem, and he
died there. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps.
88:3}
8The army of Judah attacked Jerusalem,
killed everyone there, and burned it down.
{513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James
1:12} 9Then they fought the Canaanites
in the hill country, the Southern Desert,
and the foothills to the west. 10Then they
attacked the Canaanites in Hebron (for-
merly called Kiriath-Arba) and defeated
the forces of Sheshai, Ahiman, and Tal-
mai. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
11From Hebron the soldiers of Judah
attacked Debin (formerly called
Kiriath-Sepher). 12Caleb said, "Who-
ever captures Kiriath-Sepher can marry
my daughter Achsah." 13Othniel, Caleb's
nephew, captured the city, so Caleb gave
his daughter Achsah as Othniel's wife.
14She urged her husband to ask his Uncle
Caleb for a field. She went to see her
father, and as she was getting off her don-
key, he asked, "Is something wrong?" {23
Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 15She said, "You
gave me land in the Southern Desert, but I
need some land with springs of water." {52
Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}
So he gave her the upper springs and lower
springs.
16Descendants of Jethro, Moses' father-in-
law the Kenite, left Jericho to live with the
people of Judah in the Southern Desert
near Arad.
17Soldiers of Judah and Simeon together
attacked the Canaanite city of Zephath.
Because they destroyed the city com-
pletely, they renamed it Hormah (mean-
ing "Destruction"). {517 Victory-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:14} 18Then the men of Judah cap-
tured Gaza, Ashkelon, Ekron, and the land
around each town. 19The LORD helped
them defeat the people in the hill coun-
try, {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen.
39:2, 3, 21, 23} but they couldn't defeat
the people in the valleys, because they had
iron chariots. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa.
59:1, 2} 20The city of Hebron was given to
Caleb, as Moses had promised, and Caleb
defeated the descendants of the three sons
of Anak. 21The Benjamites could not cap-
ture Jerusalem, where the Jebusites lived.
{237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18}
22When the tribes of Ephraim and
Manasseh attacked Bethel (formerly called
Luz), the Lord helped them. {377 Pres-
ence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 23When
spies went to check on Bethel, 24they said
to a man coming out of the city, "Show
us some secret way into the city and we
will see that you and your family are safe."
25He showed them how to get in, and they
killed everyone in the city except the man
and his family. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
26The man then went to the land of the

Hittites, where he built a city and named it Luz.
[27]The tribe of West Manasseh could not force the Canaanites out of their towns of Beth-Shan, Taanach, Dor, Ibleam, and Megiddo and villages around them, because the Canaanites were determined to stay there. [28]So when the Israelites became more powerful, they made the Canaanites work for them as their slaves, but they could not force them out completely. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3} [29]Also the tribe of Ephraim couldn't force Canaanites out of Gezer, so the Canaanites continued to live there. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3} [30]And the Zebulun tribe couldn't force the Canaanites out of Kitron or Nahalol, so they too were made slaves. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3} [31]The Asher tribe could not drive out the Canaanites in Acco, Sidon, Ahlab, Achzib, Helbah, Aphek, or Rehob, [32]and so the people of Asher lived among the Canaanites. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3} [33]Also the Naphtali tribe could not force the Canaanites from Beth-Shemesh or Beth-Anath, and so the Naphtalites made them slaves, and the Naphtali tribe lived with Canaanites all around them. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3}
[34]The Amorites kept the tribe of Dan from going from the hill country to the valleys, {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} [35]and they were determined to stay on in Mount Heres, Aijalon, and Shaalbim. But later when the Ephraim and West Manasseh tribes grew stronger, they forced the Amorites to become slaves. [36]The boundary of the Amorites went from Scorpion Pass to Sela and continued upward from there.

Lord, just as Israel had to both defeat an enemy and take belongings of the land, so I must get victory over bad habits and establish good habits. But, some habits are hard to give up because they have "iron wheels." When Israel didn't win a complete victory, they later became slaves to those they didn't conquer. In the same way, when I don't get victory over a sin, it becomes my master. I want complete victory. Amen.

Judges 2

Weeping at Bokim

[1]The angel of the LORD went from Gilgal to Bokim and gave this message to the Israelites: "As I promised your ancestors, {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} when I brought you out of Egypt I said I would give them this land. I said, 'I will never break My agreement with you, [2]and you are not to make any agreements or peace treaties with the people in this land. You are to break down their altars.' {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [3]But you have disobeyed Me. Therefore I will not force out these nations. {324 Non-Answer to Prayer, Ps. 18:41} They will be painful like thorns in your sides, and their gods will trap you." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}
[4]Hearing this, the Israelites started crying, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [5]and they called the place Bokim (meaning

"People Who Cry"). So they offered sacrifices to the Lord.
6Joshua then sent the people on their way to take the land as each tribe's inheritance.
7The people served the LORD during Joshua's lifetime {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and during the lives of some elders who lived longer than he did, men who had seen the wonderful miracles God did for Israel. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 8Joshua died at the age of 110, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 9and he was buried in the hill country of Ephraim at Timnath Heres, north of Mount Gaash.
10After everyone in Joshua's generation died, the people of the next generation did not know the LORD or what He had done. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

Lord, I will teach those who come after me all the great things You have done for me. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} May those who come after me do all the things I've done for You: but may they do even better things in a better way. Amen.

11In fact they sinned against the LORD by worshiping the idols of Baal. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 12They rejected the LORD, the God of their ancestors, the one who had brought them out of Egypt. Their worshiping false gods {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} of the people around them angered the LORD, 13because in worshiping Baal and the Asherah idols they were rejecting Him.
14So in His anger He let other nations attack Israel and take their belongings. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} Their enemies easily defeated them, and Israel could not hold them off. 15Every time they went to fight an enemy, the LORD was against them, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} just as He said He would do. And now they were in great distress. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
16Then the LORD chose leaders called judges, who rescued the Israelites from their enemies. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 17But even then, they would not listen to their judges; instead they bowed down in worship to other gods. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} They were quick to reject the way of their ancestors, who obeyed the LORD. 18When the LORD chose a judge, He rescued the Israelites from their enemy, {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} because He felt sorry for them as they moaned under the pressure of their enemies. 19But when the judge died, the Israelites behaved even worse than their ancestors, as they served and worshiped other gods. {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} They stubbornly refused to stop worshiping idols.
20So in His anger the LORD said, {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} "Because this nation has broken the agreement I made with their ancestors, and don't obey Me, 21I will not force out of their land any of the nations still there when Joshua died. 22I will use them to test Israel {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} to see if they will obey Me as their ancestors did."
23That explains why the LORD let these

nations stay in the land, and didn't let Joshua force them all out.

Lord, I never like being spanked by You, but You do it when I sin and run away. I know You love me and care for me; that's why You spank me. I repent of my sin and come back to You; help me be obedient to You. Amen.

Judges 3

Local Groups Remain Unconquered

[1]The LORD left certain nations in the land to test those Israelites who had not been in the previous wars in Canaan. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [2]This was so this generation of Israelites would learn how to fight. [3]The nations included the five Philistine rulers, and the Canaanites, Sidonians, and Hivites in the hill country of Lebanon from Mount Baal-Hermon to Lebo-Hamath. [4]The LORD used these nations to test the Israelites to see if they would obey the commands He gave their ancestors through Moses. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

[5]All around the Israelites were the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. [6]So it's not surprising that the Israelites' young men married young women in these nations and that the Israelites' young women married young men in these nations, and that these nations influenced Israelites to worship their gods. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

[7]The Israelites sinned against the LORD by forgetting Him and worshiping images of Baal and Asherah poles. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [8]This so angered the LORD that He let Israel be defeated by Cushon Rishathaim, king of northern Syria. After being under his rule for eight years, [9]Israel asked the LORD for relief, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} and He gave them Othniel, Caleb's nephew, to rescue them. [10]The Spirit of the LORD controlled Othniel, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and he became Israel's judge and fought against Cushan Rishathaim {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and defeated him. [11]Israel then had peace until Othniel died 40 years later. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, You use all kinds of people in Your service; thank You for giving Achsah to make Othniel into the leader You could use. Thank You for the spouse You've given me; make me strong through my spouse. Amen.

[12]The Israelites again sinned against the LORD, and so He let Eglon, king of Moab, defeat them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [13]Together with the Ammonites and Amalekites, Eglon attacked Israel and captured Jericho. [14]Eglon was over Israel for 18 years. [15]Again Israel asked the LORD for help, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and He gave them Ehud, a left-handed man of the tribe of Benjamin. The Israelites sent Ehud to take their tax money to Eglon. [16]Ehud made a double-edged dagger about 18 inches long

and strapped it under his clothing on his right thigh.
17Ehud gave the taxes to Eglon, a very fat man. 18Ehud then told the men with him to leave. 19He went with them as far as the stone idols near Gilgal, and then he returned alone to Eglon. Ehud said to him, "I have a secret message for you." Eglon ordered his officials to leave the room. 20Then as Eglon was seated in the upper room of his summer palace, Ehud said, "My message for you is from God." 21When the king stood up, Ehud pulled out his dagger with his left hand and plunged it so far into Eglon's stomach 22that even the handle could not be seen. Leaving the dagger there, 23Ehud locked the doors and escaped by climbing through a window onto a porch.
24When the king's officials went back and found the doors locked; they said, "He is probably relieving himself." 25When the king didn't come out after a long time, they got a key, unlocked the doors, and found him dead on the floor. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
26By this time Ehud had escaped past the stone idols near Gilgal and had gone to the town of Seirah. 27Arriving in the hill country of Ephraim, he blew a call to arms on his trumpet, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} and some Israelites went with him down the hills. 28He said, "Come with me because God will help us defeat the Moabites." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} So they went with him and took control of the shallow places where people cross the Jordan. 29They killed about 10,000 Moabites, {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} all of them strong and brave soldiers. 30Moab was then under Israel's rule for 80 years. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
31Another judge, Shamgar, killed 600 Philistines with a sharp stake used to prod oxen. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, help me to learn the secret of victory as I struggle to win over sin. You reserve supernatural power for Yourself. This is something only You can do. You expect me to use my learned discipline which I must do. I yield my strength to You. Lord, win the battle through me, because "we are laborers together with God" (1 Cor. 3:9). Amen.

Judges 4
Deborah's Leadership

1After Ehud died, the Israelites again sinned against the LORD. 2So He let Jabin, a Canaanite king living in Hazor, conquer Israel. Sisera, his army commander, lived in Harosheth Haggoyim. 3Sisera had 900 iron chariots, and he made life miserable for the Israelites for 20 years. So the LORD's people pleaded to the Lord for help. {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7}
4Deborah, the wife of Lappidoth, was a prophetess, and she was leading Israel. 5She would settle Israel's legal cases while sitting under a palm tree between Ramah and Bethel in Ephraim's hill country. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 6One day she sent for Barak, son of Abinoam, who was in Kedesh in the tribe of Naphtali.

When he arrived, she said, "The LORD God of Israel is telling you to take 10,000 men from the tribes of Naphtali and Zebulun and lead them to Mount Tabor. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 7I will trick Sisera, Jabin's army commander, to go with his chariots and troops to the Kishon River, and God will help you defeat him." 8Barak said, "Okay. I'll go if you go with me." 9She replied, "All right, I will. But the honor of defeating Sisera will go to a woman, not you."{517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} So Deborah went with Barak to Kedesh, 10where Barak had gathered 10,000 men from Zebulun and Naphtali. And Deborah went too. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

11The Kenites were descendants of Hobab (also known as Jethro), Moses' father-in-law. Heber, a Kenite, had moved to live near the great oak tree in Zaanannim near Kedesh, where Deborah and Barak were going.

12When Sisera heard that Barak had gone up to Mount Tabor, 13Sisera went with his men and his 900 iron chariots from Harosheth Haggoyim to the Kishon River. 14Deborah told Barak, "It's time to attack Sisera. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} The Lord will help you defeat him." {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} So Barak led his 10,000 troops down the slopes of Mount Tabor. 15The Lord caused Sisera and all his charioteers to panic, and Sisera even jumped out of his chariot and ran. 16But Barak chased Sisera's charioteers and soldiers all the way to Harosheth Haggoyim. Every one of Sisera's soldiers was killed. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

17Sisera ran to the tent of Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenmite. Jabin, king of Hazor, and the Kenites were on good terms. 18Seeing Sisera, Jael went out to meet him. She said, "Come into my tent. Don't be afraid." So he went in, and she covered him with a blanket. 19He said, "May I have a drink of water? I'm thirsty." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} She gave him some milk and then covered him up again. 20He told her, "Stand at the door of your tent so that if anyone asks you if anyone is in the tent, tell them 'No.'"

21Sisera was very tired, so he soon went to sleep. Then Jael took a hammer and drove a tent peg through his head, and he died. 22As Barak was chasing Sisera, Jael went to meet him and said, "The man you are looking for is inside." He went in her tent and saw Sisera lying there with a tent peg through the temple of his head. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

23Jabin, the Canaanite king, was weakened by the Israelites, {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 24and Israel kept getting stronger against Jabin, until finally they destroyed him. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, You give us victory in many different ways and by different people. Teach me to trust the methods You use. You gave Israel a victory through Barak, Deborah the judge, and Jael a distant relative. You work Your mighty mysterious ways through little things

like a tent peg; teach me to trust the details of Your work. Amen.

Judges 5

The Song of Deborah and Barak

[1]Deborah and Barak sang this song: {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
[2]Praise the LORD. Israel's leaders took charge, and the people gladly followed. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
[3]Listen, kings and rulers, as I sing to the LORD, making music to the LORD, the God of Israel. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
[4]When You, LORD, came from Seir and marched across Edom, the earth shook, and the cloudy sky poured down rain. [5]Even Mount Sinai trembled in the presence of the LORD, the God of Israel. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[6]In the days of the judge Shamgar, son of Anath, and in the days of Jael, people avoided the main roads and used winding back roads. [7]People left their villages until I, Deborah, took command, protecting my people like a mother. [8]When Israel worshiped false gods, their city gates were attacked {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} and not even 40,000 soldiers had spears or shields to fight with. [9]But I praise the LORD for Israel's leaders and those who volunteered to serve in the army. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[10]You rich people who ride on white donkeys and sit on nice saddle blankets, and you poor people who have to walk, listen to [11]the singers at the wells, as they tell of the LORD's great victories through the villages. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
Then the Lord's people marched down to the city gates, [12]and said "Wake up, Deborah, and sing! {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} And get up, Barak, son of Ahinoam, and capture your enemies."
[13]The people who were left joined with their leaders and fought against mighty warriors. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [14]Soldiers came from Ephraim, where the Amalekites used to live. Others came from Benjamin. And captains came from Makir of the tribe of Manasseh and Zebulun. [15]The princes of Issachar were with Deborah and pushed with Barak into the valley. But the people of Reuben could not make up their minds. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [16]Why did you stay at home, around the campfires? Was it simply so you could hear the shepherds whistling for their flocks? You could not decide whether to join in battle against Israel's enemies. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [17]The people of Gilead stayed on the east side of the Jordan River, and Asher stayed with his ships at the Mediterranean shore.
[18]But the soldiers of Zebulun and Naphtali risked their lives on the battlefield. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}
[19]Canaanite kings fought us at Taanach near the Megiddo springs, but they could not defeat us and rob us of our silver. [20]It seemed as if even the stars fought against Sisera, [21]and the old Kishon River swept their soldiers away. So my soul, march on

and be strong. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [22]Sisera's horses ran off, their hoofs stamping the ground.

[23]The angel of the LORD said, "Put a curse on the town of Meroz because its people did not help the Lord fight His enemies." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [24]But Jael, Heber's wife, is to be honored above all women who live in tents. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [25]When Sisera asked her for water, she gave him curdled milk in an expensive bowl. [26]Then with a tent peg in her left hand and a worker's hammer in her right hand, [27]she crushed his head by piercing his temple. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He fell at her feet and lay dead.

[28]Sisera's mother looked out her latticed window, wondering why he hadn't returned from the battle. [29]Her wise women answered her, and she wept saying to herself, [30]"Apparently they are finding a lot of loot, capturing a woman or two for each man, and are bringing back beautifully embroidered garments for me.

[31]"LORD, may all Your enemies die as Sisera did. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} And may those who love You shine brightly like the sun." {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} Then Israel had peace for 40 years.

Lord, You used weak and unlikely people in the past. Do it again; use me. Amen.

Judges 6

God's Call to Gideon

[1]Again Israel sinned against the LORD, and so He let the Midianites oppose them. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [2]The Midianites were so cruel that many Israelites lived in rock crevices, caves, and dens in the mountains. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [3]Whenever the Israelites planted crops, the Midianites, Amalekites, and other nations attacked Israel. [4]They camped in the land and destroyed crops as far away as Gaza, and killed all of Israel's sheep, cattle, and donkeys. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} [5]They came with their own livestock and camels, and set up their tents as numerous as swarms of locusts. They ruined the land wherever they were. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} [6]The Israelites became so poor that they begged God to help them. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

[7-8]So the LORD sent them a prophet who said, "This is a message from the LORD. 'I rescued you from slavery in Egypt, {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [9]setting you free from the Egyptians. When nations here made life miserable for you, I forced them out and gave you their land. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]I told you I am the LORD your God and you are not to worship the Ammonite gods. But you did not obey Me.'" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[11]The angel of the LORD went to the town of Ophrah and sat down under the oak

tree that belonged to Joash, of the Abiezer clan of the West Manasseh tribe. His son Gideon was threshing wheat in a shallow winepress so the Midianites couldn't see him. 12The angel of the LORD appeared and said to Gideon, "The Lord is with you, mighty warrior." {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7}
13Gideon responded, "But if the Lord is with us, why have all these bad things happened to us? True, our fathers told us how the LORD performed miracles in bringing us out of Egypt. But now the LORD has forgotten us, and the Midianites are treating us terribly." {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
14The LORD said, "Gideon, you are strong and you can rescue Israel {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} therefore I am sending you to do it." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 15Gideon replied, "But how can I rescue the nation? My clan is the weakest in Manasseh, and I am the least in my entire family." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 16The LORD said, "I will be with you, and you will destroy the Midianites as easily as if they were only one man." {241 Inner-Assurance Praying, 1 John 5:10}
17Gideon said, "So that I will know that I please You and that You really are speaking to me, please do a miracle to prove it. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 18Wait here while I go get an offering to bring to You." {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} The Lord said, "Go ahead. I'll wait." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
19Gideon hurried home, killed and cooked a young goat and made bread without yeast. He put the cooked meat in a basket and poured the broth into a pot. Then he put the meat, broth, and bread under his father's oak tree. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11}
20The angel of the LORD said, "Put the meat and bread on this rock, and pour the broth over them." When Gideon did this, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 21the angel touched the meat and bread with a stick, and fire immediately burned up the meat and bread. Then the angel disappeared. 22Realizing he had actually seen the angel of the LORD, Gideon said, "Oh Sovereign LORD. I have seen the angel of the LORD face to face." {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} 23But the Lord said, "Everything is okay. Don't be afraid. You won't die." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 24So Gideon built an altar {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and called it "The Lord Is Peace." That altar is still there outside the town of Ophrah.
25That night the LORD spoke again to Gideon, and said, "Your father has an altar to Baal and an Asherah pole near it. Destroy these, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 26and build an altar to Me, the LORD your God, on the top of this hill. Using the wood of the Asherah pole, build a fire and offer a bull from your father's herd as a burnt offering to Me." {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 27Then Gideon took 10 of his servants to help him tear down the Baal altar and Asherah pole. He did this at night because he was afraid that if his family and men of the town found out he did it, they would kill him. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[28]In the morning people saw the Baal altar destroyed and the Asherah pole cut down and the remains of a bull sacrificed on a new altar. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [29]Wondering who did this, {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} they discovered that Gideon, Joash's son, did. [30]So the men of the town ordered Joash to bring out his son. They said he must die because he had broken the Baal altar and cut down the Asherah pole. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}
[31]Joash told the crowd, "Why are you trying to defend Baal? If he needs your help, then you are the ones to die. If he really is a god, he can defend himself." [32]From then on people called Gideon Jerub-Baal (meaning "Let Baal Take Revenge") because they said, "Let Baal take care of himself." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}
[33]All the Midianites, Amalekites, and other nations camped together in the Jezreel Valley. [34]The Spirit of the LORD came on Gideon, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and he blew a trumpet as a signal for the men of his clan, the Abiezrites, to follow him. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [35]He sent messengers to the tribes of Manasseh, Asher, Zebulun, and Nephatali, urging them to send their soldiers to join his army. So they did. {89 Convergence-Faith Praying, 1 Cor. 13:2}
[36]Then Gideon said, "If You will help me rescue Israel as You promised, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} then prove it to me in this way: [37]Tonight I will place some wool on the threshing floor. If dew in the morning is on the wool but the ground around it is dry, I will know You will help me." [38]That is exactly what happened. Rising early in the morning, Gideon squeezed enough water out of the wool to fill a bowl. {169 Fleece-Prayer, Judg. 6:36-40}
[39]Then Gideon said, "Don't be angry with me. But I have one more request. This time let the wool be dry and the ground around it covered with dew." {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [40]That night God kept the wool dry and covered the ground around it with dew. {169 Fleece-Prayer, Judg. 6:36-40}

Lord, forgive me when I doubt as Gideon did. It's so easy to doubt when I get my eyes off You. Lord, I'll keep my spiritual eyes on You; I'll follow when You lead, I'll go where You want me to go. Amen.

Judges 7

God Defeats the Midianites

[1]The next morning Jerub-Baal (that is, Gideon) and his men camped at the Harod Spring. The Midianites were camped north of them in the valley near the Moreh Hill. [2]The Lord told Gideon, "You have too many soldiers. If you keep them all, the Israelites may boast that they won the battle all by themselves. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [3]So tell the soldiers that if anyone is afraid, he can leave and go home." So 22,000 men went home, which left 10,000 with Gideon. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

[4]Then the LORD told Gideon he still had too many soldiers. "Take them down to the spring, and I will tell you which ones can go with you and which ones should go home." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [5]When Gideon took his army to the spring, the LORD said, "Some men will lap water like a dog, and others will kneel down to drink." [6]Three hundred men lapped water with their hands, and all the others knelt down to drink. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [7]The LORD said, "The 300 who lapped water from their hands will rescue you from the Midianites. You may send the others home." [8]So Gideon sent home all but the 300 {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} who kept with them the food and trumpets of the others. The Midianites were camped in the valley below Gideon's army. [9]In the night the LORD told Gideon, "Get up and attack the Midianites because I will give you victory over them. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]But if you are afraid, go down to their camp with your servant Purah {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [11]and listen to what they are saying. This will encourage you." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} So he and Purah sneaked down to the edge of their camp. [12]Their camp had so many people they were like a thick swarm of locusts. And their camels seemed more numerous than the grains of sand on the seashore. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

[13]Gideon heard a soldier telling a friend about his dream. "In my dream a loaf of barley bread tumbled into our camp. And it hit a tent with such force that the tent fell over." {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} [14]His friend said, "Your dream means that Gideon, Joash's son, will come and defeat us all." {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

[15]When Gideon heard this, he worshiped the Lord. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Going back to his camp, he shouted, "Get up! The Lord will help us defeat the Midianites." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [16]He divided his army into three groups of 100 men each, and gave each man a trumpet and a clay jar with a burning torch in it. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [17]Then he told them, "When we get close to their camp, follow what I do. [18]When I and those who are with me blow our trumpets, {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} you blow yours and shout, 'We fight for the LORD and for Gideon.'" {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

[19]Gideon and the 100 men with him got to the edge of the Midianite camp a little after 10 p.m., just as the guards had changed. Gideon and his 100 men blew their trumpets and broke their jars. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [20]And the men in the other two groups of 100 each did the same. With the torches in their left hands and holding their trumpets in their right hands, they all shouted, "We fight with a sword for the LORD and for Gideon." [21]The enemy soldiers awakened in a panic and started running away. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[22]When Gideon's 300 blew their trumpets again, the Lord caused the enemy troops to start fighting each other with their swords.

They ran to Beth-Shittah toward Zererah to the border of Abel Meholah near Tabbath. [23]Israelite soldiers from Naphtali, Asher, and both halves of the Manasseh tribe charged the Midianites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [24]Gideon also sent messengers to the men in the hill country of Ephraim, asking them to fight the Midianites {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} and to put guards at every low spot of the Jordan River as far as Beth-Barah to keep the Midianites from crossing the river. Troops from Ephraim did exactly as Gideon asked of them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [25]The Ephraim troops even captured Oreb and Zeeb, two Midianite leaders. They killed Oreb at the Oreb Rock and Zeeb at the Zeeb Winepress. The Ephraim troops took the heads of Oreb and Zeeb to Gideon. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

Lord, I trust You to give me victory over the enemy even when I don't know how it'll come. I'll trust You to use "broken vessels," lamps, and trumpets. Use everything I have. Use me in Your service. Amen.

Judges 8

Gideon Pursues Zebah and Zalmunna

[1]However, the Ephraimites were very upset with Gideon. They criticized him, saying, "When you went to fight Midian, why didn't you ask us to help?" [2-3]Gideon answered, "You were able to do more than I did. You captured and beheaded Oreb and Zeeb. Even the small, leftover grapes of your tribe are far better than the full grape harvest of my clan of Abiezer." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} This clever answer calmed down the Ephraimites. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8}

[4]Gideon and his 300 men pursued the Midianites to the Jordan River and crossed it. [5]Tired from the pursuit, {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} they asked the men of Succoth for some bread. They said, "We are tired out, but we need to keep after Zebah and Zalmunna, the kings of Midian." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [6]The town leaders of Succoth said, "Why should we feed your troops? Maybe you haven't captured Zebah and Zalmunna. Catch them first and then we will feed you." [7]Gideon replied, "Because of your response, after we catch Zebah and Zalmunna, I will return and rip open your flesh with thorns and briers." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[8]Leaving Succoth, Gideon and his men went to Penuel and asked the leaders there for some food. But they answered the same way as the Succoth leaders. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [9]So Gideon said, "After I defeat these two Midianite kings, I will come back and tear down your tower." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[10]Zebah and Zalmunna were in Karkor, east of the Dead Sea, with only 15,000 men of their original army of 135,000. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [11]Gideon went along the route of the

nomads east of Nobah and Jogbehah and launched a surprise attack against the army. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 12Zebah and Zalmunna fled, but Gideon captured them and all their soldiers. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 13On his return home, as Gideon went through the Pass of Heres, {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 14he caught a young man from Succoth and asked him to write down for him the names of Succoth's 77 town leaders. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 15Gideon then went to the town officials and said, "You questioned whether I already had captured Zeba and Zalmunna. Well, here they are, and you refused to give my soldiers food." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 16Gideon then used thorns and briers to kill the 77 town officials. 17Then he went to Penuel and tore down the town's tower and killed all the men there. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} 18Then Gideon asked Zeba and Zalmunna, "What were the men like whom you killed at Tabor?" they said, "They were like you; they all looked like sons of a king." 19Gideon replied, "Those were my very own brothers. The Lord knows that if you had not killed them, I would let you live." {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} 20Gideon told Jether, his oldest son, to kill Zeba and Zalmunna. But Jether was young and was afraid to pull out his sword and kill them. 21Zeba and Zalmunna told Gideon, "Do it yourself. Don't ask a boy to kill two men." So Gideon killed them and took the fancy gold ornaments off their camel's necks. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 22The Israelites said to Gideon, "Be our king. Then your son and grandson can follow you as our king." {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 23Gideon responded, "No, I won't be your king. And my son won't either. The Lord is your king. {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} 24But I have one request. Give me the earrings you took from our enemy." The custom of the Ishmaelites was to wear gold earrings. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 25They gladly gave him the earrings. They spread out a garment and each man tossed down a ring. 26Together these rings weighed over 40 pounds. Also there was gold from the camel's ornaments and from jewelry worn by the Midianite kings. He also took the kings purple robes. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 27He made the gold into priestly vests and placed it in Ophrah. But the Israelites, including even Gideon and his family, started worshiping it. {280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17} 28Midian was never able to oppose Israel again. And the land enjoyed peace for 40 years. 29Gideon returned home, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 30 and had many wives and 70 sons. 31He also had a concubine in Shechem, who had a son he named Abimelech. 32Gideon grew to be an old man. He was buried in the tomb of his father Joash in Ophrah.

33Soon after Gideon died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Israel again worshiped Baal idols, with Baal-Berith as their main God. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 34Again they forgot the LORD their

God, who had rescued them from their many enemies. [35]Also they were ungrateful to Gideon's family for all that Gideon had done for them. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, teach me to be as wise as Gideon, to emphasize what others did and minimize what I do. Help me always to do right and never be afraid of reprisals. Life is serious and sin has consequences. Teach me to be thorough in separating myself from sin. Amen.

Judges 9

Deception of Abimelech

[1]One day Gideon's son Abimelech went to Shechem and said to his brothers and others in his mother's family, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [2]"Ask the people of Shechem whether it is better to have all 70 of Abimelech's half brothers rule over you or just Abimelech himself, who is related to you." {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [3]The citizens of Shechem liked the idea of their relative Abimelech being their king. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [4]Then they gave him 70 pieces of silver from the temple of Baal-Berith, and with that money Abimelech hired some rascals who followed him. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8}

[5]Abimelech went to his father's home, in Ophrah and murdered all 70 of his half-brothers except one. That was Jotham, Gideon's youngest son, who escaped by hiding. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [6]Then all the citizens of Shechem and Beth-Millo met beside the oak tree by the sacred pillar in Shechem and crowned Abimelech king.

[7]Jotham, Gideon's youngest of his 70 sons, heard about this. So he climbed to the top of Mount Gerizim and shouted, "You citizens of Shechem, listen to me if you want God to listen to you. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14} [8]One time the trees asked an olive tree to be their king. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [9]But the olive tree said, 'No, I won't stop producing olive oil, just so I can wave branches over the other trees.' {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [10]Then the trees asked the fig tree to be their king. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [11]But the fig tree refused. He didn't want to give up producing figs just to wave his branches over the other trees. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [12]Then the trees asked the vine to be their king. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [13]But the vine refused to give up its grapes for wine just to wave his branches over the other trees. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [14]Then the trees asked a thornbush to be their king. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [15]The thornbush said to the trees, 'If you really want me to be your king, come enjoy my shade. But if not, then may fire come out of me and burn up the cedars of Lebanon.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[16-17]"Have you done the right thing in making Abimelech your king? {424

Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} Is this fair to my father who risked his life for you to rescue you from the Midianites? 18Actually you have turned against my father by murdering 69 of his 70 sons and making Abimelech your king. 19If you have done the right thing toward Gideon, then perhaps all of you and Abimelech will be happy. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 20But if what you did was wrong, then may Abimelech send fire to burn up all of you, and may you send fire to burn up Abimelech." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 21Then Jotham escaped and lived in Beer, where he was afraid of Abimelech. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

22After Abimelech had ruled for three years, {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 23God sent a demon to stir up trouble between Abimelech and the Shechem citizens, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 24and to punish the people of Shechem for killing Gideon's sons. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 25The citizens put some men up on hilltops to watch for and ambush Abimelech, and to rob passersby. Abimelech heard what they were doing. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}

26Gaal, son of Ebed, moved to Shechem, and the town's citizens trusted him. {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 27At the time of the grape harvest the people picked the grapes and then walked on them in their winepresses to make wine. Then they held a festival in the temple of their god. While eating and drinking, they started cursing Abimelech. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 28Gaal said, "Why is Abimelech your king? He's not a true Shechemite. He is a son of Gideon, and Zebul is his deputy. Hamor was the founder of Shechem, so we should follow his descendants, not Abimelech. {67 Church-Boss Rejection Prayer, 3 John 9} 29If I was the ruler of Shechem, I would get rid of Abimelech. I would tell him to call out his enemy, and I would easily defeat them all." {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}

30This made Zebul, Abimelech's deputy, and the city's mayor, very angry. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} 31So Zebul sent messengers to Shechem to tell Abimelech, "Gaal is persuading the people to make him king. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 32So here's what I suggest: Have your men hide in the fields at night. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} 33Then at sunrise, have them attack the town. When Gaal and his men come to fight you, you will defeat them." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

34So Abimelech and his troops were hiding at night near Shechem in four companies. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 35Gaal went to the city gate as Abimelech and his men were coming out of their hiding places. 36Gaal said to Zebul, "People are coming down from the mountaintops." Zebul answered, "You are just seeing shadows." 37Gaal said, "No, look. People are coming from the mountaintops, and some are coming along the road by the tree where some men try to predict the future." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

[38]Zebul said to Gaal, "Now why are you bragging? Why did you say we shouldn't have Abimelech as our king? Why don't you go fight this army you made fun of?" [39]So Gaal and the citizens of Shechem fought Abimelech {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [40]Abimelech chased Gaal and his men, and many of them fell wounded. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} [41]Then Abimelech stayed in Arumah, and Zebul forced Gaal and his brothers out of Shechem. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10}

[42]The next day the people of Shechem were getting ready to go fight in the fields. When Abimelech heard of this, [43]he divided his men into three groups to set up an ambush. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} When he saw the men coming out of town, he attacked and fought them. [44]He and the men with him rushed to the city gate, and the two other companies rushed on some of the Shechemites and killed them. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [45]All day long Abimelech kept attacking the city. Finally he captured it and killed everyone in it. Then he and his men demolished the city and scattered salt all over it. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[46]Some of the Shechemite citizens who were in the town's tower went to hide in the nearby temple of their false god El-Berith. [47]When Abimelech heard of this, [48]he went to Mount Zalmon and cut off some tree branches and put them on his shoulders. He told the men with him to do the same thing he had done. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [49]So they did. Then they piled the branches against the temple and set them on fire. About 1,000 people died there. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}

[50]Next Abimelech went to Thebez and captured it. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [51]But everyone in town hid in the tall tower in the city, locking themselves in and climbing up on the roof. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [52]Abimelech rushed to the tower, but as he approached its gate to set it on fire, [53]a woman dropped a heavy millstone on his head and cracked his skull. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[54]Abimelech told his armor-bearer, "Draw your sword and kill me. I don't want anyone to know a woman killed me." So his servant jabbed Abimelech's sword into him, and he died. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} [55]When the Israelites saw that Abimelech was dead, they went home. [56]In this way God got even with Abimelech for murdering Gideon's many sons. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [57]Also God punished Shechem for helping Abimelech. Thus the curse by Jotham, Gideon's son, came true. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, You include the evil done by men in Your book to show us that You use evil to punish evil. I will live righteously. Amen.

Judges 10

Tola and Jair

[1]After Abimelech died, Israel's next judge was Tola. Though he was from the Issachar tribe, he lived in Shamir in Ephraim's hill country. His father was Puah, and his grandfather was Dodo. [2]After leading Israel for 23 years, he died and was buried in Shamir. {379 Prevailing-Prayer, Jer. 12:1}

[3]Israel's next leader was Jair, from Gilead. He was judge for 23 years, [4]and had 30 sons, each of whom had his own donkey and owned a town in Gilead. These 30 towns are still called Havvoth-Jair (meaning "The Towns of Jair") [5]When Jair died, he was buried in Kamon in Gilead. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6}

[6]Once again the Israelites sinned against the LORD. They worshiped not only Baal and the Astareths but also the gods of Syria, Sidon, Moab, Ammon, and Philistia. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} They completely turned from the LORD and did not serve Him at all. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [7-8]So He became very angry with them, and He let the Philistines and Ammonites torment them. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} For 18 years they were cruel to the Israelites in Gilead, east of the Jordan River in the land that used to belong to the Amorites. [9]The Ammonites also crossed the Jordan and attacked the people of Judah, Benjamin, and Ephraim. The Israelites were in a terrible situation, {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} [10]so they prayed for the LORD to help them. They admitted, "We have sinned against You by turning from You and worshiping the Baal idols." {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

[11]The LORD replied, "When you asked Me for help in the past, I rescued you numerous times, from the Egyptians, Amorites, Ammonites, Philistines, [12]Gideonites, Amalekites, and Maonites. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [13]Yet you continue to turn from Me and worship other gods. So I won't rescue you anymore. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} [14]Go ask these gods you've chosen to save you from your trouble." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

[15]Again the Israelites admitted, "We have sinned. So punish us in whatever way You think best. But please rescue us from our enemies." {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [16]Then the Israelites got rid of the idols and worshiped only the LORD. And He felt bad about all their misery. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[17]Meanwhile the Ammonite soldiers had camped in Gilead, and the Israelites were camped at Mizpah. [18]Seeing that war was about to break out, the leaders in Gilead were concerned about the threat of the Ammonites. So they said, "If someone offers to lead an attack against the Ammonites, we will make him our king." {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1}

Lord, thank You for recognizing real repentance in the past. It means You will recognize my repentance when I cry to You. Amen.

Judges 11

Jephthah

[1]Jephthah was known as a great soldier
in Gilead. His mother was a prostitute,
[2]and his father, whose name was Gilead,
had several sons by his legitimate wife.
These half brothers made him leave Gil-
ead because, as they said, "As the son of a
prostitute, you can't have any of our fam-
ily property." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa.
43:2, 3} [3]So Jephthah went to live in Tob,
an area north of Gilead. A number of reb-
els there began following him.
[4]Later when the Ammonites attacked
Israel, [5]the Gilead leaders asked Jephthah
to come back to Gilead [6]and lead their
army against the Ammonites. {269 Jus-
tice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [7]Jephthah said,
"How do I know I can trust you? You
made me leave my family, so why do you
want my help now?" {172 Forgetting
the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} [8]The Gil-
ead elders said, "But we need you now. If
you defeat the Ammonites, we will make
you our king." {242 Inner-Desires Prayer,
Eph. 4:22 ff.} [9]Jephthah answered, "If the
LORD gives me victory over the Ammo-
nites, will you really make me your king?"
{269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [10]The leaders
said, "The LORD is our witness that we
will do what we say."
[11]So Jephthah went back to Mizpah,
where the leaders made him commander
in chief and ruler, and he repeated before
the LORD his commitment to them. {377
Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [12]Then
Jephthah sent messengers to the Ammo-
nite king, asking him why he was attacking
Israel. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [13]The
king answered that the Israelites had taken
their land from them when the Israelites
had come out of Egypt. "This land," he
said, "belongs to us, all the way from the
Arnon River in the south to the Jabbok
River in the north and west to the Jordan
River. So give us back this land and there
won't be any war." {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts
27:25}
[14]Jephthah sent his messengers back to
the Ammonite king [15]with these words:
"Israel did not take any land from Moab or
Ammon. [16]When the Israelites came out of
Egypt, they crossed the Red Sea and then
arrived at Kadesh. {47 Blessing-Prayer,
Gen. 49:28, KJV} [17]Then they sent mes-
sengers to the king of Edom asking per-
mission to go through his country. But he
refused. Then they asked the king of Moab
the same thing, and he too refused. So the
Israelites stayed at Kadesh.
[18]"Later they went east of Edom and
Moab and camped on the other side of the
Arnon River Gorge. So they never entered
the land of Moab. [19]Then Israel sent mes-
sengers to Sihon, the Amorite king in Hes-
hbon, asking permission for our people
to go through his country. {51 Blocked-
Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7} [20]Sihon didn't trust
Israel, so from Jahaz his army attacked the
Israelites. [21]But the LORD, the God of
Israel, helped Israel defeat Sihon and his
army. [22]Israel then took over all the land
from the Arnon River to the Jabbok River,
and from the desert to the Jordan River.
{409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
[23]"So the LORD, the God of Israel, helped
us get rid of the Amorites. So why should

we give it back to you? {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [24]You keep whatever land your god Chemosh gives you. So we will keep whatever land the LORD our God has given us. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [25]Are you better than King Balak of Moab? He didn't quarrel with us about land or try to start a war. [26]So here you are trying to get back the land where Israelites have been living for 300 years in Heshbon and Aroer and surrounding villages, and along the Arnon River. If the land is really yours, why have you waited till {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} now to say so? [27]We haven't done anything wrong against you, but you are weary in trying to start a war. The LORD, the judge, will show which of us is right." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

[28]The king of Ammon paid no attention to Jephthah's message. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [29]Then the Spirit of the LORD controlled Jephthah, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and he crossed Gilead and East Manasseh and went past Mizpah in Gilead and attacked the Ammonite army. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [30]He said to the Lord, "If You help me defeat the Ammonites, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} whatever first comes out of my house [31]when I return home in peace, I will sacrifice to You." {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [32]When Jephthah fought the Ammonites, the Lord gave him victory. [33]He destroyed 20 towns between Aroer and Minnith, all the way to Abel-Keramim. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[34]When Jephthah returned home to Mizpah, the first one to come out of his house to greet him was his daughter, his only child, who was playing a tambourine and dancing. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [35]When he saw her he tore his clothes in grief and said, "Oh, my daughter! I am terribly miserable because I made a promise to the Lord that I must keep." {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [36]She said, "Father, you must do whatever you promised to the LORD, because He has given you victory over the Ammonites. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [37]But first let me go roam in the hills and cry with my girlfriends for two months because I will never get married." {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [38]"Yes," he said, "You may have two months." So she and some girlfriends wandered in the hills for two months, crying because she could never have children. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [39]Then she returned home, and did what he had promised to the Lord. Then it became a custom in Israel {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [40]that every year young girls would go away for four days to remember what happened to Jephthah's daughter.

Lord, You include these difficult passages in Scripture because they reflect the difficult decisions Your servants had to make. You're not as concerned with our physical birth as You are with our spiritual birth. Thank You

that I've been born again. Lord, You're not as concerned about our past just as You were not concerned about Jephthah's past. You are concerned about our future so I dedicate my future to You. Lord, You make me what I am today; I will use all I have for Your glory. Amen.

Judges 12

Jephthah Defeats Ephraim

[1]The men of the Ephraim tribe got their armed forces together and went across the Jordan River to Zaphon to meet with Jephthah. They asked him, "Why didn't you ask us to help you fight against the Ammonites? Since you didn't, we are going to burn down your house with you in it." [2]Jephthah responded, "But I did ask for your help against the Ammonites, and you wouldn't lift a finger to help. [3]So we risked our lives and attacked the Ammonites, and the Lord helped us defeat them. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} So why are you coming now to fight me?"

[4]The men of Ephraim said, "You people of Gilead are nothing more than refugees from Ephraim. You lived on land that belongs to us and Manasseh." [5]Hearing this, Jephthah called together his soldiers and attacked Ephraim's army. The Gileadites then posted guards where soldiers from Ephraim would try to cross the Jordan to get back home. The guards would say to each soldier, "Are you from Ephraim?" If they said, "No," [6]the guards would demand that he say "Shibboleth" that is because the people could not pronounce the "sh" sound, so they would say "Sibboleth." Then the guards would kill him right there. A total of 42,000 Ephraimites died there that way. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[7]Jephthah led Israel for six years. After he died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} he was buried in a town in Gilead.

[8]The judge after Jephthah was Ibzan, who lived in Bethlehem. [9]He had 30 sons and 30 daughters, and he let them all marry outside his clan. After leading Israel for seven years, [10]he died and was buried in Bethlehem. [11]After Ibzan, Elon from the Zebulun tribe led Israel for 10 years. [12]After he died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} he was buried in Aijalon in Zebulun. [13]The next leader was Abdon, son of Hillel from Pirathon. [14]He had 40 sons and 30 grandsons, each one riding on his own donkey. [15]After Abdon led Israel for eight years, he died {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and was buried in his hometown in the hill country of Ephraim, where the Amalekites used to live.

Lord, You used weak and unlikely people in the past. Do it again, use me. Lord, it's so easy for believers to get bitter with one another, and then to argue and fight. Help me be understanding of others. Teach me that arguing and fighting may lead to bloodshed. May I be a person of peace. Amen.

Judges 13

Samson's Birth

[1]Again the Israelites sinned against the LORD, and so he let the Philistines control Israel for 40 years. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} [2-3]One day the angel of the LORD appeared {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} to the wife of Manoah of the tribe of Dan who lived in Zorah and who was unable to have children. The angel said, "You have never been able to have children, but soon you will be pregnant and have a son. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} [4]Don't drink any wine or beer or eat any food not allowed by God's laws. [5]Your son's hair must never be cut, because he will be a Nazarite, {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} as a special servant of God. And he will begin to free Israel from the Philistines. "

[6]She ran to tell her husband the news. She said, "A man of God who looked like the angel of the Lord {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} appeared to me. I didn't ask where he is from, and he didn't tell me his name. [7]But he said I would get pregnant and have a baby boy. He said I'm not to drink any wine or beer or eat any food forbidden by God's laws. He said the boy will be a Nazarite, as a special servant of God all his life." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [8]Then Manoah prayed, "LORD, please let the man of God come back and tell me more about the child we will have."

[9]The angel of God appeared again to Manoah's wife as she was in the field alone. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [10]She ran to find her husband and told him, "The same man is here again." {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [11]Manoah went back with his wife and asked, "Are you the one who spoke to my wife the other day?" He replied, "Yes, I am." [12]Manoah asked, "Do you have any further word about our future son's life and work?" {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [13]The angel of the LORD answered, "Be sure your wife follows the instructions I gave her. [14]She must not eat grapes or raisins or drink wine or beer, or eat anything forbidden in God's law." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[15]Manoah said, "Please stay here awhile until we get you something to eat." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [16]The angel said, "I won't eat anything but you could offer a goat as a sacrifice to the LORD. (Of course Manoah didn't realize he was talking to the angel of the LORD.) {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [17]Manoah then said, "What is your name, because when the baby is born, we will want to honor you." [18]The angel replied, "My name is secret." {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}

[19]Then Manoah offered to the LORD a young goat and a grain offering on a rock. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} Then the Lord did an amazing thing. [20]As the flames blazed up from the altar, the angel ascended in the fire. When Manoah and his wife saw this, they bowed down to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [21]They never saw the angel again, but they realized he was the angel

of the LORD. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} 22Manoah was concerned, for he said, "We will die because we have seen God." 23Manoah's wife said, "No, I don't think the LORD will kill us. If He was going to kill us, He wouldn't have accepted our offerings and appeared to us and given us this wonderful news about our having a son." {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
24Later when Manoah's wife had a son, they named him Samson. The LORD blessed him as he grew up. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 25Then the Spirit of the LORD began to control him {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} when he was staying in Mahaneh-Dan between the towns of Zorah and Eshtaol.

Lord, may I follow You as carefully as the Nazarites mentioned in Scripture. I will abstain from alcohol, unclean activities, and unwholesome things. Thank You for the Holy Spirit that works in your children to prepare them for Your service. Thank You for preparing me to serve You. Amen.

Judges 14

Samson's First Wife

1One day Samson went to Timnah and there he saw a young Philistine woman. 2When he got home, he told his parents he wanted to marry her. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 3But they objected strongly, saying, "Why don't you marry an Israelite girl? Why get a wife from the pagan Philistines? You could choose from the many girls in our clan or even in all of Israel." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} Samson said to his father, "Please get her for me. She's the one for me."
4His parents didn't know that this was from the LORD, because through her He would set a trap for the Philistines, who were ruling Israel. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 5As Samson and his parents were going to Timnah, a lion attacked Samson in the vineyards near town. 6But the Spirit of the LORD came on Samson, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he tore the lion's jaws apart as if it were a young goat. But he didn't tell his parents about it. 7In Timnah he talked with the girl and still felt she was the one for him.
8Later when he went back to Timnah for the wedding, he left the road to look at the lion's carcass. He saw a swarm of bees had made some honey. 9He took some of the honey, ate some of it, and gave some to his parents. But he didn't tell them where he got it. {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1}
10His father was making final arrangements for the wedding, and Samson threw a big drinking party 11for 30 men in the village. 12Samson said to them, "Let me tell you a riddle. If you can solve it this week, I will give each of you a linen garment and a plain garment. 13But if you can't solve it, then you must give me 30 linen garments and 30 plain garments." They said, "Okay, let's hear it."
14Samson said, "Out of the eater came something to eat, and out of the

strong came something sweet." {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} Three days went by, and they still hadn't figured it out. [15]On the seventh day they said to his fiancée, "Get the answer to this riddle from Samson, or we will burn down your father's house with you in it. Did you invite us here to make us poor by giving all our clothes to Samson?"

[16]So she went to Samson and cried, "You must hate me. Because if you loved me, you would tell me the answer to your riddle." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} Samson replied, "But I haven't even told my parents, so why should I tell you?" [17]She cried all week to try to get the answer from Samson. On the seventh day he finally gave in and told her the answer. Then she gave the answer to the 30 young men. [18]Before sunset on the seventh day they went to Samson and gave the answer: "What is sweeter than honey? What is stronger than a lion?" Samson replied, "If you hadn't plowed with my heifer (that is, if you hadn't persuaded my fiancée), you wouldn't have found out the answer to my riddle." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

[19]The Spirit of the LORD controlled Samson, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he went to the Philistine town of Ashkelon, about 10 miles west. There he killed 30 men, took their clothing, and gave it to the 30 men at Timnah. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} In anger he left his bride-to-be and went home to live with his parents. [20]Then she married one of Samson's wedding attendants.

Lord, outward anger comes from lack of inward self-control. This is a strange mixture of outward "righteous indignation" and fleshly desires. Just as You used Samson who was not perfect, use me; I am not perfect. Amen.

Judges 15

More Women Problems

[1]Later during the wheat harvest Samson took a young goat as a gift to the girl he thought was still his fiancée. He wanted to go into her bedroom, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} but her father said, "You can't do that. [2]I thought you no longer loved her, so I gave her as the wife of one of your wedding attendants. But her sister is prettier than she is. So why not marry her instead?" [3]Samson said, "I now have a right to get even with the Philistines."

[4]So he caught 300 foxes and tied together tails of every two foxes with a torch between each pair. [5]He lit the torches and let the foxes run in the fields of the Philistines, burning both the standing wheat and the stacks of cut wheat, and destroying the olive trees. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [6]When the Philistines asked who did this, someone told them Samson did it because his fiancée's father had given her to another man. So the Philistines went to Timnah, got the woman and her father, and burned them to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

7When Samson heard what they did, he said, "I will get even with you." 8So after he killed many Philistines, he went to live in a cave at Etam Rock, a few miles southwest of Bethlehem. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9Then the Philistines set up camp in Judah and raided the town of Lehi. 10The people of Judah asked them, "Why have you attacked us?" The Philistines said, "We have come to capture Samson and to do to him what he did to some of our people."

11A group of 3,000 men from Judah went to the cave where Samson was and said to him, "Don't you realize the Philistines rule over us? What are you doing to us?" He replied, "I was only getting even with them. I was doing to them what they had done to me." 12The men of Judah said, "Because you have endangered our lives by what you have done, we are turning you over to the Philistines." "Okay. But promise me you won't kill me." 13"No," they said. "We won't." So they tied him up with two new ropes and led him off.

14As Samson arrived at Lehi, the Philistines shouted with joy that he was captured. But the Spirit of the LORD controlled Samson, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he snapped off the ropes on him like they were burnt pieces of cloth. 15Seeing a donkey's jawbone on the ground, Samson picked it up and used it to kill 1,000 Philistines. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 16He then said, "Using a donkey's jawbone I stacked up bodies in one pile after another. With a donkey's jawbone, I killed a thousand men." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 17Then he tossed the jawbone away and called the place Ramath Lehi (meaning "Jawbone Hill").

18He was so thirsty that he prayed, "LORD, You helped me defeat this enemy. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} Now please don't let me die of thirst {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} and be at the mercy of these pagans." 19God made water gush out of a hollow place in the ground, {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} and when Samson drank he felt strong again. He named the spring En Hakkure (meaning "The Caller's Spring"). 20For 20 years Samson led Israel, but Philistines were still in the land. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14}

Lord, teach me the principle that a solitary individual with limited resources can be influential for You against the crowd, when that individual is filled with the Spirit of God. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Remind me that when I take a stand for You, many compromising believers will not stand with me, and they may even turn against me. You use ordinary little tools to get Your work done, tools like a donkey's jawbone, so use the little things in my life. Amen.

Judges 16

Samson at Gaza

1One day Samson went to Gaza, a Philistine city, and slept with a prostitute. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 2Word spread that he was in Gaza, and so

some Philistines went to the city gate to wait all night to kill him at dawn. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 3But at midnight he got up, tore the doors and parts of the city gate, put them on his shoulders, and carried them to the top of the hill near Hebron. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

4Later he fell in love with Delilah, who lived in the Sorek Valley in Philistine territory. 5The Philistine rulers went to her and said, "Find out why he is so strong and how we can overpower him and tie him up. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} If you do, each of us will give you 28 pounds of silver." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 6So she asked Samson the secret of his strength and what it would take to overpower him. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 7He said, "If someone were to tie me with seven new wet bowstrings, I'll be weak like everyone else."

8So the Philistine rulers gave her seven wet bowstrings and she tied him up with them. 9Some men were hiding in a room in her house, so that she yelled at Samson, "Samson, the Philistines are after you." He snapped the bowstrings as if they were charred pieces of string. So they did not know the secret of his strength.

10Then Delilah said to Samson, "You made fun of me and lied to me. So tell me how you can be tied up securely." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 11He said, "If you use new ropes, I'll be weak like anyone else." 12So she tied him with new ropes, and as before she shouted, "Samson, the Philistines are after you." But he snapped them off as if they were pieces of thread. 13Again she said, "You are still making fun of me and lying to me. So tell me how you can be tied up securely." 14He said, "Okay. Here's what you need to do. Weave the seven braids of my hair into the threads of a weaver's loom. Then I'll be weak like anyone else. So while he slept, she wove his hair braids into the threads of a loom. Again she yelled, "Samson, the Philistines are after you." He woke up and pulled up the loom and yanked his hair out from the fabric.

15Delilah said, "You say you love me, but three times you have made me look like a fool. And you still haven't told me why you are so strong." 16Every day she kept nagging him to tell her his secret until he couldn't stand it any longer. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 17So he told her, "I have never cut my hair because I have been a Nazarite all my life. If my hair were cut off, I would be as weak as anyone else." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

18Delilah urged the Philistine leaders to come back one more time. So they went to her house with their money in hand. 19She got him to sleep on her lap. Then she called in one of the men to shave off his hair. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} Delilah woke him up 20and said, "Samson, the Philistines are after you." He woke up and thought, "I'll free myself like before." But he didn't realize that the Lord had left him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 21The Philistines grabbed him, blinded him, and took him to Gaza. They put him in prison and chained him with

bronze chains. And they made him grind grain using a millstone. [22]But his hair began to grow back, about half an inch every month. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

[23]To celebrate their defeat of Samson, the Philistine rulers offered {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} a sacrifice to their god Dagon. [24]They praised Dagon, saying, "Dagon has given our enemy Samson to us. He ruined our crops and killed our people" [25]In their excitement they asked that Samson be brought out of prison to entertain them. [26]They made him stand near some columns that supported the roof of their temple. Then Samson asked the servant who held his hand to take him to the columns so he could lean against them. [27]The temple was packed with men and women and the Philistine rulers, and about 3,000 people were on the temple roof looking down into the courtyard.

[28]Then Samson prayed, "O Sovereign God, please remember me {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and give me strength so I can get even with the Philistines for putting out my eyes." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [29]Then he put his right hand on one of the central columns and his left hand on the other. [30]He shouted, "Let me die with the Philistines." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} When he pushed against the columns with all his strength, the temple crashed and killed everyone in it. Thus in this one moment he killed many more Philistines than when he was alive. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[31]His brothers and other relatives went to Gaza to get his corpse and bring it back home. They buried him in the tomb of Manoah his father {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} between Zorah and Eshtaol. He had led Israel for 20 years.

Lord, I think what Samson could have done if he had completely separated himself to You. I thank You for all he accomplished in spite of his lack of separation from sin. Use me... fill me... accomplish Your purpose in me. Amen.

Judges 17

Micah's Idols

[1]A man named Micah lived in the hill country of Ephraim. [2]One day he said to his mother, "Do you remember that someone stole about 28 pounds of silver from you, and you placed a curse on him. I confess; I'm the one." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} His mother said, "May the Lord bless you, my son." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [3]When he returned the money to her, she said, "In honor of my son I give this money to the Lord {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} so he can make an idol."

[4]After he gave her the money, she took four of the 28 pounds to a jeweler, who made an idol. And Micah and his mother kept the idol in their house. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}

[5]In their home Micah had a shrine where he placed the idol and a priestly vest he made and some other household idols. He even made one of his sons his priest. [6]This

is not surprising because in those times when Israel had no king, everyone did whatever he wanted. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

7One day a young Levite from Bethlehem 8wanted to find a place where he could be a priest. He happened to arrive at Micah's house in Ephraim. 9When Micah asked him where he was from, he said, "I'm a Levite from Bethlehem, and I'm looking for a place to live." 10Micah said, "You are welcome to live with me. You can be my priest, and in return each year I'll give you 10 pieces of silver, and new clothes and food." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 11The young man agreed to this and became like one of Micah's sons. 12Micah made the Levite his priest, and the Levite lived with Micah. 13Then Micah said, "I'm sure the LORD will be good to me now that I have my own Levite as a priest." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Lord, stealing is always wrong, even from relatives. It's never right to do the wrong thing, even for a good purpose. So, may I always worship You in the right way with the right heart attitude. Amen.

Judges 18

Micah and the Tribe of Dan

1In these days, when Israel did not have a king, the tribe of Dan was looking for a place to settle because they did not have any inherited land of their own. 2The tribe chose five soldiers from Zorah and Eshtaol to explore the land. One time they stayed overnight in Micah's house in Ephraim. 3Hearing the accent of Micah's young priest, they asked him why he was there. 4He explained that Micah had hired him as his live-in priest. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 5So they asked him to ask God if their journey would be successful. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 6The priest said, "Yes, the LORD knows where you are going." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

7Later the five men arrived in Laish in the north, where the people, like people in Sidon, felt safe and secure. They were prosperous and didn't need to depend on anyone else for protection. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 8When the five men returned to Zorah and Eshtaol, their relatives asked about their journey. 9The five men said, "We saw some good land up north. We can attack Laish and take it over. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 10When we all get there, you will see that the people think they are safe. God has given us this land that lacks nothing at all."

11So 600 Danites, ready for battle, left Zurah and Eshtaol. 12One night they camped in Judah near Kiriath-Jearim (meaning "Dan's Camp"). 13Then they went to Micah's house in Ephraim. 14The five men who had spied the land said to the 600, "One of these houses has a priestly vest, household idols, and a carved idol. You know what to do."

15The five men went to see the Levite at Micah's house, 16while the 600 Danites

stayed by the town gate. [17]The five went in and took the carved idols, priestly vest, and household idols, while the priest was with the 600. [18]Then when he saw them take these items, he said, "Hey! What are you doing?" [19]They said, "Be quiet and come with us. Wouldn't you rather be a priest for the entire tribe rather than for one family?" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [20]The priest liked this idea, and so he took the priestly vest, household idols, and carved idols and went with the 600. [21]They all started out again, with their children, livestock, and belongings in front of them.

[22]When they had traveled a while, Micah asked his neighbors to help him get his idols back. When they caught up with the Danites [23]and shouted at them, the Danites said to Micah, "Why did you ask your neighbors to chase after us?" [24]Micah said, "You stole my idols and took my priest. I have nothing left." [25]The Danites responded, "Don't argue with us. Some of us are short-tempered and may kill you and your family." [26]The Danites then left, and Micah, knowing he was outnumbered, went home. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

[27]The Danites went on with Micah's priestly vest, idols, and priest, and went to Laish and attacked and burned the city. [28]No one could rescue them because they were miles from Sidon and hadn't depended on anyone else for protection. The city was in a valley near Beth-Rehob. Then the Danites rebuilt the city and lived there.

[29]They gave Laish the name Dan, after one of Jacob's sons. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [30]The Danites set up idols there, {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} and Jonathan, son of Gershom, son of Moses, and his sons were their priests until the people were taken away as captives. [31]The tribe continued to worship the idols Micah had made, but the tabernacle was in Shiloh.

Lord, I want to live in peace like the people of Laish. I want contentment, and respect of others. It's when I don't defend my peace and I'm deceived about the enemy and I'm no longer on guard—that's when I'm in the most danger. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} Lord, I will keep watch over my soul and be on guard against the world, the flesh, and the devil. Protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

Judges 19

The Levite and His Concubine

[1]In those days, when Israel still had no king, a Levite who lived in Ephraim's remote hill country brought home a concubine from Bethlehem. [2]But she was unfaithful to him, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} and she went back to her father in Bethlehem. Four months later [3]her Levite husband went with a servant and two donkeys to try to talk her into going back with him. When they arrived there, she invited them in, and her father was glad to see them. He asked them to stay awhile,

and so they stayed three days, eating and drinking.
5On the fourth day the Levite and his servant got up early and were getting ready to go. But the woman's father suggested they have something to eat before they leave. 6So they did, 7and the father suggested they stay overnight. They finally gave in and stayed that night too. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 8On the fifth morning the man and his servant again got up early and were ready to leave. But again the father urged them to stay, have something to eat, and leave that afternoon. 9But when afternoon came, as the man and his concubine and his servant were ready to leave, her father said, "It's getting late. So please stay overnight, and then you can leave in the morning." 10But this time the man didn't want to stay any longer. So they left and went toward Jebus (that is, Jerusalem), 11and the Levite's servant suggested they stay overnight there. 12But the master said, "No, this is a city of foreigners. Let's go to Gibeah. 13We can spend the night either there or in nearby Ramah." 14As the sun was going down, they went into the town square of Gibeah, but no one invited them in.
15-16That evening an old man from Ephraim who was living in Gibeah was going home from working in the fields. 17Seeing the three in the town square, he asked them where they were from and where they were going. 18The Levite said, "We are going from Bethlehem to a remote place in Ephraim where I live. On the way we will stop at the tabernacle. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 19We have food for our donkeys and ourselves, so we don't need anything."
20"Come stay at my place," the old man said. "No need for you to sleep here in the town square." 21The man took them home and fed their donkeys. After they washed their feet, they ate and drank. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 22While they were eating supper, some scoundrels pounded on the door and shouted to the old man, "Bring out the man who came to your house so we can have sex with him." {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}
23The old man went outside and said, "Don't do such a terrible thing. This man is my guest, and what you are suggesting is shameful. 24You can have my virgin daughter and this man's concubine, and do with them whatever you want. But don't do such a shameful thing to this man, who is my guest." 25The men wouldn't listen to him. So the Levite pushed his concubine out the door, and they raped her all night. 26At daybreak she went back to the door, and fell down there.
27When her husband got up in the morning, he saw her lying there. 28He said, "Get up. It's time to go." But there was no answer since she was dead. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} So he put her body on his donkey and left. 29When he got home, he cut her body into 12 parts and sent one part to each tribe of Israel. 30People who saw this were shocked. They said, "We've never seen anything like this before since we left Egypt several hundred years ago. What can we do about it?"

Lord, evil comes in many different ways; help me recognize it and protect myself. A "lesser sin" is not any better in Your eyes than a "greater sin." May I never bargain with sin. Remind me that going against common sense and compromise leads to terrible results. Amen.

Judges 20

Israelites Punish the Benjamites for Their Sin

[1]When the word about this crime appeared, all the Israelites from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south and Gilead east of the Jordan assembled in Mizpah. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [2]The tribal leaders and 400,000 soldiers were there, [3]and the Benjamites heard about it. The leaders asked how this terrible thing happened.

[4]The Levite whose concubine was raped and killed said, "My concubine and I arrived in Gibeah to spend the night. [5]During the night some men from town planned to kill me. But they raped my concubine and she died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [6]Then I cut her body into 12 parts and sent one part to each tribe because of this terrible act. [7]So what should we do about this?"

[8]Together the people said, "We'll not go home; [9]Instead we'll cast lots to decide who will attack Gibeah. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [10]We'll take one-tenth of the men from each tribe to give the soldiers food, and the others will give Gibeah what it deserves because of the terrible thing it did." [11]So the Israelite men were united and went to attack the town. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2}

[12]Messengers went through the tribe of Benjamin, saying, "A terrible crime was committed in Gibeah. [13]So turn over to us these wicked men so we can put them to death and get rid of this sin." But the people of Benjamin refused to listen. [14]They came from towns all over Benjamin to fight against the Israelites at Gibeah. [15]In all, 26,000 soldiers with swords joined the 700 soldiers in Gibeah. [16]Among these soldiers were 700 left-handed men who could sling a rock at a target the size of a hair and never miss.

[17]But the other tribes had 400,000 experienced soldiers. [18]When the Israelites went to Bethel to ask God which tribe should go against the Benjamites first, He said, "Judah." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [19]The next morning the Israelites camped near Gibeah [20]and started to go fight the Benjamites. [21]But the Benjamites killed 22,000 Israelites that day. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [22]But the others encouraged each other, [23]and then cried before the Lord all day. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} When they asked the Lord whether they should again fight the Benjamites, their fellow Israelites, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} the Lord said, "Yes, go against them." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

[24-25]On this second day when the Israelites got ready to fight, the Benjamites killed

another 18,000 Israelite swordsmen. [26]So again the Israelites went to Bethel and cried before the LORD {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and ate nothing all day. And they brought burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the LORD. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [27]They asked the LORD if they should fight the Benjamites, their relatives. {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} (In those days the sacred chest was in Israel with [28]Phinehas the son of Eleazar, the son of Aaron, as the high priest.) The LORD told them to fight them again because this time He would give them victory.

[29]So the Israelites set an ambush against Gibeah. [30]And on the third day they did the same. [31]Then as the Benjamites ran out of their city to kill Israelites as before, they killed about 30 Israelites in the fields and on the roads to Bethel and Gibeah. [32]The Benjamites thought they were winning as before, but the Israelites were running in order to draw the Benjamites away from the city of Gibeah. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

[33]The Israelites ran toward Baal-Tamar. While the Israelites in ambush west of Gibeah charged against the Benjamites from behind, 10,000 [34]of Israel's best soldiers made a surprise attack on Gibeah. [35]The Lord helped Israel defeat Benjamin, striking down 25,100 Benjamite swordsmen. [36]Then the Benjamites knew they were defeated. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

The Israelites had retreated from Benjamin because they depended on the men in ambush against Gibeah. [37]These men in ambush rushed and went through all the city, killing everyone there. [38]Then they sent up a huge cloud of smoke as a signal [39]for the Israelites to turn back {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} and attack the Benjamite soldiers. When the Benjamites had killed about 30 Israelites, they thought they were winning. [40]But when the Benjamites saw the smoke going up, [41]they were terrified {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} because they realized they were defeated. [42]So they ran toward the desert but they couldn't escape. [43]The Israelites surrounded the Benjamites, chased them down, and overtook them east of Gibeah. [44]A total of 18,000 Benjamites died in that battle. [45]As they fled to the desert to the Rimmon Rock in the desert, 5,000 of them were killed on the road, and as the Israelites chased them to Gidom, they killed 2,000 more.

[46]That day 25,000 Benjamite brave soldiers died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [47]But 600 men made it alive to the Rimmon Rock, where they stayed for four months. [48]The Israelites went back to the tribe of Benjamin and killed every living thing, and they set every Benjamite town on fire.

Lord, the leaders of Benjamin made a foolish decision, and everyone paid a price. Help me make smart decisions for those I lead. Also help those who lead me to make smart decisions. Amen.

Judges 21

Wives for the Benjamites

[1]The men of Israel had promised at Mizpah never to give their daughters in marriage to Benjamites. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [2]The people went to the place of worship at Bethel and sat in the Lord's presence all day. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [3]And they cried, "LORD, God of Israel, why has this happened to Israel? Now one of our own tribes is missing."
[4]The next day the people built an altar and presented burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the Lord. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [5]Then they wondered if any tribe was missing when they met in Mizpah to worship the LORD. They had made a promise {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} that if anyone didn't show up there, he would be put to death. [6]The Israelites felt sad because they realized that the tribe of Benjamin was almost completely wiped out. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} They said, [7]"A few Benjamite men are left, but how can we get wives for them since we promised the LORD that we would not give them our daughters as their wives?" {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1}
[8-9]When they asked if anyone was absent from their assembly at Mizpah, they counted the people and discovered that no one from Jabesh in Gilead had been there. [10-11]So they sent 12,000 soldiers to Jabesh Gilead and told them to kill every male and every woman who was not a virgin. [12]The soldiers found 400 young virgins in Jabesh Gilead and brought them to the camp in Shiloh in Canaan.
[13]The Israelites offered a peace treaty to the few remaining Benjamites at the Rimmon Rock. [14]So the 400 women from Jabesh Gilead were given as wives to the Benjamites. But there were not enough. [15]This made the Israelites sad because one of their tribes was almost wiped out. [16-17]The elders were concerned about how to get wives for the other Benjamite men so the tribe would not be wiped out. [18]They said, "We can't give them our daughters because we promised the Lord we wouldn't do that."
[19]Then someone thought of the annual festival to the LORD in Shiloh, north of Bethel, south of Lebonah, and east of the road leading to Shechem. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [20]So they told the Benjamites who did not have wives, "Hide in the vineyards, [21]and when the girls of Shiloh come out to dance, run out and each of you grab one of them to be your wife. [22]If their fathers or brothers object to this, we will say, 'Please understand. We couldn't find enough virgins for our men when we destroyed Jabesh in Gilead. And since you didn't give your daughters to them in marriage, you did not break a promise.'" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[23]So the men of Benjamin did this. As the young women were dancing, each man grabbed one of them and took her to be his wife. They went back to their land, rebuilt their towns, and lived there. [24]Then the Israelites left Shiloh and returned to their tribal territories and their homes. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [25]In

those days Israel had no king, and so everyone did what he thought was right. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

Lord, these "Dark Ages" of Israel were terrible; people lived contrary to Your law, they were often wrong and suffered for it. Teach me to live according to what You've revealed as Your standard in the Word of God. Many of the people thought they were doing right when actually they were foolishly wrong. Lord, I know that sincerity and prayer are not enough to live and serve You correctly; I will live by Your law in the Bible. Amen.

Ruth

Ch 1: Elimelech and His Family Move to Moab 381
Ch 2: Ruth Works in the Field of Boaz 383
Ch 3: Plans for a Husband 384
Ch 4: Boaz Marries Ruth 385

RUTH

Key Word: *Kinsman* (Ruth 4:14)

Key Verse: "So Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife: and when he went in unto her, the LORD gave her conception, and she bare a son" (4:13).

Theme: The author (possibly Samuel) tells a short story that begins with a *crisis* when Elimelech and his family abandon the Holy Land and move to the nation of Moab. Complications follow with Elimelech and his two sons dying, leaving a wife and two daughters-in-law with husbands. When Naomi tells the two widows to return to their family and idol worship, one of the two widows—Ruth—decides to follow the LORD of Israel and goes with her mother-in-law (Naomi) back to the Holy Land and Bethlehem. What appears to be a chance choice of a field to pick up leftover grain was obviously divine guidance {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} because the field was owned by Boaz, a family relative who becomes the "Kinsman Redeemer." Boaz redeems Ruth out of bankruptcy and marries her. Their son is Obed, the grandfather of King David.

Ruth is a picture of the Gentile bride—the church—which is redeemed by the family of David—Jesus Christ. It's also a picture of Gentiles who choose the salvation of the LORD, as did Ruth. *Lord, I choose to follow Jesus Christ and will serve Him all my life*. Amen.

Ruth 1

Elimelech and His Family Move to Moab

1 In the days of the judges a man from Bethlehem in Judah moved to Moab because of a famine. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 2 The man's name was Elimelech, and his wife was Naomi and his two sons were Mahlon and Kilion. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 3 In Moab Elimelech died, and Naomi was left with her two sons. 4 The two sons married Moabite women, Orpah and Ruth. Then 10 years later 5 Mahlon and Kilion died." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} So Naomi was a lone widow and mother.

Lord, we don't mean to rebel against Your ways, it's just that we follow our rationalizations rather than seeking Your will in Scripture. It's amazing how we never consider Your will

when making plans for our lives. Forgive our self-inclination. Amen.

6Hearing that the LORD had given His people crops again, Naomi decided to go back to Judah with her two daughters-in-law. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 7As they started on their journey, 8Naomi said to her daughters-in-law, "Why don't you go back home? {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} The LORD will be kind to you just as you were to your husbands and me. 9May the LORD give each of you another husband." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} She kissed them good-bye and they cried, 10and the two women said, "We will go with you."
11-12Naomi insisted, "Why come with me? I'm too old to have another husband and to have sons whom you could marry. 13And you wouldn't want to wait for them to grow up. No, life has been more difficult for me than for you because it seems that the LORD is against me." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 14Then they cried again and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law good-bye, but Ruth stayed with Naomi. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 15Naomi said, "Ruth, you see that your sister-in-law is going back home and to her gods. Why don't you go back too?"
16Ruth replied, "Please don't make me go back. I want to go where you go and live where you live. I want your people to be my people and your God to be my God. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 17When you and I die, I want to be buried next to you. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} And may the LORD punish me severely if we are ever separated."

Lord, Naomi was wrong to send Orpah back to idolatrous gods. May I never counsel this way. Lord, I will choose You, as did Ruth. Amen.

18Seeing that Ruth had made up her mind, Naomi stopped trying to urge her to go back to Moab. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} 19When Naomi and Ruth reached Bethlehem, everyone was excited to see them. And the women asked, "Can this really be Naomi?" 20She responded, "Don't call me Naomi (which means 'Pleasant'), call me Mara (which means 'Bitter'). {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} Why? Because God has made me bitter. 21I went away full, but I've returned with nothing. The LORD has been against me and has sent me tragedy." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
22The barley harvest was just beginning in March when Naomi and Ruth, her daughter-in-law from Moab, arrived in Bethlehem.

Lord, Ruth had absolutely no positive incentives to choose and follow You. May I have single vision as Ruth did, to choose You rather than anything else. I choose to follow You, no matter what. Amen.

Ruth 2

Ruth Works in the Field of Boaz

[1]Boaz, a relative of Naomi's husband, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} was an important man in Bethlehem.
[2]One day Ruth said to Naomi, "Let me go pick up leftover grain in the fields. Maybe someone will be kind to me." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} Naomi said, "Sure, go ahead." [3]So Ruth did, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} and it so happened that she was in Boaz's field. [4]When she went to his field and greeted his workers with the words, "The LORD bless you," they responded, "And may the Lord bless you." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [5]Boaz asked the foreman, "Who is that young woman over there?"
[6]The foreman answered, "She came back from Moab with Naomi. [7]She asked me if she could gather grain behind the harvesters. She has been working hard all morning except for a quick break in the shelter." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}
[8]Boaz went over and talked with her. He said, "Don't go gather grain in anyone else's field. Stay here and follow along after my servant girls. [9]I've told the men not to bother you. And when you are thirsty, {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} feel free to get a drink from their water jars." [10]She bowed to the ground and said, "Why are you so kind to me? You know I am a foreigner."
[11]Boaz answered, "I have been told that you have been kind to your mother-in-law and that after your husband died you left your parents and your country to come live here in a foreign country. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [12]I pray that the LORD, under whose wings you will find protection, the God of Israel, will bless you." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
[13]Ruth said, "May I continue to please you. You have spoken so kindly to me, though I am not even one of your servant girls." [14]At lunch Boaz said to Ruth, "Come eat with us." When she sat down with the workers, Boaz gave her some roasted grain, and she had more than she could eat.
[15]When she went back to work, Boaz told his workers to let her gather grain where it was stacked, [16]and to pull out some stalks from the bundles for her to pick up. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [17]She worked till evening, and when she beat the grains of barley from the stalks, she had half a bushel. [18]When she took back to Naomi the grain along with leftovers from her lunch, [19]Naomi asked her, "In whose field did you work today? May the LORD bless the man who noticed you and was so kind to you." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} Ruth told her she had been working in the field of a man named Boaz.
[20]"May the LORD bless him!" Naomi said. "God continues to be kind to us and our dead loved ones. Boaz is a close relative, responsible to redeem us." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [21]Ruth then said, "Boaz even said I could continue working in his field during the entire harvest time."
[22]Naomi said, "That's good that you can do that. You'll be safer there than in other fields." [23]And so Ruth gleaned with the

servant girls during the barley and wheat harvests. All this time she was living with her mother-in-law. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Lord, thank You for the example of Ruth. Give me character to work anywhere, under any conditions, to work faithfully until a job is done. Amen.

Ruth 3

Plans for a Husband

[1]One day Naomi said to Ruth, "My daughter, I think it's time I found a home for you so you will be provided for. [2]Tonight Boaz, a relative of yours, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} will be winnowing barley on the threshing floor. [3]So I suggest you take a bath, put on some perfume, and wear some nice clothes. Then go to the threshing floor, but don't let him see you till he's finished supper. [4]Notice where he lies down to sleep, and then quietly go lift the cover off his feet and lie down as a way of suggesting marriage."

[5]Ruth said, "I'll do whatever you say." [6]She went to Boaz's threshing floor that night and did what her mother-in-law suggested. [7]After Boaz ate, he lay down by a pile of grain and went to sleep. Ruth quietly uncovered his feet and lay down. [8]During the night Boaz suddenly work up, {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} and he saw a woman lying near his feet. He asked, [9]"Who are you?" She said, "I am Ruth. Please spread the corner of your blanket over me because you are a close relative responsible to redeem me." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

[10]Boaz said, "The Lord bless you. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} You are certainly loyal to your family. You could have preferred a younger man, whether rich or poor. [11]Don't worry; I'll do what you asked. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} Everyone in town knows you are a wonderful person. [12]True, I am a close relative, but someone I know is more closely related to you than I am. [13]I'll check with him in the morning to see if he is willing to redeem you, and then he can marry you. But if he isn't, then, as surely as the Lord lives, I'll marry you. So lie down here till morning." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[14]Ruth got up before daybreak because Boaz had said he didn't want anyone to know she had been there. [15]Then he put into her shawl six scoops of barley. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [16]When Ruth went back to town, Naomi asked how everything went. [17]Ruth said, "Boaz gave me this grain because he didn't want me to return to you with nothing for you." [18]Naomi said, "It will be interesting to see what happens. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} I'm sure Boaz will take care of this matter today."

Lord, You put love in the hearts of men and women for each other. Teach me to love deeply those related to me, and deeply as You love me. Amen.

Ruth 4

Boaz Marries Ruth

[1]Meanwhile Boaz went to the town gate
and the other close relative came by.
"Come over and sit down," Boaz said. The
man did. [2]Then Boaz got 10 town leaders
to join them as witnesses. [3]Then Boaz said
to the man, "Naomi has returned from
Moab and is putting up for sale the land
her husband Elimelech owned. [4]As his
closest relative you have first choice on
buying the land. If you want it, buy it now
before these 10 witnesses. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} But if you don't
want it, say so, because I am next in line to
purchase it." The man said, "I'll buy it."
[5]Then Boaz said, "If you buy the land, you
must also marry Ruth. That way her children will carry on the family name and
the property will stay in the family." [6]The
other relative said, "I've changed my mind.
If I marry her, that could make problems
for my own estate. So you may redeem
it; I can't." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [7]To finalize a sale of property
one person would take off his sandal and
give it to the other person. [8]So the man let
Boaz buy the property, and he took off one
of his sandals and gave it to Boaz.
[9]Boaz told the 10 town leaders and others,
"You are witnesses that today I have bought
the property of Elimelech, Mahlon, and
Kilion, [10]and I have agreed to marry Ruth,
Mahlon's widow. This will keep the property in the family and our children will
carry on Mahlon's family name." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[11]The 10 leaders and others said, "We are
witnesses. {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} May the Lord give Ruth many
children as He did for Leah and Rachel.
May you be important in Ephratah and
famous in Bethlehem. [12]May your and her
children be like those of Perez, the son of
Tamar and Judah." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
[13]So Boaz married Ruth, and the LORD
gave her a son. [14]The women said to
Naomi, "Praise the LORD. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} He has
given you a grandson. We hope he will be
famous throughout Israel. [15]He will take
care of you in your old age. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} He is the son of
your daughter-in-law, who is better to you
than your having seven sons."
[16]Naomi loved the boy and took care of
him. [17]The women of the neighborhood
named him Obed, who became the father
of Jesse and the grandfather of David.
[18]The family line from Perez to David was
as follows: Perez, [19]Hezron, Ram, [20]Amminadab, Nashon, [21]Salmon, Boaz, [22]Obed,
Jesse, David.

Lord, You sent Jesus to be my Kinsman-Redeemer; He came to be my relative (see Heb. 2:11). Then He took my sin and died for me (see 2 Cor. 5:21); Jesus paid my sin debt. He gave me life and freedom and now I choose to love and follow You. Amen.

1 Samuel

Ch 1: Hannah Prays for a Son 389
Ch 2: Hannah Praises God 391
Ch 3: The Lord Calls Samuel 393
Ch 4: The Philistines Capture the Sacred Chest 394
Ch 5: Trouble Resulted 395
Ch 6: The Philistines Return the Sacred Chest 396
Ch 7: Samuel Leads Israel 397
Ch 8: The People Insist on Having a King 398
Ch 9: Saul Meets Samuel 399
Ch 10: Saul Becomes King 400
Ch 11: Saul Rescues Jabesh Gilead 401
Ch 12: Samuel Makes a Speech to Israel 402
Ch 13: Saul Sinned at Gilgal 404
Ch 14: Jonathan Attacks the Philistines 405
Ch 15: God No Longer Wants Saul to Be King ... 407
Ch 16: Samuel Secretly Anoints David to Be the New King 409
Ch 17: David Defeats Goliath 410
Ch 18: Jonathan and David Become Good Friends 413
Ch 19: Saul Tries to Kill David 414
Ch 20: Jonathan Helps David Escape 416

Ch 21: David Receives Help from the High Priest 418
Ch 22: David's Hideouts 419
Ch 23: David Saves the People of Keilah 420
Ch 24: David Spares Saul's Life 421
Ch 25: Samuel Dies 423
Ch 26: David Spares Saul's Life Again 425
Ch 27: David Lives among the Philistines 426
Ch 28: Saul Consults a Witch at Endor 427
Ch 29: Achish Sends David and His Men to Ziklag 428
Ch 30: David Defeats the Amalekites 429
Ch 31: Saul Kills Himself 430

1 SAMUEL

Key Word: *King Saul* (1 Samuel 11:15)

Key Verse: "And the LORD came, and stood, and called as at other times, 'Samuel, Samuel.' Then Samuel answered, 'Speak; for thy servant heareth'" (3:10).

Theme: First Samuel marks the end of the time of the judges when, "Everyone did what he thought was right" (Judg. 21:25). The priesthood under Eli became corrupt, and Samuel introduced the office of prophets, and from then on a prophet, not a priest, primarily spoke the "words of God." Also this book introduces the office of king, when Samuel first anointed Saul. Then after Saul's rebellion against God, Samuel anointed David as the next king.

First Samuel contrasts the bad leadership of Saul with the godly leadership of David who was "a man after his (God's) own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). *Lord, I will seek You as did David, and I will follow You with all my heart. Amen.*

1 Samuel 1

Hannah Prays for a Son

[1]Elkanah lived in Ramathaim in Ephraim's hill country. His father was Jeroham, his grandfather was Elihu, his great-grandfather was Tohu, and his great-great-grandfather was Zuph. So Elkanah was known as a Zuphite. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [2]He had two wives, Hannah and Peninnah. Peninnah had children, but Hannah didn't. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
[3]Once every year Elkanah went to Shiloh to worship the Lord of the Heavens and offer sacrifices at the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Eli was priest, as were Hophni and Phinehas, his sons. [4]Elkanah gave some meat from his sacrifices to Peninnah and his sons and daughters. [5]He {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} gave Hannah twice as much as he gave them to show his love for her since she had no children. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
[6]Peninnah made fun of Hannah since she couldn't get pregnant, and this bothered Hannah. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [7]This happened every year. At the tabernacle Peninnah provoked Hannah so much that Hannah cried and didn't eat. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [8]Elkanah would ask, "What's wrong, Hannah? Why don't you eat? Why do you

feel so sad? You have me; aren't I better than if you had 10 sons?"
[9]One time when they were at Shiloh Hannah got up after supper and went to the tabernacle. Eli was sitting in a chair by the tabernacle entrance. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [10]Hannah was so sad that she cried as she prayed. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [11]She promised the LORD, "Please notice my misery. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} If you give me a son, I will give him back to You for his entire life. {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} And as a sign of my dedicating him to You, we will never cut his hair."
[12]As she kept praying, Eli watched her. [13]He noticed that her lips were moving, but he heard no words. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} So, thinking she was drunk, [14]he said, "How long will you stay drunk? Stop drinking wine." [15]She said, "Sir, I am not drunk. I am deeply disturbed, {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} and so I was telling the LORD my problem. [16]Please don't think I am wicked. I was praying because I am deeply grieved." {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}
[17]Eli said, "In that case, stop worrying. May the God of Israel answer your prayers." {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [18]She said, "I hope you will be pleased with me." Then she left, ate something, and no longer looked depressed.
[19]The next morning Elkanah and his family worshiped the LORD {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and then went home to Ramathaim. Later the Lord helped Hannah get pregnant, {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} and [20]she had a son. She named him Samuel (meaning "Asked of God") because she had asked the LORD for him. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
[21]The next year Elkanah and his family went to Shiloh to give a sacrifice and to keep a promise he had made to the LORD. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [22]But Hannah stayed home. She said, "I'll wait till I wean the boy, and then I'll present him to the LORD, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and he can be there the rest of his life." [23]Elkanah said, "That's fine. Stay with Samuel till you have weaned him. The LORD will help you keep your promise." {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} So Hannah stayed home and nursed the child.
[24]Then when Samuel was still a small boy, Hannah took him and a three-year-old bull, half a bushel of flour, and some wine to Eli at Shiloh. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [25]They killed the bull as a sacrifice to God and then took Samuel to Eli. [26]She said, "Do you remember that a few years ago I stood here, [27]praying that the LORD would give me a child? {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} Well, here he is. The LORD answered my prayer. [28]Now I am giving him to the Lord {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} to belong to Him as long as he lives." And they worshiped the LORD there. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, motivate me to keep praying when answers don't come. Then teach me how to pray the right thing in the right way. Also,

teach me how to fast and when to fast for answers. I yield my prayer life to You. May Your will be done. Amen.

1 Samuel 2

Hannah Praises God

1Then Hannah prayed {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} this prayer: "My heart is glad in the LORD; He has given me strength. Now I have an answer to my enemies {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} because You have given me relief from my problem.

2"No one is holy like You. And no one is as reliable like a rock as You are. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 3I can tell proud people to stop boasting, because the LORD knows all about us and judges what we do. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

4"The Lord breaks the bows of soldiers, and also He gives strength to the weak. 5People who had plenty to eat are now starving, and the hungry are now filled. The woman who had no children now has seven, but the one who had many children now has none. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

6"The LORD causes death and gives life. He brings some to the grave and raises some up. 7He makes some people poor and others rich. He puts some in low positions and others He lifts up.

8"He lifts the poor from being low in the dust, and He lifts up the needy from a pile of ashes. He gives them high positions with princes, and puts them in places of honor. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} He has set the world on pillars, making it stable and secure.

9"He protects every one of His people but the wicked will die in darkness. No one can succeed by himself. 10Anyone who opposes the LORD will be broken. He will thunder against them, and He will judge all the earth. He will give strength to His anointed king." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

11Then Elkanah and his family went home to Ramah, and the boy Samuel served the Lord as Eli's helper. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

12Eli's sons were wicked with no respect for the LORD. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 13Whenever someone was boiling meat from a sacrificed animal, 14a servant of Eli's sons would stick a fork into the pot, and give the meat to the priests. This is how they treated every Israelite who made a sacrifice at Shiloh. 15Sometimes even before the animal fat was burned, the servant would demand that some new meat be given so it could be roasted, not boiled. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 16If the man making the sacrifice said, "Okay. Take what you want, but first let me burn the fat," then the servant would say, "No. Give it to me now, or I'll take it by force." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 17This sin of Eli's sons was terrible because they showed no respect for the sacrifices.

18By contrast Samuel was serving the LORD. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} He was wearing a priestly vest. 19Each year his mother made him a

sleeveless garment and took it to him when she and her husband went to offer sacrifices in Shiloh. [20]Each year Eli blessed Elkanah and Hannah {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and said, "May the LORD give you more children to take the place of Samuel." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} Then they would go home. [21]The LORD gave Hannah three more sons and two daughters. And Samuel grew up in the tabernacle. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

[22]When Eli, who was very old, {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} heard what his sons were doing to the people's sacrifices, and that they were sleeping with the women who served at the tabernacle entrance, {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7} [23]he said to them, "I have heard reports of your wicked ways. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [24]You must stop doing this. These reports are not good. [25]If someone sins against another person, things can be made right. But if you sin against the LORD, no one can help you." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} However, his sons paid no attention to their father's words. The LORD had already planned to kill them. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [26]By contrast the boy Samuel continued to grow taller, and the people and the Lord liked him more. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

[27]One day a prophet went to Eli and said, "The LORD says, 'As you know, I showed Myself to your ancestors when they were in Egypt under Pharaoh. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [28]Out of all the tribes of Israel I chose Aaron to be My priest, offering sacrifices, burning incense, while wearing a priestly vest. And I said that the priests could eat the meat from the sacrifices. [29]Why then do you and your sons have no respect for the sacrifices and offerings people bring? {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} And why do you put yourself and your sons ahead of Me by getting fat from the choice parts of the animal offerings?

[30]"'I had promised that you and the Levites would be My priests forever. But not now! {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} If you honored Me, I would honor you. But since you despise Me, I will despise you. [31]So I will put an end to you and your family, [32]so that no one will live a long life. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [33]You will cry with grief, and all of your descendants will die young. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[34]"'As proof that what I have said will come true, your two sons Hophni and Phinehas will die on the same day. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [35]Then I will choose someone to be My priest who will be faithful and will obey Me. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I will bless his descendants, and they will serve as priests before My king. [36]If any one of your descendants is alive, he will beg My priest for money and food and he will ask to be a priest so he can have some food.'" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

Lord, make me godly so I can have a godly influence on my children and grandchildren. I will be tough on sin so both my children

and I can be godly. Don't let anything hinder my prayers from being answered. Amen.

1 Samuel 3

The Lord Calls Samuel

[1]The boy Samuel served the LORD by helping Eli. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} In those days the LORD seldom spoke to His people, and He did not appear to them in visions. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [2]One night Eli, now almost blind, was in bed, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [3]and Samuel was lying down in the tabernacle near the curtain leading to the holy of holies. [4]When the LORD called Samuel's name, Samuel said, "I'm here." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [5]Then he ran to Eli and said, "I'm here. What do you want?" Eli said, "I didn't call you. Go back to bed." So he did. [6]Again the LORD called Samuel's name. So he got up and said to Eli, "I'm here." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Eli said, "Son, I didn't call you. Go back and lie down." [7]The LORD had not spoken to Samuel before, and so he didn't realize the Lord was calling his name. [8]Once more the LORD called Samuel's name, and he went to Eli and said as before, "I'm here." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

Then Eli realized the LORD was the one calling the boy. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [9]So he told Samuel, "Go, lie down, and if He calls you again, say, 'Yes, LORD, I am listening.'" {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} So Samuel went back to bed, [10]and the LORD said, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} as before, "Samuel. Samuel." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} And the boy answered, "Speak, LORD. I am listening." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

[11]The LORD said, "I am going to do a shocking thing in Israel. [12]I will do all the terrible things I warned Eli about. [13]He knew his sons were doing disgusting things but he didn't stop them, so I told him I would punish him and his family. [14]I told him that I would never forgive him and his family by sacrifices and offerings." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[15]Samuel stayed in bed the rest of the night, and in the morning he opened the tabernacle doors. He was afraid to tell Eli what the Lord had said. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [16]But Eli called him, and Samuel said, "I'm here." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [17]Eli said, "What did the Lord say to you? If you don't tell me everything He said, may God punish you." [18]So Samuel told Eli everything the Lord said. And Eli responded, "He is the LORD, and He will do what He thinks best." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[19]As Samuel grew, the LORD was with him, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and everything he said came true. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [20]Everyone from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south knew that Samuel was a prophet of God. [21]The LORD often appeared to Samuel in Shiloh, {393 Recognizing God's Presence in

Prayer, Gen. 16:13} and Samuel passed those words on to Israel.

Lord, forgive me when You've called and I didn't answer. Speak to me again, and I will answer, "Here am I to serve You." I will stop doing those things that block out Your call. Help me recognize Your call to me. I want to listen to everything You say. Amen.

1 Samuel 4

The Philistines Capture the Sacred Chest

[1]One day when the Israelites went to fight the Philistines, the Israelite soldiers camped at Ebenezer, and the Philistines at Aphek. [2]The Philistines defeated Israel, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} killing about 4,000 of them. [3]When the remaining Israelite soldiers went back to camp, the elders asked, "Why did the LORD let the Philistines defeat us? {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} Here's what we can do: Let's get the sacred chest from Shiloh and take it with us on the battlefield." {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

[4]So some of the soldiers went to Shiloh and brought back the sacred chest. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Hophni and Phinehas went with them and brought the sacred chest back to camp. [5]When the group arrived with the sacred chest at the camp, the Israelites shouted with such joy that the ground shook. [6]Hearing the noise, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} the Philistines learned that the sacred chest was now in the Israelite camp, [7]and they were frightened. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} They said, "A god has come into their camp. So we are in deep trouble. [8]Who can save us from these gods? {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} They are the ones who destroyed the Egyptians with terrible disasters when they were in the desert. [9]Be strong, all you Philistines. If we don't, we will become their slaves just as they were our slaves."

[10]The Philistines fought hard, and again defeated the Israelites, killing 30,000 soldiers, and the others ran to their tents. [11]The Philistines captured the sacred chest, and Hophni and Phinehas died. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

[12]A Benjamite ran to Shiloh with his clothes torn and dust on his head to express his grief. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} [13]When he arrived, Eli was sitting in a chair by the roadside, just waiting and concerned about the sacred chest. The man told people in the town about the battle, and the people started crying. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [14]Hearing this, Eli asked what was wrong. The man went over to Eli, [15]who was now 98 years old and blind, [16]and he said, "I just now escaped from the line of battle." Eli asked what happened, [17]and the man said, "Israel ran from the Philistines, many soldiers were killed, your two sons Hophni and Phinehas are dead, {311 Morning-Prayer, John 21:4} and the sacred chest has been captured."

[18]When the man mentioned the sacred chest, Eli fell backward off his chair by

the town gate. He was a very heavy old man, and he broke his neck and died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He had been a leader of Israel for 40 years.
19Eli's daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was about to give birth. When she heard that the sacred chest had been taken {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} and that her husband and his father had died, {311 Morning-Prayer, John 21:4} she went into hard labor. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 20As she was dying, the women with her said, "Don't be afraid. It's a boy." But she didn't pay any attention or respond. 21Thinking about her husband and her father-in-law, she said, "My son's name is Ichabod (meaning 'No Glory')." 22She said, "That's because God's glory left our people when the sacred chest was captured." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}

Lord, forgive me when my empty worship and secret sin have allowed the enemy a victory. I will not be indifferent in the future; I will fight to be spiritual and stay close to Your presence. Amen.

1 Samuel 5

Trouble Resulted

1After the Philistines captured the sacred chest, they took it from Ebenezer to Ashdod, 2and they put it in their temple next to the statue of Dagon. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 3Early the next morning the people in Ashdod went to see the chest, the image of Dagon was lying face down in front of the chest. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} So they set it up in its place. 4The following morning the image of Dagon had fallen over again face down in front of the chest. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} And its head and both hands were broken off and were in the doorway. 5That is why the priests of Dagon and its worshipers will step over that part of the doorway and not on it. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}
6The LORD caused sores to break out on the bodies of the people of Ashdod and their neighbors. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 7When the people saw this, they said, "The God of Israel has done this to us and our god Dagon, so we must get rid of their sacred chest. 8The people asked the Philistine rulers what to do about the Israelites' sacred chest. They said, "Move it to Gath." So they did. 9But there in Gath everyone, both old and young, got terrible sores, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and the people were in a panic. 10So they sent the sacred chest to Ekron, another Philistine town. Before the sacred chest even entered the city, the people yelled, "They've brought the Israelites' sacred chest here, and it will kill all of us." 11So the people of Ekron got the Philistine rulers together and said, "Please send the Israelite sacred chest away, or it will kill us." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} The people of the city were in a panic because a lot of people were dying. 12Even those who didn't die were suffering from the sores, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and the whole city was in tears.

Lord, I will not carry You any place where I can't magnify You. I won't go there either. I will do what I know You want me to do; I will bow before You. Amen.

1 Samuel 6

The Philistines Return the Sacred Chest

[1]After the sacred chest had been in Philistia seven months, [2]the people asked their priests and fortune-tellers what to do with the sacred chest and how to send it back. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [3]They said, "Send it back with a gift. Send with it an offering that admits your guilt. And then you will be healed {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and realize why you have had this problem."

[4]When the Philistines asked what guilt offering they should send, the priests and fortune-tellers said, "Since all five Philistine rulers have these sores just as you do, send five gold models of the sores and five gold models of the rats that are destroying your crops. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [5]In this way you will honor Israel's God, and perhaps He will then stop bringing all this trouble on you, your gods, and your crops. [6]Don't be stubborn like the Egyptians and Pharaoh. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} As you know, God sent terrible plagues on them, and they finally let Israel go.

[7]"Get a new cart and two cows that have young calves and have never pulled a cart. Hitch the cows to the cart, but put their calves back in the barn. [8]Put the sacred chest on the cart, and put the gold sores and gold rats in a box next to the sacred chest. Send it away, [9]and watch it to see if it goes to the town of Beth-Shemesh. If it does, you know that the Lord brought this disaster on us. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} But if it doesn't go into Israelite territory, then you'll know that this just happened by chance, and was not caused by the Lord." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[10]So they hitched two cows to a cart and put the calves back in the barn. [11]They put the sacred chest on the cart and next to it the box with the models of the gold rats and sores in it. [12]The cows went straight to Beth-Shemesh, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} mooing as they went. The Philistine rulers followed them up to the border of Beth-Shemesh. [13]The people of the town were harvesting wheat in the valley, and when they saw the sacred chest, they were very happy. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

[14]The cart came to the field of Joshua from Beth-Shemesh, and the cows stopped by a large rock. The people chopped up the cart and sacrificed the cows as a burnt offering to the Lord. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [15]Some Levites who were there took down the sacred chest and the box with the gold objects and placed them on a rock. Then the people of the town offered more sacrifices to the LORD. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [16]The five Philistine rulers watched all this and then returned to Ekron.

[17]These gold sores sent from the Philistines as a guilt offering to the Lord represented the five towns of Ashdod, Gaza, Ashkelon, Gath, and Ekron. [18]The five gold rats also represented these same five towns and their surrounding villages. The large rock where the Israelites set the sacred chest is a reminder there in Joshua's field of what happened.
[19]However, 70 of the men of Beth-Shemesh looked inside the sacred chest. And so God killed them all. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Because of this the people of the town grieved over this loss. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [20]The men said to each other, "Who can stand in the LORD's presence and live? {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Where can we send the sacred chest from here?" [21]They sent messengers to Kiriath-Jearim to say, "The Philistines have sent back the sacred chest. Please come back and get it."

Lord, I know You want worship, so I will be clean mentally, physically, socially, sexually, and spiritually so I can worship You effectively. Amen.

1 Samuel 7

Samuel Leads Israel

[1]The people of Kiriath-Jearim got the sacred chest and took it to Abinadab's house on a hill, and they chose his son Eleazar to guard it. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [2]It was there for 20 years. During this time everyone was sad and asked the LORD to help them. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [3]Samuel told everyone, "To get back with the Lord completely, you need to get rid of all your foreign idols and the images of the goddess Ashtoreth. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Commit yourselves to the Lord and serve only Him, He will rescue you from the Philistines." {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6} [4]The Israelites got rid of their idols of Baal and Ashtoreth {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} and served only the Lord. [5]Then Samuel said, "Have everyone meet at Mizpah, and I will pray for you there." [6]So they all met at Mizpah, {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} and drew water from a well and poured it out as an offering to the LORD. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} They ate nothing all day, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and they confessed that they had been unfaithful to the LORD. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}
[7]When the Philistine leaders heard that all the Israelites were at Mizpah, they sent an army to attack them. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} Hearing of this, the Israelites were afraid. [8]They told Samuel, "Keep praying, {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} and ask God to rescue us." [9]Then Samuel offered a young lamb as a burnt offering, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and he prayed to the LORD for help, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} and the LORD answered. [10]Just as the Philistines were ready to attack, the LORD made it thunder so loud {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} that it scared the Philistines. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} They were in such a panic that they

ran from the Israelites. [11]The Israelites ran after the Philistines, killing many of them on the way to Beth-Car. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}
[12]Samuel propped up a stone between Mizpah and Shen and called it Ebenezer (meaning "Stone of Help") to remind Israel that the Lord had helped them. [13]So the Philistines did not attack Israel again for a long time, {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} including all of Samuel's lifetime. [14]The Israelites were able to retake towns from Ekron to Gath. Also there was peace between Israel and the Amorites. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
[15]Samuel was a judge in Israel all his life. [16]Every year he went to the towns of Bethel, Gilgal, and Mizpah to serve as judge over disputes among the people. [17]He always returned to his home town in Ramah where he served as judge. And he built an altar there to the LORD. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, I will live for You today and worship You today because yesterday's victories are the foundation for another victory tomorrow. Forgive my doubts and make me strong. Amen.

1 Samuel 8

The People Insist on Having a King

[1]When Samuel grew old, he made his two sons as judges. [2]One was Joel, and the other was Abijah, and they were judges at Beersheba. [3]But his sons did not follow him. They accepted bribes and were dishonest.
[4]So Israel's leaders went to Samuel in Ramah, [5]and they said to him, "You are old, and your sons are not following your ways. So we suggest you choose someone to be our king, like kings of other nations."
[6]Their asking for a king displeased Samuel, so he asked the LORD about it. [7]The LORD said, "The people have rejected Me, not you. [8]They are turning from you just as they turned from Me and have been worshiping other gods ever since I rescued them from Egypt. [9]So warn them and tell them what a king will do to them."
[10]Speaking to the people, [11]Samuel said, "Here's how a king will treat you. He will draft your sons into his army. Some of them will ride chariots and others will run ahead of the chariots. [12]Some will be made commanders, others will farm his land and harvest his crops, and he will have some of them make weapons and chariot equipment. [13]He will force your daughters to work for him, making perfume and doing cooking and baking. [14]He will take the best of your fields, vineyards, and olive groves and give them to his officials. [15]Also he will require you to give him a tenth of your grain and grapes for his officials. [16-17]He will take your servants and the best of your livestock and a tenth of your sheep and goats, all for himself. In fact you will become his slaves. [18]Then you will beg the Lord for relief. But He won't answer you."
[19]The people refused to respond to this warning. They said, "We want a king anyway. [20]He can rule over us and lead us in battles against our enemies." [21]When

Samuel told the LORD how they responded, [22]He said, "Okay. Go ahead and give them a king." Then Samuel told them to all go back home.

Lord, teach me when it's wrong to pray. I don't want to be blinded to Your will. Keep reminding me about the enemy and don't let me substitute earthly protection for Your divine protection. Amen.

1 Samuel 9

Saul Meets Samuel

[1-2]Saul was a handsome man and was a head taller than anyone else. His father Kish was an influential man of the tribe of Benjamin. Saul's grandfather was Abiel, and Abiel's lineage included Zeror, Becorath, and Aphiah. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

[3]One day some of Kish's donkeys ran off, and so he told his son Saul to go look for them. [4]So he and a servant of his went all through the hill country of Ephraim and around Shalishah, but couldn't find them. They even went to Shaalim and Benjamin, but they couldn't find them anywhere. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3}

[5]When they got to the district of Zuph, Saul suggested to his servant that they go on home "because my dad may be worried about us." [6]But the servant said, "I have an idea. In this town there is a highly respected man of God. Maybe he can tell us where to look." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [7]Saul said, "Yes, but what can we give him as a gift? All our food is gone." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [8]The servant said, "I have a small silver piece we could give him." [9-10]Saul said, "Good. Let's go." [11]Going up the hill to the town, they saw some girls coming to draw water and they asked them, "Is the seer here?" (In those days prophets were called seers, men who received messages from God in visions.) {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

[12-13]"Yes," they said. "He just got back in town. And he's on his way to offer a sacrifice up the hill {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and to eat with the villagers. If you hurry, you'll find him." [14]As Saul and his servant went toward town, Samuel was coming their way to go to the hilltop shrine. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} [15-16]The day before this, the LORD had told Samuel that he would meet a man from Benjamin and that Samuel was to make him the leader of the Israelites {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} to rescue His people from the Philistines. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

[17]When Samuel saw Saul, the LORD said, "This is the man. He will rule My people." [18]Saul asked Samuel at the town gate, "Can you tell me where we can find the seer?" [19]Samuel said, "I am the seer. Come on up to the hilltop shrine {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and eat with me. In the morning I will tell you whatever you need to know. [20]Don't worry about your father's donkeys that ran off three days ago. They have been found. All Israel is now focused on you and your family." [21]Saul said, "But I am from Israel's smallest tribe {307

Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} and the least important clan in my tribe."
22Samuel took Saul and his servant into the hall at the hilltop shrine and seated them at the head of the 30 or so who had been invited. 23Samuel told the cook to bring the best piece of meat, 24and when he did, Samuel said to Saul, "This is for you, and I invited these guests to eat with you." {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11}
25Then they went back to town and Samuel and Saul visited on the roof of Samuel's home. 26In the morning Samuel woke Saul up and told him he would help him get ready to leave. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} 27Then at the edge of town Samuel suggested that Saul have his servant go ahead. "But," Samuel said, "You stay here with me for a few minutes because God has something for me to tell you."

Lord, I will study carefully how Saul corrupted himself, and I will think differently, and do things differently, so I will not backslide. Then I will look for Your hand working in my life in small circumstantial ways. I want to accomplish something greater with my life than what I'm doing now. Anoint me for service. Lord, stretch me... fill me... guide me... and use me. Amen.

1 Samuel 10

Saul Becomes King

1Samuel took a small jar of olive oil and poured it on Saul's head. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} He kissed Saul and said, "The LORD has chosen you to be the leader of His people. 2When you are on your way today, you'll meet two men near Rachel's tomb at Zelzah in the territory of Benjamin. They will tell you your father's donkeys have been found. Your father has forgotten about them and is now worried about you. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
3"So go on from there to the big oak tree at Tabor. There you'll meet three men going up to Bethel. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} One of them will have three young goats, another will have three loaves of bread, and another some wine in a wineskin. 4They will give you two loaves of bread. 5Then go on to Gibeah where some Philistines are camped. You'll meet some prophets coming down from the nearby hilltop shrine, playing musical instruments and prophesying. 6The Spirit of the LORD {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} will control you, and you will be like a different person, prophesying with them. 7Then do whatever you feel is best, because God will be with you. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 8Then go to Gilgal. Wait for me there, and in seven days {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} I will go there to sacrifice burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} Then I'll tell you what to do next."
9As Saul turned to leave, God changed his heart and all the things happened just as Samuel had said. 10At Gibeah some prophets met Saul, and again the Spirit of God controlled Saul {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he joined them in prophesying. 11People who had known

Saul before said, "What's happened to him? Is he really a prophet?" [12]A man who lived there said, "Why not? It doesn't matter who his father is. God can cause anyone He wants to prophesy." Yet everyone was so amazed that Saul prophesied, that the people began saying, "Is Saul also a prophet?" [13]Then Saul went to the hilltop shrine to worship. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

[14]Saul's uncle asked Saul and his servants, "Where have you two been?" Saul said, "We were looking for my dad's donkeys. We couldn't find them, so we went to talk with Samuel." [15]Saul's uncle asked, "What did he say?" [16]Saul replied, "He told us the donkeys had been found." But Saul said nothing about his being chosen as king.

[17]Samuel had all the people meet together at Mizpah. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [18]He said, "Here's what the LORD, the God of Israel says, 'I rescued you from Egypt's power and from other nations that have troubled you. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [19]But you have rejected Me, even though I rescued you from many problems, and you insisted that you have a king.' So each tribe and clan must now present themselves to the Lord."

[20]So Samuel brought each tribe to the Lord, and he chose the tribe of Benjamin. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [21]Then when each clan in that tribe was brought to the Lord, he chose the clan of Matri, and from that clan he chose Saul, Kish's son. But when they looked for him, he was nowhere to be found. [22]So the people asked the LORD where he was, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} and the LORD said, "He is hiding with the baggage." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}

[23]The people ran to find him, and as he stood there he was a head taller than anyone else. [24]Samuel said, "This is the man the LORD has chosen. You can see that no one is like him." {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} Then the crowd shouted, "May the king live a long life."

[25]Then Samuel told the people the rights and duties of a king and he wrote them all down on a scroll. And he put the scroll in the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Then Samuel sent everyone home. [26]Saul went home to Gibeah, and some men who felt led by the Lord went with him. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [27]But some rascals said, "How can Saul rescue us from our enemies?" They hated him and didn't give him any gifts. But Saul said nothing about them.

Lord, teach me the difference between real humility and fake humility. Then may I be bold when I should lead, and may I "hide behind the baggage" when I should be humble. Amen.

1 Samuel 11

Saul Rescues Jabesh Gilead

[1]When Nahash, king of the Ammonites, attacked Jabesh in Gilead, the leaders of the town suggested that if he made a peace

treaty with them, the Israelites would be their servants. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} 2Nahash answered, "Yes, I will make a treaty with you, but first I will gouge out the right eye of every man in your town."
3The elders said, "Give us seven days to see if we can get some help. And if not, we will surrender to you." {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18}
4The messengers arrived in Gibeah, Saul's hometown, and when they told about the problem at Jabesh, the people cried. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} 5Just then Saul was coming from plowing in the fields, walking behind his oxen. "Why is everyone crying?" he asked. When they told him the situation, 6the Spirit of God controlled Saul in a powerful way, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he was very angry. 7He killed two of his oxen, cut them in pieces, and had messengers take the pieces and say to the Israelites, "Come follow Saul and Samuel into battle. If you don't, this is what will happen to your oxen." The LORD made the people so afraid that they all came together as one. 8A total of 30,000 came from Judah, and 300,000 from all the other tribes, and they assembled at Bezek. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}
9Saul told the messengers to say to the people of Jabesh, "We will rescue you by tomorrow afternoon." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} When the people heard this, they were excited. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 10So they told the Ammonites, "We will surrender to you tomorrow, and then you can do whatever you want." 11The next day Saul divided his army into three groups and launched a surprise attack in the late hours of the night. They killed Ammonite soldiers well into the afternoon of the next day. A few escaped, but no two of them were together. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
12Some of the people of Israel went to Saul and said, "Who said they didn't want you to be king? We will kill them." 13Saul said, "No. Don't do that. We can all be grateful that the LORD has rescued us today." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 14Then Samuel said, "Let's all go to Gilgal and agree together there that Saul should be our king." 15So everyone went to Gilgal, and before the LORD they agreed that Saul should be their king. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} They sacrificed fellowship offerings to the LORD, and everyone enjoyed a great celebration.

Lord, I don't have much but what I have I give to You. Use me according to Your usefulness. Make me better than I am, and help me accomplish more than I could without Your power working through me. Amen.

1 Samuel 12

Samuel Makes a Speech to Israel

1Samuel told the Israelites, "I have given you a king as you asked. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 2I am now old and my hair is gray, {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} and my sons are grown. I have been

your leader since I was a young man. But now you have a king as your leader. [3]Think back on my life. Have I ever taken anyone's ox or donkey or cheated you or troubled you in any way? Have I ever accepted a bribe to keep me from being honest? If I have done any of these things, I will make it right." [4]The Israelites said, "No. You have never cheated or troubled us or stolen from us." [5]Samuel said, "The LORD and the king are witnesses of what you said." {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49} They replied, "Yes, that is true."

[6]Then Samuel said, "The LORD used Moses and Aaron to rescue your ancestors from Egypt. [7]Now I want to remind you of all the LORD has done for you and your ancestors. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [8]After Jacob went to Egypt, your ancestors asked the Lord to help them, and He sent Moses and Aaron to lead your ancestors out of Egypt and to settle them here. [9]But when they forgot the LORD, He let them be defeated by Sisera, commander of Hazor's army, and the Philistines and the king of Moab.

[10]"Again your ancestors asked the LORD to help them. They admitted that they had sinned {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} by forgetting Him and worshiping idols of Baal and Astarte, and they promised to worship Him if He would rescue them. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [11]So the LORD sent Gideon, Barak, Jephthah, and myself to rescue you from your enemies. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [12]When you saw that Nahash, king of the Ammonites, was going to attack you, you said you wanted a king to rule over you, even though the LORD your God was your king.

[13]"So here is the king you've chosen, the one the LORD has made your king. [14]Now you need to reverence the LORD {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} and serve and obey Him and not rebel against His commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [15]But if you don't obey Him and you rebel against His commands, you will face serious problems. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[16]"Stand here and watch what the LORD will do. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [17]It never rains during the wheat harvest, but I'm going to ask the LORD to send thunder and rain. Why? This will be a sign that you were wrong in asking for a king." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [18]Then Samuel prayed, and the LORD sent thunder and rain. The people all stood amazed. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [19]So they asked Samuel to pray that they would not die. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} They admitted they had sinned in the past many times, including asking for a king. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}

[20]Samuel answered, "Don't be afraid. True, you sinned. But now follow the LORD and serve Him wholeheartedly. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [21]Don't worship idols. They are powerless and can't help you in any way. [22]The LORD won't reject you. That's because of His reputation, {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} and because you belong to Him. [23]I won't stop praying for you. {248

Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} If I did, I would be sinning against the LORD. I will continue to teach you how to live for the Lord, [24]and your part is to continue to reverence and serve the LORD {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} with all your heart and to remember all the wonderful things He has done for you. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [25]But if you and your king continue to sin, you and he will be destroyed." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I will pray continually for my family, leaders, and those I lead. I want to become effective in prayer; teach me to pray. Amen.

1 Samuel 13

Saul Sinned at Gilgal

[1]Saul was 30 years old when he became king, and he ruled Israel for 40 years. [2]Of the 3,000 men Saul chose as special troops, two-thirds of them were with him at Micmash in the hills near Bethel, and one-third were with Jonathan at Gibeah in the tribe of Benjamin.

[3]Jonathan, Saul's son, attacked the Philistine army at Geba, and news of this spread among other Philistines. So Saul sounded an alarm throughout the land. [4]He announced that because he had attacked the Philistine outpost, the Philistines now hated Israel more than ever. So he ordered all the soldiers to join him at Gilgal. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

[5]The Philistines had 3,000 chariots with two chariot drivers in each one, and their soldiers were as numerous as grains of sand on the seashore. They camped at Micmash, just east of Beth-Aven (that is, Bethel). [6]The Israelites, seeing they were outnumbered, {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} hid in caves, under thick bushes, under rocks, and in pits and dry wells. [7]Some even crossed the Jordan River to Gad and Gilead. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} Saul stayed at Gilgal, and the men with him were terribly frightened. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

[8]Saul waited at Gilgal seven days as Samuel had told him to do. But when Samuel didn't come, [9]Saul ordered his men to help him offer a burnt offering and a fellowship offering. [10]Just as Saul was finishing with the burnt offering, Samuel arrived and Saul went over to greet him. [11]Surprised, Samuel said, "What have you done, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} making a burnt offering?" Saul replied, "My soldiers were running off in all directions and you hadn't come when you said you would, and the Philistine soldiers were gathering at Micmash. [12]I was afraid the Philistines would attack us here at Gilgal, and since you weren't here, I went ahead and offered a sacrifice." {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [13]Samuel said, "Saul, that was a stupid thing to do. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} If you had obeyed the Lord your God, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} He would continue to have someone from your family as king from now on. [14]But because you sinned, that won't happen. In fact He has

already chosen the one to be Israel's next king, a man who loves what God loves."
15Then Samuel left Gilgal and went to Gibeah, and about 60 men were with Saul. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 16Saul and his son Jonathan were at Geba, and the Philistines were at Micmash. 17Every day some Philistine soldiers attacked the Israelites. One group went north toward Ophrah near Shual, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 18another went west to Beth-Heron, and a third went east toward the desert near the Zeboiim Valley.
19No blacksmiths were in Israel those days because the Philistines made sure the Israelites couldn't make swords and spears. 20So whenever the Israelites needed to have their plowshares, picks, axes, and sickles sharpened, they had to go to the Philistines. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 21And their prices were high. 22So in their battles no one had a sword or spear, except Saul and Jonathan.
23Some Philistines moved their camp to the pass at Micmash.

Lord, keep me from presumptuous sins and teach me patience. From now on I'll obey; I'll meet You each day. Amen.

1 Samuel 14

Jonathan Attacks the Philistines

1One day Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Let's go to the Philistine camp on the other side of the valley." He didn't tell his father, {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 2who was near Gibeah, sitting under a pomegranate tree in Migron. About 600 men were with him, 3including Ahijah, who was wearing a priestly vest. He was a great-grandson of Eli. And so he knew Jonathan had left. 4-5A cliff to the north of Micmash was called Bozez, and a cliff to the south was called Seneh.
6Jonathan suggested, "Let's go toward the outpost of these pagans. Maybe the LORD will help us. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} He can help a few soldiers like us just as easily as He can help a large number." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 7The armor-bearer responded, "Whatever you say. I'm with you completely." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 8So Jonathan said, "Here's the plan. We'll cross over and let them see us. 9If they say, 'Wait there where you are in the valley,' we won't climb up to their camp. 10But if they say, 'Come up here and fight us,' that will be the sign that the Lord will help us win." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}
11So Jonathan and his armor-bearer stood in the valley where the Philistines saw them. The Philistines said, "Look. These Israelites are crawling out of their holes."
12Then they yelled to Jonathan and his armor-bearer, "Come up here, and we'll teach you a lesson on how to fight." So Jonathan said to his armor-bearer, "Climb on up after me. The LORD will help us win." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23}
13Jonathan climbed up the side of the hill, with his armor-bearer right behind him. Jonathan killed some soldiers in front of him, and his armor-bearer killed those

who were behind him. [14]That day they killed about 20 men in an area of about half an acre. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [15]The whole Philistine army panicked—those in the camp, those on guard at the outposts, and the attacking forces. Then God sent an earthquake, and the earth shook. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[16]When Saul realized the Philistines were running off in every direction, [17]he asked that his officers see who was missing from their forces. When he learned that Jonathan and his armor-bearer were the ones missing, [18]he asked Ahijah the priest to bring the sacred chest. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [19]But when Saul and Ahijah were talking, they heard that the noise and confusion among the Philistines kept getting louder. So Saul said to Ahijah, "Never mind." [20]Saul got his men together and led them to the Philistines, and saw that they were in such a panic of confusion that they were killing each other. [21]Some men who had joined with the Philistines now left and went back with the Israelites. [22]Some Israelites had hidden in the hills of Ephraim, but when they heard that the Philistines were on the run, they joined in the chase. [23]So the Lord rescued Israel that day. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[24]The Israelite soldiers were weak because Saul had made them agree {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} that if they ate anything that day, while he was getting even with the Philistines, they would be under a curse. [25]The army went into a forest [26]and saw some honey on the ground. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} No one dared eat any of it because of Saul's words about the curse. [27]But Jonathan didn't know about this, so he dipped the end of his stick in the honey. As soon as he ate some of it, he felt stronger. [28]One of the soldiers told him, "Saul said a curse would be on any soldier who ate any food today. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} That explains why we are all so weak."

[29]Jonathan said, "That is a foolish command. Notice how much stronger I feel after eating just a little bit of honey. [30]If the men had eaten some of the food they took from the Philistines, they would feel better and they could have killed even more Philistines." {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24}

[31]That day after the Israelites had killed Philistines from Micmash to Aijalon, about 20 miles away, they were very tired. [32]That evening they butchered sheep, cows, and calves belonging to the Philistines and ate the meat from the animals with the blood. [33]Someone told Saul they were eating blood. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Saul said, "That's wrong. Roll a big rock over here. [34]Then tell the men to bring me their cows and sheep and kill them here on this rock. And tell them not to sin against the Lord by eating meat with blood in it." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} So they did. [35]Then Saul built an altar to the Lord.

[36]Saul said to his soldiers, "Let's attack the Philistines again and fight them all night and kill every one of them." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} They said, "We'll do whatever you think is best."

But Ahijah the priest suggested they ask the Lord about this. [37]So Saul asked God if they should attack the Philistines, but God did not answer him. {324 Non-Answer to Prayer, Ps. 18:41} [38]So Saul said, "Let's find out who has committed some sin today. [39]Even if it's my own son Jonathan, he must die." No one said anything.
[40]Saul told the soldiers, "You stand there, and Jonathan and I will stand opposite of you over here." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} The men agreed. [41]Then Saul asked the LORD, the God of Israel, for the answer. [42]When they cast lots, everyone was cleared except Jonathan and Saul. Then when the lots were cast again, Jonathan was chosen. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [43]Saul then asked Jonathan what he had done. He said, "I simply tasted a little honey on the end of my stick. Why must I die for that?" [44]"Yes, Jonathan, you must die."
[45]The soldiers were against the idea. They said to Saul, "Why should he die when he has rescued us from the Philistines? Not even a hair on his head will be touched because of what he did for us with the LORD's help." In this way the army kept Saul from killing Jonathan, his own son. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [46]Then Saul stopped hunting the Philistines, and everyone went home.
[47-48]Saul fought Israel's enemies in every direction, against the Moabites, Ammonites, Edom, kings of Zobah, Philistines, and Amalekites. He had victory over them all. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [49]Saul had these sons: Jonathan, Ishri (also called Ish-Bosheth), and Malki-Shua. His two daughters were Merab and Michal. [50]His wife was Ahihoam, daughter of Ahimaaz. His army commander was his cousin Abner. [51]And his father was Kish. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[52]All his life Saul fought the Philistines. And he drafted into his army every brave man he saw.

Lord, forgive my faulty perceptions that make me fail. Amen.

1 Samuel 15

God No Longer Wants Saul to Be King

[1-2]One day Samuel said to Saul, "As you know, I am the one the LORD sent to appoint you king over Israel. So here is a message from Him, the Lord of the Heavens. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 'I will punish the Amalekites and destroy them all and everything they own. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]Put to death men, women, children, babies, and all their livestock.'"
[4]So Saul gathered soldiers at Telaim in southern Judah, including 200,000 foot soldiers and 10,000 from the tribe of Judah. [5]After getting an ambush ready, [6]Saul told the Kenites to leave that area so they wouldn't be destroyed. That's because the Kenites were kind to the Israelites in the desert. So the Kenites left. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [7]Then Saul attacked the Amalekites all the way from

Havilah to Shur, east of Egypt. [8]Saul kept Agag their king but destroyed all the people. [9]Saul and his army also kept alive the best of the livestock, but killed their animals that were weak or sickly.

[10]Then the LORD said to Samuel, [11]"I feel bad that I made Saul king because he has not obeyed Me." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} This disturbed Samuel, and he cried out in prayer to the LORD all night. [12]Early in the morning Samuel got up to go talk with Saul. But someone told him Saul had gone to Carmel, south of Hebron, where he set up a monument to honor himself, and then went to Gilgal. [13]When Samuel located Saul, Saul said, "The LORD bless you. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} I have done what the Lord wanted me to do." [14]Samuel answered, "Why then do I hear sheep bleating and cows mooing?" {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [15]Saul answered, "It's not my fault that they are alive. My soldiers kept the best of the Amalekites' livestock to offer as sacrifices to the LORD your God. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} But we killed all the other animals."

[16]Samuel said, "Stop! Don't say any more. Let me tell you what the LORD told me last night." Saul replied, "Okay. Tell me." [17]Samuel said, "When you thought little of yourself, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} the LORD chose you to be Israel's king and to be over all the tribes. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [18]Then He told you to completely destroy the wicked Amalekites. [19]Why then didn't you obey the LORD? {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Why did you keep some animals for yourself? That was a sinful thing to do." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[20]Saul said, "But I did obey the Lord. I killed all the Amalekites and captured alive only Agag their king. [21]I didn't take the best of the sheep and cows; the soldiers did. And they did it to sacrifice them to the LORD your God at Gilgal."

[22]Samuel said, "Does the LORD want offerings and sacrifices? No. He wants obedience. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} To obey Him is far better than offering Him a sacrifice or giving Him the fat of rams. [23]Rebelling against Him is as bad as fortune-telling, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} and pride is as bad as worshiping an idol. You have not done what the Lord wanted you to do, and so He has rejected you from being king." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

[24]Saul said, "Yes, I have sinned. I disobeyed the LORD and you. I was afraid of my soldiers, and I gave in to them. [25]Please forgive me and come with me to worship the LORD." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [26]Samuel said, "No. I won't go with you. You rejected The LORD's word, and so He has rejected you." [27]As Samuel started to leave, Saul grabbed his robe and it tore. [28]Samuel said, "The LORD has torn away the kingdom from you, and He will give it to someone better. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [29]God, who is the Glory of Israel, isn't a human. So He doesn't lie or change His mind." {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

30Again Saul admitted, "I have sinned. But could you honor me before the leaders and the people {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} by going with me to worship the LORD your God?" 31So Samuel finally agreed and went with Saul, and Saul worshiped the LORD. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 32Samuel then told Saul to bring Agag to him. Agag came, thinking, "Maybe they won't kill me after all." 33But Samuel said, "You have caused mothers to lose their children, so now your own mother will be without children." Samuel then put Agag to death at Gilgal, by chopping him to pieces. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 34Samuel went home to Ramah, and Saul went home to Gibeah. 35Samuel never went to see Saul again, though Samuel mourned for him. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} The Lord felt bad He had made Saul king of Israel.

Lord, sin is so attractive; it blinds me to the realities of Your Word. Take away my blindness and help me see sin as it really exists. Then give me strength to overcome temptation. Make me victorious. Amen.

1 Samuel 16

Samuel Secretly Anoints David to Be the New King

1The LORD said to Samuel, "Why keep mourning for Saul? Put some olive oil in a container and go {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} see a man named Jesse who lives in Bethlehem. I have chosen one of his sons to be king of Israel." {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 2Samuel said, "But if Saul hears about it, he will kill me." The LORD said, "Take a calf with you and say that you have come to sacrifice to Me. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 3Invite Jesse to the sacrifice. Then pour oil on the head of the one I will point out." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

4When Samuel went to Bethlehem, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} the elders were afraid, and they asked if this was a friendly visit. 5He answered, "Yes. I have come to offer a sacrifice to the Lord. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} So purify yourselves and come with me to the sacrifice." He invited Jesse and his sons to join him. {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

6When Jesse and his sons came, Samuel saw Eliab and thought he might be the LORD's choice. 7But the LORD said, "Don't consider his appearance or height. He's not the one. I don't choose people based on their appearance. That's what most people do, but the LORD considers the person's character." {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} 8-10Then Jesse had Abinadab, and Shammah, and four others come to Samuel, who said that not one of these was the one God had chosen. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 11"Are these all of your sons?" Samuel asked. Jesse answered that the youngest was taking care of his sheep. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} So Samuel said, "Send for him. We'll wait till he arrives." 12So David was brought in, and he was a healthy, nice-looking young man.

Then the LORD said, "He's the one. Make him king." {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} 13So Samuel poured oil on David's head as his brothers looked on. From then on the Spirit of the LORD came on David in a powerful way. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} And Samuel went home to Ramah.

14The Spirit of the LORD left Saul, and the Lord sent a demonic spirit on him that tormented him. 15Saul's officials suggested a remedy. 16They said, "We'll find a harpist to play for you whenever the demonic spirit is tormenting you. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} Then you will feel better." 17Saul responded, "Okay. Find me a good harpist." 18One of the officials said, "One of Jesse's sons plays the harp. He is brave, a good fighter, can express himself well, and is handsome. And besides all that, the LORD is with him."

19Then Saul sent messengers to Jesse, asking that he send David to Saul. 20Jesse sent his son David with a donkey carrying a loaf of bread and wine and also a young goat. 21Right away David started working for him, and Saul liked him very much and made David his bodyguard. 22Then Saul sent a message to Jesse with the words, "I really like David, so please let him stay here." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

23Whenever the demonic spirit tormented Saul, David played his harp. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} This made Saul feel better, and the demonic spirit left him.

Lord, I want to be used by You. I don't want to sin and have Your anointing taken from me as You took Your Spirit from Saul. I want to be like David, "a man after Your own heart" (1 Sam. 13:14). Amen.

1 Samuel 17

David Defeats Goliath

1Again the Philistines got ready to attack the Israelites. They camped between Socoh in Judah and Azekah in Ephes Dammim. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 2-3Saul and the Israelites camped in the Elah Valley. They occupied a hill on one side of the valley, and the Philistines were on a hill opposite them. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

4A Philistine hero named Goliath, who was from Gath and was over nine feet tall, came out of the Philistine ranks to challenge the Israelite soldiers. 5He wore a bronze helmet, a 125-pound chest armor, 6bronze to protect his legs, and a bronze sword strapped on his back. 7His spear was long like a weaver's beam and weighed about 15 pounds. And a man carrying his huge shield walked in front of him. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

8Goliath shouted to the Israelite soldiers, "Why are all of you lining up for battle? I represent the Philistines, and you are only servants of Saul. So choose someone to represent you. 9If he can kill me, we will all be your slaves. But if I kill him, you will

all be our slaves. [10]I challenge you! Choose someone to come fight with me."
[11]Hearing Goliath's challenge, the Israelite army, including tall Saul, felt helpless and very much afraid. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [12]Jesse, who was now getting old, had eight sons, including David. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [13-14]Three sons, Eliab, Abinadab, and Shammah were in Saul's army. [15]But David worked for Saul part of the time, and other times he helped his father care for his sheep. [16]For 40 days Goliath challenged the Israelite soldiers every morning and evening.
[17]One day Jesse told David, "Take this bushel of roasted grain and these 10 bread loaves to your brothers in the army camp. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [18]Also take these 10 hunks of cheese to the commander. See how your brothers are doing. [19]As you know, they are with Saul in the Elah Valley facing the Philistines. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
[20]Early the next morning David left the sheep with another shepherd and loaded up the food. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} He reached the camp as the Israelites were leaving for the battlefield and were shouting battle cries. [21]The two armies were facing each other. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [22]David left his things with the men in charge of supplies, and ran to greet his brothers. [23]Just then David heard Goliath shout his usual challenge to the Israelite soldiers. [24]As before, when the Israelites heard him, they were afraid and ran off. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}
[25]The Israelites had said, "This man keeps coming out to challenge us. Yet Saul says he will reward whoever kills him, and he will give his daughter to be his wife, and he and his family won't have to pay any more taxes." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
[26]David asked the men near him, "So is this true that whoever kills Goliath will be rewarded this way? And who does this uncircumcised Philistine think he is, making fun of the armies of the living God?"
[27]They told David what the king had said he would do for the man who kills Goliath.
[28]When Eliab, David's oldest brother, heard him talking with the soldiers, {434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11} he got very angry and said, "What are you doing here? You are supposed to be taking care of our father's sheep. You are so proud and wicked. You just came here to watch the battle." [29]David responded, "What have I done now? Can't I even ask a question?" [30]He walked out to some other soldiers and asked them the same question and got the same answer. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} [31]Someone told Saul that David had asked about rewards for killing Goliath. So Saul sent for him.
[32]David said to Saul, "Don't be discouraged because of this Philistine. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} I'll go fight him myself."
[33]Saul said, "You can't do that. You are only a boy, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} and Goliath has been a soldier all his life." {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [34]David responded, "I take care of my father's sheep. And when a lion or bear carried off one of the lambs, [35]I ran after it, hit it, and took the lamb out of his mouth. If the lion or bear attacked me, I grabbed

its hair, hit it, and killed it. [36]I have killed a lion and a bear that way, and so this uncircumcised Philistine will be like that because he has mocked the armies of the living God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [37]The LORD who saved me from the lion and the bear will save me from this Philistine." {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} Saul said to David, "Okay. Go, and may the Lord be with you." {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}

[38]Saul put on David his own military clothes and armor and bronze helmet. [39]David strapped on a sword, and walked around, but he wasn't used to wearing such things. {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18} He said, "I can hardly move. I'm not used to wearing these things." So he took them off. [40]He walked to a stream, picked up five smooth stones, and put them in his shepherd's bag. Carrying his shepherd's rod and his sling, he walked toward Goliath. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

[41]Goliath went toward David, walking behind the man carrying his shield. [42]Seeing that David was only a young man, healthy and good-looking, he hated him. [43]He said to David, "What do you think I am? A dog? So that's why you are coming at me with a stick." And he cursed David in the name of the Philistine gods. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [44]"Come here and I'll kill you and feed you to the birds and wild animals." {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10}

[45]David said, "You come out to fight with a sword and a spear and a dagger. But I am coming against you in the name of the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel's army, the One you have mocked. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [46]Today the LORD will help me defeat you. I will kill you and cut off your head. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} And I will give the dead bodies of your soldiers to the birds and wild animals. [47]Then everyone here will know that the LORD doesn't need swords or spears. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} He can win battles without our help. He will help us defeat you."

[48]As Goliath started toward David, David ran to the battle line, [49]took a stone out of his bag, {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} hurled it from his sling, and hit the Philistine in the forehead. The stone sank into his forehead, and he fell face down on the ground. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [50]So David defeated the Philistine with a sling and a stone; he killed him without even using a sword. [51]He pulled out the Philistine's sword and used it to cut off his head. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Then the Philistine soldiers all ran. [52]The Israelites then pursued the Philistines all the way to their towns of Gath and Ekron. Their dead bodies were all along the Shaaraim road to Gath and Ekron. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [53]Then the Israelites went back to the Elah Valley and took what they wanted from the Philistine camp. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [54]Later David took Goliath's head to Jerusalem, {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} and he put the giant's big weapons in his own tent.

55As Saul had watched David go to fight Goliath, he asked Abner, his army guard, "Who is that young man?" Abner said, "I don't know." 56So Saul said, "Please find out." 57When David returned from killing Goliath, Abner took him to Saul, and David still had the Philistine's head in his hand. 58When Saul had asked him, "Whose son are you?" David replied, "My father is Jesse, and we live in Bethlehem." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, I will get mentally ready to fight. Give me ingenuity and strength against satan's weapons. I will look to You and not to others. I will take up Your cause, I will win today's battles, and not worry about future big battles. I need Your strength today... help me. I surrender all. Amen

1 Samuel 18

Jonathan and David Become Good Friends

1After David and Saul finished talking, David met Jonathan, and they became good friends. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 2Saul kept David with them and did not let him make any trips home. 3Jonathan liked David so much that he agreed to be his loyal friend. 4To seal their friendship Jonathan gave David his robe, sword, and belt. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

5David was successful in doing whatever Saul asked him to do. Then Saul made him a high-ranking officer in his army, and everyone, including Saul's officers, was pleased with this decision. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

6When the soldiers were returning home after David killed Goliath, women came out from every town along the way to welcome King Saul. They were singing and dancing {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} to the music of tambourines and cymbals. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 7They sang, "Saul has killed thousands, and David has killed tens of thousands."

8This made Saul very angry. "They are saying David has killed ten times as many as I have. What's next? Will they want to make him king?" 9From then on Saul was suspicious of David. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 10The very next day a demonic spirit overwhelmed Saul, and he began acting like a madman. David came to play his harp for Saul as he usually did at such times. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} But Saul had a spear in his hand, and 11threw it at David twice, thinking he could pin him to the wall. But both times David jumped aside. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

12Saul was afraid of David, {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} because the LORD had left Saul and was now with David. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 13So to get rid of David, Saul made him commander of a thousand men and sent him off to fight. 14David continued to succeed in everything he did because the LORD was with him. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} 15When Saul saw this, he was even more afraid of David

than before. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 16But all the Israelites appreciated David {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} because he was so successful in leading his troops into battle.
17Saul thought to himself, "Rather than my killing David, I'll let the Philistines do it." So he said to David, "If you fight the LORD's battles, including defeating the Philistines, I will give you my daughter Merab as your wife." {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 18But David said, "Who am I that I could become the son-in-law of the king?" {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 19But when the time came for David to marry Merab, Saul had her marry some guy named Adriel of Meholah. 20Meanwhile Michal, Saul's other daughter, was in love with David, and this pleased Saul. 21He thought "I'll let him marry Michal, but I'll arrange things through her so he'll be killed by the Philistines." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}
22Then Saul told his officials to tell David privately that because he likes him and they all like him, the king now wants him to be his son-in-law. 23When they told David this, he said, "How can a little-known, poor man afford a bride price for the king's daughter?" {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 24When Saul's officials told this to Saul, 25he said, "Tell him the only bride price I need is for him to bring me our enemies." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Saul's real plan was to have David killed fighting the Philistines. 26David was pleased to become the king's son-in-law. Saul set a time limit for this to be done, 27but before that time ran out, David and his men killed not 100, but 200 Philistines and he took their foreskins to Saul. Then Saul gave him Michal as his wife. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}
28Saul realized how much the LORD was with David {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and that his daughter loved David. 29This made him even more afraid of David, {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} and Saul hated him the rest of his life. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 30Whenever the Philistine army attacked the Israelites, David was more successful than all of Saul's other officers. And David became very famous in all of Israel. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

Lord, I will not let others make me compromise myself. Don't let me be ground under someone's feet. I will deal with my feelings; will You deal with the unjust person? May I always do the right thing, no matter what's done to me. Help me endure hatred and help me glorify You in all I do. Amen.

1 Samuel 19

Saul Tries to Kill David

1Saul told Jonathan and his officers to kill David. But Jonathan was a good friend of David, 2and so he warned David, {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} 3"My father is trying to get you killed. So tomorrow morning go hide in the fields. I'll take my father with me there and I'll talk

with him about you. If I find out something, I'll let you know." [4]The next morning Jonathan spoke well of David to Saul, and urged him not to be against David. [5]"Remember how he risked his life to kill Goliath, and the Lord used him to give us a great victory, and you were happy? {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} So why kill an innocent man? That doesn't make sense." [6]Saul agreed and said, "No, I won't have David killed." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[7]Jonathan told David what happened. And so he brought David to Saul, and things were okay, as they were before. [8]Also like before when there was war again with the Philistines, David killed many of them and forced the retreat. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[9]One day as Saul was sitting at home, listening to David play his harp, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} a demonic spirit took control of Saul. [10]He threw his spear at David, trying to pin him to the wall. But David jumped aside and ran to his house. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [11]Saul sent troops to guard David's house that night and then kill him in the morning. Somehow his wife Michal knew of this plan. So she told David he better get away that night. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [12]She helped him get down through a window and he escaped. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [13]Then she put an idol in his bed, covered the idol with some of David's clothes, and put goat hair on the idol's head.

[14]In the morning the troops went to kill David, Michal said, "He is sick." [15]But Saul ordered his troops to bring David to him in his sick bed, so Saul himself could kill him. [16]When the men went there, they saw the idol in his bed with goat hair on its head. [17]They told Saul, so he said to his daughter Michal, "Why did you trick me this way and help my enemy get away?" She lied when she said, "He said he would kill me if I didn't help him get away."

[18]David went to see Samuel in Ramah and he told him what happened. So the two of them went to Naioth, a section in Ramah, and stayed there awhile. [19]Somehow Saul heard David was there, [20]so he sent some soldiers to capture him. But when they got there, they saw Samuel and others prophesying. And the Spirit of God took control of these soldiers too and they began prophesying. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [21]Saul heard about it, so he sent other soldiers to capture David, but they prophesied too. And this even happened with a third group Saul sent. [22]Then Saul himself went to Ramah and at the well in Sechu he asked where Samuel and David were. When someone told him they were in the section called Naioth, [23]he went in that direction. And on the way he too began to prophesy. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [24]He took off his clothes and lay that way all night. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Because he prophesied, people, when amazed at something, would say, "Is Saul a prophet too?"

Lord, my friend is my enemy, and is a friend of iniquity. He thinks constantly of harming

me. He always is digging a trap but he falls into his self-made destruction. His attack on me ends up hurting himself; his wounds are self-inflicted. I pray You will bless him, so he will listen to You and do right. But You, O Lord, will I praise for You always deal with everyone rightly; I will praise Your name. Amen.

1 Samuel 20

Jonathan Helps David Escape

[1]David left Ramah and went to see his good friend Jonathan. David asked him, "What have I done wrong? Why do you think your father is trying to kill me?" {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [2]Jonathan answered, "I don't think he's wanting to kill you. He always tells me everything he's going to do, and so I'm sure he wouldn't hide this from me."
[3]"Jonathan, it's true. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} He knows we are good friends. And so he didn't tell you of his plans to kill me because he doesn't want to hurt your feelings. I know for a fact that I'm very close to death." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
[4]Jonathan then said, "Tell me what to do and I'll do it." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
[5]So David said, "Tomorrow is the new moon festival, and each month at this time your father has me eat with him. But this time I'll go hide in a field until tomorrow evening. [6]If your father asks where I am, tell him I asked you if I could go to my hometown of Bethlehem for a celebration my relatives are having. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]If he says, 'Okay,' then I'm safe. But if he gets angry, you'll know he wants to kill me. [8]I know you'll be kind to me because of our agreement {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} to be good friends. If I have done something wrong, then you may kill me. Just don't hand me over to your father."
[9]Jonathan said, "Don't worry. If I find out that my father plans to kill you, I will certainly let you know." {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [10]David asked, "But how will I know?" [11]Jonathan answered, "Let's go to the field, and I'll tell you." So when they got to the field, [12]Jonathan said, "I promise that by the day after tomorrow I'll talk with my father about you and let you know how he feels about you. [13]If he wants to kill you, I will certainly let you know. I pray that the LORD will be with you just as he used to be with my father. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [14]Please be kind to me as long as I live. But if I die, [15]be kind to my family after all your enemies are defeated."
[16]Jonathan made an agreement with David and said, "May the Lord destroy all your enemies." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [17]And because Jonathan appreciated David so much, he asked David to promise once more his deep friendship for him. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
[18]Then Jonathan said, "At the new moon festival tomorrow you will be missed at the dinner table. [19]So the day after that, go in the evening to the place by the Ezel Rock

where you hid before. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 20I will shoot these arrows to the side of the rock as if I were doing target practice. 21I'll tell a boy to get the arrows. If you hear me tell him the arrows are on this side of the Ezel Rock, you'll know there is no danger. 22But if I tell him to keep going because the arrows are farther on, that will mean you need to leave. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} 23The LORD will keep watching us to see if we keep our agreement to each other." {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49}
24So David hid in the field, as Jonathan suggested. At the dinner of the new moon festival, Saul sat down to eat; 25Jonathan sat across from him, and Abner was next to Saul. But David's place was empty. 26Saul didn't mention that that day because he thought David may have been ceremonially unclean. 27But when David wasn't there the second day, Saul asked Jonathan, "Why hasn't the son of Jesse been here for dinner yesterday and today?"
28Jonathan replied, "He asked me if he could go to Bethlehem {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 29for a family celebration, and he said his father told him he needed to be there. He wanted to see his brothers, so I told him he could go."
30Immediately Saul became furious with anger, and he yelled at Jonathan, "You So-and-So! I know that you and this son of Jesse, this nobody, are close friends. Shame on you and on your mother. 31As long as David is alive, you'll never be king. So go get him so I can kill him." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
32"Why do you want to kill him? What has he done wrong?" Jonathan asked. 33Saul threw his spear at Jonathan to kill him, so Jonathan knew Saul really did want to kill David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 34Jonathan was so angry he left the table. He didn't eat anything all the next day because he was so hurt by his father's awful words about David.
35Next morning Jonathan went with a young boy out to the field. 36He told the boy to run to get his arrows after he shot them. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 37When the boy got near the place where the arrows landed, 38Jonathan shouted, "Keep going. The arrows are a little farther on. Hurry." So the boy picked up the arrows and took them to Jonathan. 39Of course the boy didn't know what this meant. Only Jonathan and David knew. 40Then Jonathan gave his bow and arrows to the boy and told him to take them back into town.
41After the boy left, David left Ezel Rock where he had been hiding and bowed to Jonathan three times with his face to the ground. They hugged each other and cried, especially David. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 42Jonathan then said, "Be on your way, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} because we have each asked the LORD to be sure we and our descendants keep our promise of friendship." {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49} Then David left, and Jonathan returned to town.

Lord, help me always be faithful to Your principles. Help me be faithful to my friends

as Jonathan was to David. Lord, help me be the kind of friend to others that I want to have for myself. Amen.

1 Samuel 21

David Receives Help from the High Priest

[1]David went to Nob to see Ahimelech the priest. {132 Elijah Fast and Prayer, 1 Kings 19:4-16} Concerned when he saw David, Ahimelech asked, "Is something wrong? Why are you by yourself?" {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [2]David answered, "The king sent me on a mission and asked me not to tell anyone, so my men are someplace else. {148 Expedient-Prayer, Est. 4:16} [3]Do you have some food you can give me? Can you give me five loaves of bread?" {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [4]The priest said, "I don't have any ordinary bread. All I have is the bread in the tabernacle. You can have that if your men have not slept with any women last night." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [5]David replied, "Don't worry. My men are never with women when they are on a regular mission, and this trip is more than ordinary." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [6]So Ahimelech gave David the bread from the Table of Bread without Yeast in the tabernacle {124 Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen. 32:30} which had already been replaced that day by fresh loaves.

[7]It so happened that one of Saul's men was there that day. He was Doeg, an Edomite, Saul's chief shepherd. [8]David asked the priest if he had a spear or sword he could use. "I had to leave on this mission so quickly that I didn't grab any weapon." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [9]The priest said, "The only sword here is the one used by Goliath, whom you killed. It's wrapped in a cloth behind the priestly vest." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} David said, "Perfect. I'll take it." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

[10]Then David hurried on to the Philistine city of Gath where Achish was king. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [11]Achish's officers said, "Isn't he like the king of the land? Isn't he the one the people sing about as they dance, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} saying, "Saul has killed thousands, and David has killed tens of thousands?"

[12]When David heard these words, he was afraid of Achish. {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} [13]So he pretended to be insane. He scratched on doors at the city gate, and he let his saliva drool on his beard. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [14]Achish said to his men, "Look at this insane person Why did you bring him here? {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [15]Do you think I need more madmen carrying on like this? I sure don't want him in my palace."

Lord, David saved his life by shrewd actions. Help me to be loyal to truth, yet shrewd when it's necessary. Help me tell the truth,

but remind me I don't have to tell people all I know. Amen.

1 Samuel 22

David's Hideouts

[1]So David left Gath and went to the Adullam Cave. His brothers and other relatives heard where he was and joined him there. [2]Others went there too, including people in trouble, in debt, and discontent for one reason or another. He was the leader of about 400 people. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

[3]Later David went to Mizpeh in Moab and said to the Moabite king, "May I bring my parents to live here until I know what God will do for me?" {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [4]They stayed in Moab while David was in hiding. {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

[5]One day the prophet Gad told David to go back to Judah. So David left and went to the Hereth Forest. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [6]When Saul was sitting under an oak tree in Gibeah surrounded by his officers and with his spear in hand, he heard where David was. [7]Saul said to them, "Listen, you Benjamites. If the son of Jesse becomes king, will he give you fields and vineyards? Will he make you commanders in his army? [8]Is that why you are all against me? Not one of you has told me that my own son has made a friendship agreement with Jesse's son. And not one of you has told me that my own son has encouraged Jesse's son to kill me." {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}

[9]Doeg, who was standing there, said, "When I was at Nob, I saw Jesse's son talking with Ahimelech the priest. [10]Ahimelech asked the Lord about him and then gave him food and Goliath's sword." {471 Surveillance-Prayer, Ps. 59:1-3} [11]Immediately Saul sent for Ahimelech and all his relatives and the other priests at Nob. When they arrived, [12]Saul said, "Listen to me, you son of Ahitub." The priest asked, "What is the problem, my lord?" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [13]Saul said, "Why are you and Jesse's son plotting against me? Why did you give him food and a sword and ask God about him? Now he is preparing to kill me." {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}

[14]Ahimelech answered, "But, Sir, no one is as loyal to you as David, your son-in-law and captain of your bodyguard. Everyone in your family respects him highly. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [15]That day wasn't the first time I talked with God for David. So why accuse me and my relatives? We don't know anything about a plot against you." {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [16]Then Saul said, "Ahimelech, you and all your relatives will die." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[17]Saul ordered his bodyguards, "Kill these priests because they helped David. They knew he was running from me, but they didn't tell me." But the king's officers refused to kill the Lord's priests. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [18]So Saul turned to Doeg and said, "You do it." Doeg

turned on them and killed 85 priests. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} 19Then he went to their town of Nob and killed every person and animal there. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31}
20One of Ahimelech's sons, Abiathar, escaped and ran to see David, {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 21and told him what Saul had done. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 22Then David said, "That day when I saw Doeg there, I knew he would tell Saul. I have caused the death of all your relatives. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} 23Stay with me and I'll protect you with my own life. The same person is trying to kill us both. You'll be safe here with me." {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

O Lord, deliver me from evil people; protect me from those who would hurt me. They arrogantly set a trap for me, and plan to trip me up and catch me by their deceit. You are my God; hear my cry for help. Amen.

1 Samuel 23

David Saves the People of Keilah

1One day word reached David that the Philistines were at Keilah and were robbing wheat from the threshing floors there. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} 2When David asked the Lord if he should go attack them, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} the LORD said, "Yes." 3But David's men there in Judah were afraid of the Philistines. So they said, "We'll be terrified if we try to fight them at Keilah." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 4So again David asked the LORD if they should attack the Philistines, and again the LORD said, "Yes. Go to Keilah, and I will help you defeat the Philistines." {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}
5So David and his men went to Keilah, killed the Philistines, took their cattle, and rescued the people of Keilah. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 6Abiathar, Ahimelech's son, went with David to Keilah, taking his priestly vest with him. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 7When Saul heard that David was at Keilah, he said, "Now we can kill David. He is trapped inside a city with high walls and gates that can be locked." {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}
8So Saul got his soldiers together and went to Keilah to capture David and his men. 9David heard what Saul was planning to do. So he asked Abiathar to bring the priestly vest. 10David prayed, "O LORD God of Israel, I heard that Saul is coming to destroy Keilah because I am here. 11Will the town leaders turn me over to him? {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} Is he actually coming? Please tell me." The LORD said, "Yes. He will come." 12Then David asked, "Will the Keilah leaders turn me over to Saul?" The LORD answered, "Yes. They will." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
13So David and his 600 men left Keilah and kept going from place to place. When Saul heard that David escaped, he didn't go to Keilah after all. {142 Escaping-Danger

Prayer, Acts 12:5} [14]David stayed in caves in the Ziph Desert. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} Saul kept searching for him, but never found him. [15]When David was at Horesh in the Ziph Desert, he heard that Saul was after him. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [16]Hearing this, Jonathan found David at Horesh and encouraged him. {343 Partner-Prayer, Acts 3:1} [17]Jonathan said, "Don't be afraid. My father won't hurt you. You will be king over Israel, and I will be your chief official. My father knows this." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [18]Again they renewed their agreement to be loyal to each other. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} Jonathan went home, and David stayed at Horesh.

[19]Some people from Ziph went to Saul in Gibeah and told him David was hiding in caves at Horesh on the Hachilah Hill near Jeshimon. [20]"So if you come, we'll help you catch him." {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [21]Saul replied, "Thank you, and bless the LORD for being concerned about me. {378 Pretend-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [22]Find out exactly where he is and where he goes, because I know he is very tricky. [23]Find out his hiding places and come back and tell me. I'll go with you, and if he's in the area, I will find him." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

[24]So the men of Ziph went home. They found out that David and his men were in the Maon Desert south of Jeshimon. [25]Saul and his men began searching for David, and when David heard about it, he went to a place in the Maon Desert called the Rock. [26]He and Saul were on opposite sides of a mountain. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} But just as Saul and his men were about to capture David, {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [27]a messenger ran to Saul and told him the Philistines were raiding Israel again. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [28]So Saul stopped chasing David and went to fight the Philistines. Ever since then, that place has been called The Rock of Escape. [29]David then went to live in the hideouts at En-Gedi. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

Lord, my enemy is great. I'm like David; I'm not always sure about the loyalty of those around me. Teach me when to go help another. Help me seek Your will for the things I do. Keep me safe, and keep me from getting into trouble. Amen.

1 Samuel 24

David Spares Saul's Life

[1]When Saul returned from fighting the Philistines, he heard that David was in the desert near En-Gedi. [2]So he took 3,000 top soldiers to go with him to look for David near the rocks of the wild goats. [3]Some sheep pens were by the road, and a cave was close by. So Saul went in to relieve himself. And David and his men were hiding in that very cave, way in the back.

[4]David's men said to him, "Now is your opportunity to kill Saul. The LORD said He would help you defeat your enemies and do with them as you wish." {335 Optional Answer-Prayer, Mark 10:38} So

David quietly crept forward and cut off a corner of Saul's robe. [5]But then David's conscience began bothering him. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [6]He told his men, "I shouldn't have done that {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} because Saul is the LORD's anointed king." {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} [7]David then told his men not to attack Saul. After Saul woke up, he left and started on his way.

[8]David went out of the cave and shouted to Saul, "My lord, the king." Saul looked back and saw David bowing low. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [9]Then David shouted to Saul, "Why do you listen to people who say I'm trying to harm you? {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [10]You can see that isn't true. The LORD put you at my mercy in the cave, and some of my men wanted me to kill you. But I said, 'I can't do that, because he is the LORD's anointed king.' {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [11]Notice that I'm holding this piece of your robe. I cut it off but I didn't kill you. This proves I'm not trying to harm you or rebel against you. I haven't harmed you in any way, and yet you keep hunting for me to kill me. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [12]The LORD will decide which of us has done anything wrong. He may punish you, {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} but I will never harm you. [13]As the old saying has it, 'Only evil people do evil things.' So I will not do any evil thing to you. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [14]Why are you trying to catch me anyway? Why chase me like I'm as worthless as a dead dog or a flea? {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [15]May He help me escape from you." {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}

[16]Saul called, "Is that really you, my son?" And he cried. [17]He said to David, "You are a better man than I am. You have been kind to me, but I have treated you badly. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [18]You have been good to me because when you could have killed me, you didn't. [19]Who else would have let his enemy get away, as you have? I pray that the LORD will reward you well for the way you treated me today. {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} [20]Israel will be blessed under your leadership. [21]Promise me that you won't kill my descendants, but let them live so my name can be remembered." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

[22]David promised to do as Saul asked. Then Saul went home, and David and his men went to their hideout. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

Lord, wind doesn't make a kite good, and resistance doesn't make just any kite fly higher. No, a kite must be a good kite for the resisting breeze to lift it into the sky. Wind, or persecution, didn't make David great. No, David was great long before he first met Saul. But wind resistance makes a good kite even greater. And so 13 years of running from Saul made the great David even greater. Lord, thank You for the resistance I face in life, for resistance can make me strong as it demonstrated David's strength. May I

be strong on the inside so I can be victorious over resistance. Amen.

1 Samuel 25

Samuel Dies

[1]Samuel died and the entire nation of Israel mourned his death. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} They buried him near his home in Ramah. Then David moved to the Paran Desert. [2]A wealthy man from Maon had property near Carmel. He had 1,000 goats and 3,000 sheep, and his men there were cutting wool from the sheep. [3]His name was Nabal, and his wife's name was Abigail. She was intelligent and beautiful. But Nabal, a descendant of Caleb, was irritable and mean.

[4]When David was in the desert, [5]he sent 10 young men to Nabal with this message: [6]"May you and your family have long, healthy lives. [7]I hear you are cutting wool from your sheep. When your servants were with us in Carmel, we treated them well and we never stole anything from them, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [8]as your own servants can tell you. Please be kind to us and give us any provisions you can." {155 Faithful-Request Prayer, Heb. 3:2} [9]David's men gave this message to Nabal and waited for his answer.

[10]Nabal asked, "Who is this David, this son of Jesse? A lot of servants are running from their master, and maybe he is one of them. [11]Why should I give my bread, water, and meat to some man I don't even know?" {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} [12]David's men returned and told David what Nabal had said.

[13]Immediately David told his men to get their swords and he strapped his on. About 400 men went with him, and 200 stayed behind to guard their supplies. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[14]One of Nabal's servants told Abigail, "David sent some men from the desert to talk with our master, but he insulted them. [15]But David's men were good to us. They never hurt us or stole anything from us when they were nearby. [16]While we were herding our sheep near them, they protected us. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [17]Think fast, because Nabal may cause trouble for himself and his family. He's so stubborn no one can even talk with him." {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20}

[18]Abigail quickly loaded some food on donkeys, including 200 loaves of bread, two skins filled with wine, meat from five sheep, five bushels of roasted grain, 100 raisin cakes, and 200 fig cakes. [19]She told her servants to take these to David and she would catch up with them. But she didn't tell her husband what she was doing. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4}

[20]As Abigail was riding her donkey into a mountain ravine, she saw David and his men coming toward her. [21]David has just said, "Helping this fellow sure didn't do us any good. We guarded his flocks so that not one animal was stolen or lost. Now he has paid me back with insults. [22]By tomorrow morning every male in his family will be dead. If I don't kill them all off, may

God take my life." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[23]Abigail quickly got off her donkey and bowed down in front of David. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [24]She said, "I accept blame for this problem. Let me explain. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [25]Don't pay any attention to that wicked man Nabal. His name means 'Fool,' and that fits him perfectly. If I had seen the men you sent, perhaps I could have kept him from being so rude. [26]I pray that since the LORD has kept you from taking innocent lives, all your enemies will be like Nabal. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [27]Please accept this gift of food for you and your men. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
[28]"Please forgive me if I have offended you. The LORD will reward you with a lasting dynasty because you fight for Him and because you have done nothing wrong all your life. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [29]Even though some may be chasing you to take your life, the LORD your God will keep you safe. And your enemies' lives will disappear as quickly as a stone from a sling. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [30]When the LORD has done for you everything He promised and has made you king, {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} [31]your conscience will be clean because you will not have killed innocent people. When the LORD has done all these things for you, please remember me." {351 Personal-Request Prayer, Rom. 15:36}
[32]David replied to Abigail, "Praise the LORD, the God of Israel, for sending you to me today. [33]Blessings on you for being so wise and keeping me from killing innocent people. [34]If you hadn't come here quickly, Nabal and all his men would have been dead by morning." {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [35]David accepted her gifts and told her, "You may return home now. I will not kill your husband."
[36]When Abigail got home, she saw that Nabal was having a big party as if he were a king. He was very drunk, so she didn't tell him anything about her seeing David until the next morning. [37]Next day when he was sober, she told him what she had done. Right then he had a heart attack and he lay in bed paralyzed. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [38]Ten days later the Lord took his life. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
[39]When David heard that Nabal was dead, he said, "Praise the LORD for paying back Nabal for his sin and for keeping me from taking his life." {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} Then David sent messengers to Abigail to ask her to marry him. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [40]When they arrived at Carmel and gave her this message, [41]she bowed down and said, "Yes. And I will gladly be his slave and wash the feet of his servants." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} [42]She quickly got ready, and went back with David's messengers. She took with her five of her servant girls. And she became his wife. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[43]David had also married Ahinoam of Jezreel, so he had two wives. [44]Saul had given his daughter Michal, David's wife, to

be the wife of a man from Gallim named Palti, son of Laish.

Lord, may I die well and be buried just as Samuel was. In my grave I will wait for the return of Jesus Christ. Carry on my work when I'm gone. Help me be as influential to my generation as Samuel was to his. "Help, O Lord! For the godly man is gone, the faithful are vanishing from the earth" (Ps. 12:1, ELT). Amen.

1 Samuel 26

David Spares Saul's Life Again

[1]Again some people from Ziph went to Gibeah to tell Saul that David was hiding at Mount Hakilah near Jeshimon. [2]So Saul took his 3,000 top soldiers and went to the Ziph Desert to look for him. [3]Saul camped along the road beside Mount Hakilah near Jeshimon where David was hiding. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [4]David sent out spies to check on Saul. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

[5]One night David went to Saul's camp, and he saw Saul and his general, Abner, son of Ner, sleeping in the middle of the camp with soldiers sleeping all around them. [6]David asked if Ahimelech the Hittite or Abishai, Joab's brother, and David's nephew would go with him into Saul's camp. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} Abishai volunteered. [7]So David and Abishai went into the camp and saw Saul asleep with his spear stuck in the ground beside his head. Abner and Saul's soldiers were asleep all around him. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [8]Abishai whispered to David, "God has put your enemy right in your hands. Let me go pierce his spear through him. One strike and he's dead." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[9]David said, "No. Don't kill him. You will be held guilty for destroying the Lord's anointed king. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [10]The LORD will take care of him. Either he'll die in some battle or of old age. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} [11]But I won't kill the LORD's anointed one. Let's get his spear and water jug and leave." {326 Non-Violence Prayer, Luke 6:28}

[12]So David took the spear and water jug near Saul's head, and he and Abishai left. No one knew about it or woke up because the LORD had put them into a deep sleep. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [13]David stood on the top of a hill some distance away [14]and shouted "Wake up, Abner!" Abner replied, "Who is it?" {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}

[15]David said, "What kind of man are you? No one is as great as you. So why haven't you guarded your king? Someone would have come into your camp and killed him. [16]You have fallen down on the job. You and your men deserve to die because you didn't guard your king, the LORD's anointed. Where are the spear and the water jug that were beside his head?" {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

[17]Saul recognized David's voice and called out, "Is that you, my son David?" David answered, "Yes, it is. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [18]Why are you

chasing me? What have I done wrong? {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 19If the LORD has caused you to be against me, maybe I should give Him an offering. But if this is someone else's idea, I hope the LORD will punish them. You have driven me from home so that I can't worship there as I would like to do. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 20I don't want to die in some place away from home. Why have you come after me as if I were a flea or hunt me like a partridge in the mountains?"

21Saul responded, "I confess I have sinned. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} Come back home, and I will not harm you. You had opportunity to kill me, but you didn't. I have been a fool, and I was very wrong." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 22David then said, "Here is your spear. Have one of your men come get it. 23The LORD gives rewards to people who are good and are loyal. I could have killed you today, but I wouldn't harm the Lord's anointed king. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} 24Since I saved your life, may the LORD keep me safe and rescue me from trouble." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

25Saul said, "May the LORD bless you, my son. You will do great things and be successful." {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} So David left, and Saul went back home.

Lord, help me learn from David how to treat my enemies. Help me do good to them for their evil. I pray for Your blessing on their lives. Help them know that I am not their enemy, but that I love them and pray for them. Amen.

1 Samuel 27

David Lives among the Philistines

1Then David got to thinking to himself, "Can I really trust Saul? Someday he may kill me. So I think I'll go to Philistia. Then Saul will stop hunting for me and I'll be safe." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

2So David and his 600 men and their families went to live in Gath, where Achish was king. 3David had with him his two wives, Ahinoam of Jezreel and Abigail of Carmel, Nabal's widow. 4Saul heard that David was in Gath, so he stopped trying to find him. {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3}

5One day David said to Achish, "We would prefer to live in one of your towns in the country rather than here in the capital city." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 6Achish agreed and he gave him Ziklag, and that town has been in Judah ever since. 7And David was there was for 16 months.

8David attacked the Geshurites, Girzites, and Amalekites who lived in the area from Shur to Egypt. 9In these attacks David and his men killed every person and kept for themselves the livestock and clothes. Returning from a raid, he would go see Achish, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 10who would always ask him, "Where did you attack today?" And David would explain where he had been. 11He killed

everyone in those towns, because he thought that if he didn't someone would go to Gath and tell Achish what David had been doing. He did this while living in Philistia. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 12Achish thought the Israelites probably hated David now, and so he would have to stay there and be his servant.

Lord, there are times I don't think David did the right thing. I will not justify my faults with the things David did. Help me always be truthful and then protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

1 Samuel 28

Saul Consults a Witch at Endor

1The Philistines got all their forces together to attack Israel again. Achish told David that he and his men must join his forces. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 2David answered, "That's fine. Then you will see for yourself what I can do." Achish then told David he would make him his permanent bodyguard.

3Samuel had died and Israel mourned his death {311 Morning-Prayer, John 21:4} and buried him in Ramah. Saul had forced out everyone who was a medium (who claimed to talk with the dead) or a psychic. 4The Philistines camped in Shunem, and the Israelites camped at Gilboa. 5When Saul saw the vast Philistine army, he began panicking in fear. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 6So he asked the LORD what to do, but the LORD didn't answer him either in a dream or by the Urim and Thummim or by a prophet. {324 Non-Answer to Prayer, Ps. 18:41} 7So he told his officers, "Find me a woman who can talk with the dead so I can ask her what to do." They told him there was such a woman in nearby Endor.

8That night Saul put on ordinary clothes in place of his royal robes and he and two of his men went to see her. He asked her to bring up the spirit of a dead man so he could talk with him. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} 9She said, "Are you trying to trick me and get me killed? You know that Saul has gotten rid of everyone who says he talks to the dead. You are spying on me." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 10Saul responded, "I promise you in the LORD's name that nothing will happen to you because of this." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

11She said, "What dead person do you want to talk with?" He said, "Samuel." 12When the woman saw Samuel, she screamed and said to Saul, "You tricked me. I see now that you are Saul." 13He said, "Don't be afraid. Just tell me what you see." She answered, "I see a spirit coming out of the ground." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 14Saul asked, "What does he look like?" She said, "He is an old man wearing a robe." Saul then knew it was Samuel, and he bowed down his face to the ground. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18}

15Samuel then spoke to Saul, "Why have you disturbed me this way?" Saul replied, "Because I am in deep trouble. The Philistines are getting ready to attack us, and God has left me and won't reply to me

through prophets or by dreams. So I've come to you to ask for help." {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
16Samuel said, "But if the Lord has left you and is your enemy, why turn to me? 17The LORD has done what He said He would do. He will take the kingdom from you and give it to David. 18Why? Because when He told you to destroy the Amalekites, you didn't do it. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 19So the Philistines will defeat the Israelite army tomorrow, and you and your sons will be with me here." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
20Saul fell and lay flat on the floor, frightened because of Samuel's words. He was weak because he hadn't eaten anything that day or the night before. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} 21When the woman saw how terrified {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} he was, she said, "I risked my life by doing what you asked. So now let me give you something to eat so you'll have strength to get back to your army camp." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 23He refused to eat. But when the two men with him also urged him to eat something, he got up and sat on her couch. 24The woman killed a calf, cooked some of the meat, and baked some bread without yeast. 25She served them the food, and then they left that night. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Lord, satan's forces are huge as we approach the end of the age. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} I know there is an evil spirit world; protect me by the Holy Spirit. Be with me when I walk through the valley of death (Ps. 23:4). Amen.

1 Samuel 29

Achish Sends David and His Men to Ziklag

1The Philistine army was at Aphek, and the Israelites camped by the Jezreel Spring. 2As the Philistine commanders were leading their troops in groups of hundreds and thousands, David and his men marched at the rear with Achish. 3The Philistine commanders asked, "What are these Israelites doing here?" Achish said, "They are with David who was an officer in Saul's Israelite army. He's been with me for over a year, and he's done nothing wrong."
4The Philistine leaders were angry and they said, "Send him back to the town you gave him. We don't want him going into battle with us. He will turn against us. Saul would take him back if he cut off our soldiers' heads and took them to Saul. 5After all, this is the same man about whom the woman of Israel sang and danced with the words, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 'Saul has killed the thousands, and David has killed tens of thousands.'"
6So Achish spoke to David, "I know you are reliable, and I want you to fight with me. I have found nothing wrong with you, but my commanders don't want you to come with us. 7I suggest you go home so you won't upset them." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 8"But what have I done?" David asked. "Why can't I

fight the enemies of my king?" {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}
9Achish said, "In my view you are as good as an angel of God. But my commanders don't want you to be with them in battle. 10So I suggest you and your men leave early in the morning as soon as the sun is up." 11So David and his men got up early and went back toward Philistia, and the Philistine soldiers went to Jezreel. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, help me see the big picture—Your picture—when I get fired, as David was sent home. Help me see Your plan on the other side of being dismissed. Lord, You are the God of "closed doors" and open doors, I'll walk through Your open doors. Choose my future, Lord, and open doors for me. Amen.

1 Samuel 30

David Defeats the Amalekites

1Three days later when David and his men arrived back at Ziklag, they found that the Amalekites had raided the Southern Desert and had attacked Ziklag and burned it to the ground, 2and had taken women and children as captives. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 3Seeing the ruins and realizing their wives and children had been carried off, 4David and his men cried loudly and kept crying till they couldn't cry any more. 5Of course David's two wives, Ahinoam and Abigail, were among the captives. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 6David was terribly worried because his men in their grief talked about stoning him. But the Lord strengthened and encouraged him. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
7David asked Abiathar the priest to bring him the priestly vest. He did, 8and David asked the LORD if he should go after the Amalekites. God said, "Yes. Go after them. You will rescue your wives and children." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 9So David and his 600 men went to the Besor Ravine, south of Ziklag. 10Of that number, 200 were too tired to keep going so they didn't cross the ravine, but the other 400 did. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14}
11David's men found an Egyptian in a field and took him to David. They gave him water to drink and food to eat–12part of a fig cake and two raisin cakes. He hadn't had anything to eat or drink in three days, so now he felt much better. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 13David asked him, "Who are you, and where are you from?" He said, "I am an Egyptian, a slave of an Amalekite. He left me here three days ago because I was sick. 14We raided the towns of the Kerethites in the Southern Desert and the territory of Judah, and the desert where Caleb lives. And we burned Ziklag." 15David asked, "Can you tell me where they are now?" The man said, "If you promise me you won't kill me or give me back to my master, I'll take you to them." {79 Conditional-Prayer Promise, 2 Chron. 7:14}
16So he led David and his men to the Amalekite camp, and there they were, eating, drinking, and dancing because of all they had taken from the Philistines and Judah.

17David and his men rushed in on them and fought them all that night and the next day. The only ones who escaped were 400 young men who rode off on camels. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 18David got back everything the Amalekites had stolen, including his two wives. 19The men got back all their family members and all their belongings. 20His troops gathered all the sheep and cattle and drove them on ahead and said, "These are all for David." {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

21When David reached Besor Ravine where the 200 exhausted men were, David greeted them. 22But some of the men with David were rascals, and they said, "Since they didn't go with us to the battle, they don't deserve to get any of the things we brought back. Let them get their wives and children and go." {234 Impatient-Judgmental Prayer, Rev. 6:10} 23But David said, "No. You mustn't do that. That's being greedy. God has protected us and helped us defeat the enemy. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 24No one will listen to you when you talk like that. Those who go to battle and those who stay behind with the equipment will share the goods equally." {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 25David made that a law from then on. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

26When David got back to Ziklag, he sent some of the things they had taken from the Amalekites to the elders of Judah. He said, "Here is a present for you from the Lord's enemies." {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 27-31He sent gifts to the elders of these cities: Bethel, Ramoth Negev, Jattir, Aroer, Siphmoth, Eshtemoa, Racal, the towns of the Jerahmeelites and Kenites, the cities of Hormah, Bor Ashan, Athach, and Hebron. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

Lord, I trust You to deliver me; don't let me be embarrassed. Come down here to listen to me; I need You quickly. I need You to be as strong as a rock to keep me from being defeated. I need to hold Your hand so You can lead me out of this trouble. Get me out of this predicament; I know You can do it. I put myself into Your hands because You are my Redeemer. Amen.

1 Samuel 31

Saul Kills Himself

1The Philistines attacked Israel at Mount Gilboa, killing many Israelite soldiers and forcing many to run. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 2The Philistines closed in on Saul and his sons, and they killed Saul and Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malchishua. 3When the archers wounded Saul, {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} 4he said to his armor-bearer, "Kill me. I don't want these uncircumcised Philistines to capture and torture me and make fun of me." But his armor-bearer was afraid to do it, so Saul took his own sword and fell on it. 5When his armor-bearer saw Saul was dead; he fell on his sword too and died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 6So that same day Saul, his three sons, his

armor-bearer, and many Israelite soldiers were killed. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
7When the Israelites on the other side of the Jezreel Valley and beyond the Jordan River heard that the Israelites had fled and that Saul and his sons were dead, they left their cities. And the Philistines moved into those towns. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 8The next day when the Philistines went to the battlefield to take weapons from the dead soldiers, they found the bodies of Saul and his three sons on Mount Gilboa. 9They cut off Saul's head, pulled off his armor, and sent messengers to spread the news to their people and to announce the news in the temple of their idols. 10They put Saul's armor in the temple of the goddess Astarte and nailed his body to the city wall of Beth-Shan.
11When the Israelites of Jabesh Gilead heard what the Philistines had done, 12some brave men one night went to Beth-Shan and took down the bodies of Saul and his sons {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} and brought them to Jabesh, and burned them. 13Then they buried their bones under the oak tree at Jabesh, and they fasted for seven days. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

Lord, remind me that partial obedience is complete disobedience. Amen.

2 Samuel

Ch 1: David Mourns the Death of Saul and Jonathan 435
Ch 2: David Becomes King of Judah 436
Ch 3: The Sons of David Who Were Born in Hebron 438
Ch 4: Ish-Bosheth Is Murdered 440
Ch 5: David Becomes King over All Israel 441
Ch 6: David Brings the Sacred Chest to Jerusalem 442
Ch 7: God's Promise to King David 443
Ch 8: The Military Victories of David 445
Ch 9: David Befriends Mephibosheth 445
Ch 10: David Defeats the Ammonites and Syrians 446
Ch 11: David and Bathsheba 447
Ch 12: The Results of David's Sins 449
Ch 13: Amnon Rapes Tamar 450
Ch 14: Joab Plans the Return of Absalom 452
Ch 15: The Conspiracy of Absalom 453
Ch 16: David and Ziba 455
Ch 17: Ahithophel's Plan 456
Ch 18: The Death of Absalom 458
Ch 19: King David Returns to Jerusalem 459
Ch 20: Sheba'a Revolt and Defeat 462

Ch 21: The Gibeonites Are Avenged 463
Ch 22: The Song of David 464
Ch 23: The Last Psalm of David 466
Ch 24: A Census Is Taken 468

2 SAMUEL

Key Words: *King David* (2 Samuel 2:4)

Key Verse: "So all the elders of Israel came to the king at Hebron; and King David made a league with them in Hebron before the LORD. And they anointed David king over Israel. David was thirty years old when he began to reign, and he reigned forty years" (5:3-4).

Theme: First Samuel records the failure of Eli and King Saul, and Second Samuel reflects the restoration of peace to the nation of Israel through the strength of King David. The tenderhearted David—the shepherd king—conquers the enemies of Israel and sets up a godly rule in Jerusalem.

Yet even in the midst of strength and prosperity, evil slipped into David's life. He sinned with Bathsheba and murdered her husband. God judged David's sin, just as God punishes sin today. Bathsheba's baby died, David's family was ravaged by sin, and David's oldest son Absalom tried to kill him. *Lord, I vow to live a pure life; keep me from sin. And when I sin ignorantly—or otherwise—deal with me in mercy and cleanse me by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7-9).*

2 Samuel 1

David Mourns the Deaths of Saul and Jonathan

1 After Saul died, David went home to Hebron after defeating the Amalekites.
2 Three days later a man came from Saul's camp with his clothes torn and
dust on his head as signs of grief. He kneeled to the ground in front of David in respect.
{231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 3 When David asked him where he came from, he
said, "I escaped from the Israelite army." {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}
4 David asked, "Tell me what happened. How did the battle go?" The man responded,
"Our army ran, but many were wounded and are dead. And Saul and Jonathan are dead."
5 David asked, "Are you sure Saul and Jonathan are dead? How do you know?"
6 "I was on Mount Gilboa and I saw Saul leaning on his spear with enemy chariots coming
at him. 7 When he saw me, I asked him what I could do. 8 He asked me who I was, so I told
him, 'I'm an Amalekite.' 9 He said to me, 'Come kill me. I'm in terrible pain.' {130 Dying-
Prayer, Acts 7:59} 10 So I killed him because I could see he couldn't live any longer. I took

his crown and arm band to bring to you." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
11David and his men tore their clothes in grief. 12They cried all day long, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and ate nothing, saddened by the deaths of Saul and Jonathan and the deaths of so many of their soldiers. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 13Then David asked the man, "Where are you from?" He replied, "I am an Amalekite, but I live in Israel." 14David asked, "Why weren't you afraid to kill the king, the LORD's anointed one?"
15Then David told one of his men to kill this Amalekite and he did, and the man died. 16David had said, "It's your fault, not mine that you will die. Why? Because you admitted that you killed the one the LORD chose to be king." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 17David then wrote a funeral song in honor of Saul and Jonathan. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
18And he ordered his men of Judah to teach it to everyone in Israel. It is known as "The Lament of the Bow" and is written in the Book of Jashar. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}
19"Israel, your glorious king lies dead on the hills, and his great heroes have fallen.
20"Don't tell the news in the Philistine cities of Gath or Ashkelon. You don't want the daughters of the pagan Philistines to be glad.
21"Don't let dew or rain fall on the hills of Gilboa, and don't let crops grow in the fields. There the soldiers' shields were useless, and Saul's shield will no longer be polished with oil.
22"Jonathan's bow and arrows caused his enemies' blood to be spilled, and Saul's sword killed the enemy's best soldiers.
23"Saul and Jonathan were appreciated and were wonderful men. They were together in life, and they even died together. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}
24"Women of Saul, cry for Saul. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} He provided fine red cloth for you and gold jewelry.
25"Our great soldiers have died in battle and Jonathan lies dead on the hills of Gilboa.
26"I miss you, my brother Jonathan. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} I appreciated you so much, and your appreciation for me was greater than that of a wife for her husband. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
27"Our great heroes have fallen, and their weapons are destroyed."

Lord, may I never "lie" or "stretch the truth" to get on anyone's good side. I'll remember the consequences of the man who lied to David. Amen.

2 Samuel 2

David Becomes King of Judah

1Eventually David asked the LORD if he should move back to one of the towns in Judah. The LORD said, "Yes." So David asked, "Which town should I go to?" And the LORD said, "Hebron." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 2So David

moved to Hebron with his two wives Ahinoam and Abigail, 3and he also had his men and their families move with him to Hebron and nearby villages. 4The people of Judah went to Hebron and made him their king. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

When David learned that people in Jabesh Gilead had buried Saul, 5he sent messengers to tell them, "May the LORD bless you for being kind in giving Saul a decent burial. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} 6And may the LORD be kind and faithful to you. And I too will be kind to you because of what you have done. {78 Compliment-Blessing Prayer, Luke 6:31} 7Now that Saul your king is dead, and Judah has made me their king, be strong and courageous." {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3}

8Meanwhile Abner, Saul's cousin, and his army commanders had taken Saul's son Ish-Bosheth to Mahanaim on the east side of the Jordan River, 9and made him king over Israel, including Gilead, Asher, Jezreel, Ephraim, and Benjamin. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 10Ish-Bosheth was 40 years old at the time, and he ruled for two years. 11However, David reigned over the tribe of Judah in Hebron for seven and a half years.

12Abner and the soldiers with Ish-Bosheth went to Gibeon. 13Joab, David's commander and nephew, and David's soldiers met Abner and Ish-Bosheth's men at the pool in Gibeon. Abner and his men sat on one side of the pool, and Joab and his men sat opposite them on the other side. 14Abner suggested to Joab that their men do some hand-to-hand combat. Joab said, "Okay." {464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30} 15Each group chose 12 men. 16Then they grabbed each other by the hair, and each one stabbed his opponent in the side, and all 24 died. So that place is called Helkath Hazzurim (meaning "Field of Daggers").

17The two groups then started fighting and the battle was fierce. But David's men defeated Abner and his soldiers. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 18Three of David's nephews, Joab, Abishai, and Asahel (sons of Zeruiah, David's sister), were there at this battle. 19Asahel, who could run as fast as a gazelle, ran straight ahead after Abner. 20When Abner looked back and saw Asahel he asked, "Is that you, Asahel?" Asahel answered, "Yes." 21Then Abner said, "Why don't you go after someone else and take his weapons?" But Asahel just kept running after him.

22Again Abner said, "Stop chasing me! If I have to kill you how could I face your brother Joab again?" {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 23Asahel kept going, and so Asahel hit him in the stomach with the back end of his spear, and the spear went all the way through him to his back. Asahel fell and died. Everyone who came there and saw Asahel lying dead stopped and looked. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 24But Joab and Abishai went after Abner. About sunset they arrived at the Ammah Hill near Giah on the road to the Gibeon Desert. 25Men from Benjamin went to Abner to the top of a hill and were ready to fight. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

[26]Abner yelled to Joab, "Why do we keep on killing each other? Why don't you order your men to stop chasing their own relatives?" {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [27]Joab answered, "Well, you are right. If you hadn't said something, we would have chased our own relatives all night." [28]So Joab signaled on his trumpet for his men to stop chasing the Israelites soldiers. And so the fighting stopped.
[29]All that might Abner and his soldiers went across the Jordan River and crossed a deep ravine and arrived at Mahanaim. [30]Joab and his men went home. When he counted his soldiers, he found that only 19 soldiers were missing, in addition to Asahel. [31]But Abner lost 360 of his men, all Benjamites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [32]Asahel was buried in his family tomb in Bethlehem. And Joab and his men marched all night and reached Hebron at daybreak. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}

Lord, fruit doesn't fall very far from the roots of a tree, and Ish-Bosheth was just like Saul his father. May I plant myself by rivers of living water (see Ps. 1:3) and bring forth the fruit of holiness to Your glory. Amen.

2 Samuel 3

The Sons of David Who Were Born in Hebron

[1]War continued on between those who were loyal to Saul and those who were loyal to David. David's position became stronger, and Saul's followers grew weaker. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} [2]While David was in Hebron, he had six sons. His oldest was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam. [3]His second was Kileab, whose mother was Abigail. The third son was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. [4]David's fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggish; and the fifth was Shephatiah, and his mother was Abital. [5]And David's sixth son was Ithream, whose mother was Eglah. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
[6]During the war between the followers of Saul and David, Abner became more powerful. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} [7]He even slept with Saul's concubine Rizpah, daughter of Aiah. Ish-Bosheth told Abner he should not have done that. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [8]This made Abner very mad and he said, "Do you think I'm nothing but a dog? I have been loyal to your father's family and friends, and I haven't turned you over to David. So why do you accuse me of some crime with Rizpah? [9-10]So I will now hand your kingdom over to David and help set up his reign from Dan in the far north to Beersheba in the far south." {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} [11]This made Ish-Bosheth so afraid that he didn't say a word. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}
[12]Abner sent messengers to David to suggest that David make an agreement with him so that he could persuade everyone in Israel to make David their king. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [13]David

said, "Good idea. But first bring Michal, Saul's daughter, back to me." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 14Then David sent some officials to Ish-Bosheth, demanding that he give David his wife Michal, whom he bought by killing many Philistines. 15So Ish-Bosheth agreed and had her taken from her husband Palti. 16Her husband Palti went with her to Bahurim, crying all the way. When Abner told him to go home, he left. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

17Abner told the elders of Israel, "You have wanted to make David your king. 18So now's the time to do it. Remember that the LORD promised to use David to rescue His people from all your enemies." {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 19Abner persuaded the Benjamites to go along with this idea. Then he went to Hebron to tell David everyone was interested in making him king. 20Abner arrived with 20 men, and David gave a big feast for them. 21Then Abner said, "Let me go get all Israel to come make an agreement with you and make you king of all Israel." So Abner left. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

22Right after Abner left, Joab and some of his men returned from a raid, bringing with them everything they had taken from a town. 23Someone told Joab that Abner had come to see David and Abner left with his blessing. {471 Surveillance-Prayer, Ps. 59:1-3} 24Joab went immediately to the king and said, "What have you done? Why did you let him get away? 25Don't you realize he came to spy on you?" {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

26Joab sent messengers to catch up with Abner and bring him back from the well at Sirah. But David didn't know about this. 27Then when Abner got back to Hebron, Joab pulled him aside to the town gate as if to speak with him privately, and he stabbed Abner in the stomach, and he died. {234 Impatient-Judgmental Prayer, Rev. 6:10} 28When David heard about this, he said he was innocent of killing Abner. 29"Joab is the guilty one. I pray his family will always have some physical problems with sores or lameness or die in war or starve." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

30So why did Joab and his brother Abishai kill Abner? Because Abner had killed their brother Asahel in the battle at Gibeon. 31Then David ordered Joab and all the people to mourn Abner's death by tearing their clothes and wearing clothes made of old rough materials and walking in front of Abner's body. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} David himself walked behind the coffin. 32Abner was buried in Hebron, and David and all the people cried. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 33Then the king sang a funeral song about Abner: {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

"Should Abner have died like a fool?
34Your hands weren't tied nor were your feet chained. And yet you died as a victim of wicked men."

And the people cried again.

35People urged David to eat something while it was still daytime. But he refused, saying he would not eat anything till after sunset. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} 36His attitude pleased the people, just as everything he did pleased them. 37The

people knew by his actions that he had no part in the murder of Abner. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
38David said, "Today a great leader has fallen in Israel. 39As you know, I am the king, but these nephews of mine–Joab and Abishai–are too strong to control. So may the LORD repay these wicked men for the wicked things they have done." {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, give me patience to accept things that come slowly, as David was slowly given rulership over the kingdom. Help me understand how bad things happen. Teach me Your patience, and put within my heart a spirit of determination to do Your will. Amen.

2 Samuel 4

Ish-Bosheth Is Murdered

1When Ish-Bosheth heard that Abner had died in Hebron, he was very afraid, and everyone in Israel was very frightened. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}
2Ish-Bosheth had put two men in charge of raiding bands. They were Baanah and Recab, sons of Rimmon of the Benjamin tribe. Rimmon was from Beeroth, which was part of Benjamin. 3People who used to live in Beeroth were considered Benjamites even though they moved to Gittuim and still live there. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}
4Saul's son Jonathan had a son named Mephibosheth who couldn't walk since age five. When someone told his nurse that Saul and Jonathan had died, she hurried off carrying him in her arms, but he fell and injured his legs. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}
5Recab and Baanah went to the house of Ish-Bosheth, arriving there when it was hot and he was taking a nap. 6They went into the house, pretending to get some flour. Then they went to the bedroom, and stabbed Ish-Bosheth in the stomach, and ran off.
7After they stabbed him, they cut off his head. They took his head with them as they traveled all night to the Jordan River. 8When they got to Hebron, they said to David, "Here is the head of the man Ish-Bosheth, who tried to kill you. This is how you are getting even with Saul and his family." {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3}
9David answered, "The LORD is the one who rescues me from trouble. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 10Awhile back when someone told me that Saul was dead, he thought he was giving me good news. But I killed him. 11Now you two have killed Ish-Bosheth, an innocent man on his own bed. So you too deserve to die." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}
12So David ordered his men to kill Baanah and Recab. They cut off their hands and feet and hung their bodies by the pool in Hebron. But they buried Ish-Bosheth's head in Abner's tomb in Hebron.

Lord, when I read of those who murder for political gain, may I always do right, in the

right way, at the right time, for the right reasons. Amen.

2 Samuel 5

David Becomes King over All Israel

[1]Leaders from all Israel's tribes met with David in Hebron and said, "We are all related. [2]When Saul was king, you led us in battle as our real leader. And the Lord said you would be our leader, taking care of us as a shepherd cares for his sheep." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [3]Then David made an agreement with them in the Lord's presence, and the leaders crowned him king over all Israel. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [4]At the time he was 30 years old, and he ruled for 40 years. [5]This included seven and a half years in Hebron over Judah, and 33 years in Jerusalem over all Israel.

[6]David and his men went to Jerusalem to attack the Jebusites who lived there. When the Jebusites saw them outside their city, {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} they said, "You can't get in here. Even our blind and lame can keep you out." [7]But David did capture the fortress of Zion, now called the City of David. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [8]David said, "To capture the Jebusites, we'll have to go up through the water tunnel to reach these blind and lame enemies of mine." That's the origin of the saying, "The blind and the lame enemies can't enter the palace." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}

[9]After defeating the Jebusites, David moved to Zion and named it the City of David. He built up the area around it. [10]David became more and more powerful because the LORD, {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} the God of the Heavens, was with him. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17}

[11]Hiram, king of Tyre, sent messengers to David, with carpenters and stone workers who took cedar logs to build David's palace. [12]David realized that the Lord had made him king over Israel and had blessed his rule for their benefit. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} [13]After David moved to Jerusalem, he married several more concubines and wives [14]and had these sons: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, [15]Ibhar, Elishua, Nepheg, Japhia, [16]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

[17]The Philistines heard that David was now king of Israel, and so they took a lot of soldiers to try to find him, but he went into hiding. [18]When David heard that the Philistines soldiers were in the Rephaim Valley, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [19]he asked the Lord if he should attack the Philistines and if he would win. The Lord said, "Yes, I will help you defeat them." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [20]So David defeated them at Baal-Perazim. He said, "The LORD went against my enemies like a flood." So he named the place Baal-Perazim (meaning "The Lord Broke Through"). {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [21]The Philistines left their idols there, and David's men picked them up. {45 Blessing

of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

22Again the Philistines went against David in the Rephaim Valley. 23When David asked the LORD what to do, He said, "Don't attack them from the front. Go around behind them and attack them near the balsam trees. 24When you hear a sound in the tops of the trees like troops marching, then attack the Philistines. That sound will mean I have gone ahead of you to defeat them." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 25So David did as the LORD said and he chased them all the way from Gibeon to Gezer. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

Lord, help me overlook those who offend me, just as David overlooked these elders. It is written that David was "a man after Your own heart." May it be said of me that I pursued Your heart. Amen.

2 Samuel 6

David Brings the Sacred Chest to Jerusalem

1David got together 30,000 of Israel's best soldiers 2and they went to Baalah of Judah, also called Kiriath-Jearim. They went there to bring back to Jerusalem the sacred chest, {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} which is named after the LORD of the Heavens, whose throne is above the winged creatures. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} 3They put the sacred chest on a new ox cart and brought it down from the hillside home of Abinadab. Two of his sons, Uzzah and Ahio, were guiding the cart, 4and Ahio was walking in front. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} 5David and many Israelites were very happy as they sang and played music on harps, lyres, tambourines, castanets, and symbols. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

6When they got to Nacon's threshing floor, the oxen stumbled, and so Uzzah grabbed the sacred chest to steady it. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 7This made the LORD very angry, and so He killed Uzzah right next to the chest. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 8This in turn made David angry, and so the place is called Perez Uzzah (meaning "Outbreak against Uzzah"). {234 Impatient-Judgmental Prayer, Rev. 6:10}

9Fearful of the LORD, David wondered how he could ever take the sacred chest to Jerusalem. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 10So instead of taking it there, he took it to the home of Obed-Edom, from Gath. 11It was there for three months, and God blessed Obed-Edom and his family. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

12Hearing that the LORD had blessed Obed-Edom and his family because of the sacred chest, David went to Obed-Edom's house and took the chest to Jerusalem and everyone was happy again. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} 13After the men who were carrying the chest took six steps, they stopped and David sacrificed a bull and a calf. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 14Dancing with enthusiasm, David was wearing a priestly vest, 15while

he and the people who brought the sacred chest were shouting and playing trumpets. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}
16Michal, Saul's daughter and David's wife, looked out a window and saw them bringing the sacred chest to Jerusalem. Seeing David jumping and dancing for the Lord made her feel disgusted. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
17They put the chest in a tent David had set up for it. He then sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings to the Lord. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 18Then he blessed the people in the name of the LORD of the Heavens. {445 Speaking a Blessing-Prayer, Num. 6:27}
19He gave everyone a loaf of bread, a cake of dates, and a raisin cake, and everyone went home.
20When David went home, his wife Michal said in disgust, "You sure made a fool of yourself today, dancing partially clothed in front of your slave girls like an indecent man." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 21David responded, "I was doing this in thanks to the LORD because he chose me and not your father to be Israel's king. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
22I am willing to act like a fool to show my joy in the LORD. But my slave girls still respect me." {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} 23Michal never had any children. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, give me a holy fear of disobeying You. Come be at the center of all my plans. Teach me how to please You. I will worship You with all I do. Lord, be King of my life. Amen.

2 Samuel 7

God's Promise to King David

1When David was living in his palace and Israel was not at war, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 2he said one day to Nathan the prophet, "Here I am living in this nice palace made with lots of cedar, but the sacred chest is still in a tent." {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134}
3Nathan said, "Do whatever you feel the Lord wants you to do." {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134}
4That night the LORD told Nathan to give this message to David: 5"Are you the one to build a temple for Me to live in? {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 6Ever since bringing you out of Egypt, I have lived in a tent. 7I never said to any of the Israelite leaders, who are like shepherds, 'Why haven't you built a house of cedar for Me?' {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
8"'I, the LORD of the Heavens, chose you, David, from being a shepherd to being the prince of My people. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 9I have been with you, and I have defeated your enemies, and I will now make you very famous. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
10I have given your people a permanent homeland, where they can live in peace and where wicked nations will no longer bother them {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer,

Heb. 12:14} 11as they used to do when I appointed judges over them. I will keep enemies away from you.

"'Many of your descendants will be kings. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 12After you die, I'll choose a descendant to follow you, and I will make his kingdom strong. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 13He will build a house—a temple—for Me, and his kingdom will last forever. 14I will be his father, and he will be My son. If he sins, I will use other nations to punish him. 15But My unfailing love will always be with him, though I took it from Saul. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} 16One of your descendants will always be king, and your throne will be established forever.'" {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

17Nathan told David everything the LORD said. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

18Then David sat in the LORD's presence and said, {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} "Who am I and my family, Sovereign Lord, that You have blessed me? 19And besides that, You have promised to bless my family in the future. How interesting that You treat people this way. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} 20What more can I say? {251 Interchange with God, Gen. 18:23-33} 21You have done this great thing, and you have let me know about it. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 22You are so great, O Sovereign Lord. No one is like You, as we well know. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 23No other nation is like Israel, the people You rescued from Egypt for Yourself. You did wonderful things for them by forcing out other nations and their gods from their land. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 24You chose Israel to be Your people forever, and You are their God. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

25"Now, LORD God, please keep Your promise to me and my descendants. 26Then You will be honored and people will say, 'The LORD of the Heavens is the God of Israel.' {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} And my descendants will be established before You. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

27"O LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, You have told me my descendants will be kings. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} That's why I have the courage to pray this way to You. 28Sovereign Lord, You are God, and You can be trusted to do as You say, including this promise to me, Your servant. 29Please bless my descendants so they can continue as kings. Sovereign Lord, please bless my descendants forever." {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

Lord, thank You for not giving me all the things for which I pray. I will learn Your Scriptures, think Your thoughts, and pray Your words. I will humble myself so You can use me. Amen.

2 Samuel 8

The Military Victories of David

[1]Eventually David defeated the Philistines, including conquering Metheg Ammah, also known as Gath. [2]He also defeated the Moabites. He made their soldiers lie down on the ground, and measuring them with a rope, he killed every two men and let every third man live. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} The Moabites were subject to him and paid him taxes.
[3]When Hadadezer, king of Zobah, went to the Euphrates River to regain some land there, [4]David captured 1,700 chariot drivers and 20,000 foot soldiers, and he cut the leg muscles of all but 100 of the horses. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [5]The Syrians of Damascus went to help Hadadezer, but David killed 22,000 of them. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [6]He set up military posts in Damascus, and the Syrians were subject to him and paid him taxes. The LORD gave David victory in every battle he fought. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}
[7]Hadadezer's officers had gold shields, and David took these to Jerusalem. [8]He also took a lot of bronze from the cities of Betah and Berothai, which had been under Hadadezer.
[9]When Toi, king of Hamath, heard that David had defeated Hadadezer, [10]he sent his son Joram to congratulate David on his victory, because Toi and Hadadezer were enemies. Joram gave David a number of gifts made from silver, gold, and bronze. [11]And David gave these to the LORD just as he had done with silver and gold from the many other nations he defeated, {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [12]such as Edom, Moab, Ammon, the Philistines, the Amalekites, and goods taken from Hadadezer of Zobah.
[13]David killed 18,000 Edomites soldiers in the Salt Valley, south of the Dead Sea. [14]He then set up military posts throughout Edom, and the Edomites were subject to David as their ruler. The LORD gave him victory in every battle. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}
[15]David reigned over all Israel, always doing for his people what was fair and right. [16]His chief officers were his nephew Joab, army commander; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud, who was government recorder; [17]Zadok, son of Ahitub, and Ahimelech, son of Abiathar, who were priests; Seraiah, chief secretary; [18]Benaiah, son of Jehoiada, captain of David's bodyguard consisting of Kerethites and Pelethites; and David's sons, who were advisers. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, I claim victory no matter what strategy the enemy uses against me. You are the source of my victories. I give You all credit for all my victories. Amen.

2 Samuel 9

David Befriends Mephibosheth

[1]David had promised Jonathan that he would be kind to Saul's family. So he wondered if any of them were alive. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [2]David

asked Ziba, a servant in Saul's family, to see him. When David asked if he was Ziba, he said, "Yes. I am." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 3Then David asked him if he knew if any of Saul's family was alive because he wanted to keep his promise to be kind to them. Ziba answered, "Jonathan's lame son is still alive." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 4"Where is he?" David asked. Ziba replied, "He is in Lo Debar at the home of Machir, son of Ammiel." 5So David had Jonathan's son brought to Jerusalem.

6When Jonathan's son, who was Saul's grandson, came to David, he bowed down in honor. "Are you Mephibosheth?" David asked. "Yes. I am your servant." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 7David said, "Don't be afraid. I want to be kind to you because of my promise to your father. I'm going to give you back the land of your grandfather Saul, and I want you to live here at the palace with me." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

8Mephibosheth bowed down again and said, "I don't know why you are interested in me. I'm nothing more than a dead dog." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 9David then told Ziba, Saul's servant, "I'm giving to your master's grandson everything that belonged to Saul and his family. 10I want you and your sons and servants to work for Mephibosheth, farming his land and his ways. And he will always eat with me at my table." Ziba had 15 sons and 20 servants. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} 11Ziba said, "I will do whatever you tell me to do." So Mephibosheth ate every meal at David's table as if he were one of his sons. 12Mephibosheth had a young son named Mica. All of Ziba's family members were Mephibosheth's servants. 13And Mephibosheth, crippled in both feet, moved to Jerusalem and lived in the palace.

Lord, most kings would have killed any heir to the throne, but David exercised grace. Thank You for giving me grace, the opposite of what I deserve. I deserve nothing, but thank You for giving me Your riches in grace. Thank You for being a God of mercy, kindness, and grace. Amen.

2 Samuel 10

David Defeats the Ammonites and Syrians

1Later Nahash, king of the Ammonites, died, and his son Hanun became king. 2David said, "Nahash was kind to me, so I will be kind to his son." David sent messengers to express sympathy to Hanun about the death of his father. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 3When David's men arrived, Hanun's officials told Hanun, "They aren't here to express sympathy. They are spies." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 4So Hanun took David's men and shaved off half of each man's beard and cut off their clothes at their buttocks, and sent them off. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}

5David sent messengers to meet his men and to tell them to stay in Jericho until their beards grew back. {526 Wait-Prayer,

Ps. 27:14} [6]The Ammonites realized they made David angry, so they hired 20,000 Syrian soldiers from Beth-Rehob and Zobah, 1,000 soldiers from the king of Maacah and 12,000 men from Tob. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [7]So David sent Joab with all his soldiers to attack them. [8]The Ammonites were ready to fight by the city gate, and the Syrians of Zobah, Rehob, Tob, and Maacah were in the fields. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}

[9]Joab realized he would have to fight the enemy behind him and ahead of him. So he chose his best troops and went against the enemy. [10]And he put the rest of his soldiers under Abishai, his brother. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [11]Joab told him that each one should be ready to help the other if either group was in trouble. [12]Joab told Abishai to be brave and fight to protect their people and their cities. He added, "We are in the Lord's hands." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[13]When attacked, the Syrians began to run. [14]And when the Ammonite soldiers saw the Syrians running, they too ran from Abishai and retreated into the city. Then Joab returned to Jerusalem. [15]The Syrians now saw they could not defeat Israel themselves; [16]so Hadadezer recruited more Syrians from beyond the Euphrates River. They went to Helam under Shobach, Hadadezer's commander. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

[17]David then recruited his soldiers, crossed the Jordan River, and went to Helam. The Syrians fought David, {511 Urgent-Prayer, Luke 11:1-11} [18]but again they ran from the Israelites. David's men killed 700 charioteers and 40,000 foot soldiers, and he killed Shobach. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [19]All the allies of Hadadezer surrendered to David and were subject to him as their leader. The Syrians then were afraid to help the Ammonites any more. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, keep me from being suspicious of people. May I live with an open hand and an open heart. Amen.

2 Samuel 11

David and Bathsheba

[1]Armies usually go to war in the spring. David sent Joab and his army to attack the Ammonites and lay siege to their capital city of Rabbah. But David stayed behind in Jerusalem. [2]One evening he got out of bed and walked on the flat roof of his palace. From his roof he saw a beautiful woman taking a bath. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [3]He sent someone to find out who she was, and the man told David she was Bathsheba, daughter of Eliam and wife of Uriah the Hittite. [4]Then David sent for her, and she came to him, and he slept with her. (She had just completed the cleansing ritual after her monthly period.) She went home, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [5]and then realizing she was pregnant, she informed David.

6So David ordered Joab to send Uriah
home. 7Uriah arrived, and David asked
him about Joab, the soldiers, and the war.
8Then David told him to go home and
relax. David even gave him a gift. 9But
Uriah didn't go home. Instead he slept that
night at the palace entrance with David's
servants.
10David heard that Uriah didn't go home
to sleep with his wife. So he asked him
why. 11Uriah said, "The sacred chest and
our soldiers are all in tents, and Joab and
his officers are camped in open fields. So it
wouldn't be fair for me to go home, eat and
drink, and sleep with my wife. I couldn't
do that." 12David told him, "Okay. Stay
here tonight, and go back to the battlefield
tomorrow." So Uriah stayed there that day
and the next. 13Then David invited Uriah
for dinner and got him drunk. But still he
didn't go home to his wife. Again he slept
at the palace entrance. {340 Overcom-
ing-Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
14Next morning David wrote a letter to
Joab, 15telling him to position Uriah in
the battle's front lines, and then to pull
the troops back so he would be killed.
{101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}
16So Joab put Uriah at a place near the city
wall where the enemy's strongest men were
fighting. 17And Uriah was killed, along
with several fellow soldiers.

Lord, I have sinned, just as David sinned. I sinned in a different way, at a different time, to satisfy a different selfish reason. Forgive me, cleanse me, and restore me. Just as You used David after his sin, use me again. Amen.

18Joab wrote a report to David, 19and he
said to the messenger, "After David reads
this report, 20he may get angry and ask
you why we were fighting so close to the
city wall where arrows could be shot at us.
21He might mention Abimelech who was
killed in Thebez when a woman threw a
millstone down on him from a city wall. If
he says this, just say, 'Uriah the Hittite was
killed too.'"
22The messenger gave this report to David,
and added, 23"'The enemy chased us out
into the fields, but we pushed them
back to the city gate. 24There the enemy
shot arrows at us, and some of your men
were killed including Uriah the Hittite."
25David told the messenger to say to Joab,
"Don't be upset by this. Different ones are
killed in battle. So keep fighting against
the city." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer,
James 4:3}
26Uriah's wife heard that her husband was
dead, and she grieved for him. {474 Tears
in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 27When her days of
mourning were ended, David brought her
to his house, married her, and they had a
son. The LORD was very displeased with
what David had done. {313 Mourning the
Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}

Lord, You know me better than I know myself. When I drift from Your fellowship, rattle my cage. When I begin to cool off, burn my soul with conviction. If I turn around,

hit me in the back. If I wander from You, YELL. Don't let me trip into sin. Amen.

2 Samuel 12

The Results of David's Sins

[1]Then the LORD sent Nathan the prophet to tell this story to David: {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} "A rich man and a poor man lived in the same town. [2]The rich man had many sheep and cattle, [3]but the poor man had only a little lamb, which was like a pet to him and his children. He let it eat from his own plate and drink from his cup, and it slept with him. [4]One day a traveler arrived at the home of the rich man. Instead of killing one of his sheep for food for the guest, the rich man stole the poor man's lamb and killed it and roasted it and served it to his guest.

[5]"This made David terribly angry. He told Nathan, 'The man who did this should be killed. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [6]He must pay four times what the lamb was worth.'"{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[7]Then Nathan said to David, "You are that man. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} The LORD, the God of Israel, says, 'I made you king of Israel, and I kept you safe from Saul. [8]I gave you his palace and his wives and the kingdoms of Israel and Judah, and I could have given you much more. [9]Why then did you disregard My word by doing this evil thing? You murdered Uriah and stole his wife. [10]From now on murder will occur often in your family, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} all because you disregarded My word and took Uriah's wife to be yours. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [11]Your own family members will rebel against you. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} One who is close to you will go to bed with your wives and everyone will see it. [12]You sinned in secret, but this sin will be done in the open for everyone to see."

[13]David confessed to Nathan, "Yes. I have sinned against the LORD." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} Nathan replied, "True. But the LORD has forgiven you, and you won't die. [14]But your sin has caused the LORD's enemies to scoff at Him. So your child will die." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[15]Nathan went home. Then Bathsheba and David's baby got very sick. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [16]David begged God to make the boy well. David didn't eat, and he slept at night on the ground. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [17]His officials tried to get him to get up and eat, but he refused. [18]When the baby was only a week old, he died. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} David's officials were hesitant to tell him the baby died, because they said, "He was so disturbed when the child was alive. What would he do now that the baby is dead?" {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[19]When David heard them whispering, he knew what had happened. So he asked, "Is my child dead?" "Yes," they said. [20]Then David got up, washed, put on some lotion, and got dressed, {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} and went into the

tabernacle and worshiped the LORD. Then he went to the palace and he ate. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 21His servants were surprised. They said, "Why are you acting this way? When the baby was alive, you cried and wouldn't eat. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} And now that the baby is dead, you are up and eating."
22David replied, "I cried and didn't eat when my baby was alive because I thought, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 'Perhaps the LORD will let him live.' 23But now that he is dead, there is no need to go without eating. I can't bring him back. But someday I will go to where he is." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
24David comforted Bathsheba, and he slept with her. She got pregnant and gave birth to another son and they named him Solomon. The LORD loved Solomon, {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 25and Nathan the prophet told David that his name should be Jedidiah (meaning "Loved by the Lord"). {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
26Meanwhile Joab and the Israelite army fought against Rabbah, capital of Ammon. 27He sent word to David telling him he captured the city and cut off its water supply. 28Joab said to David, "Bring the rest of the army and capture the city so that you will get the credit for the victory instead of me." {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}
29So David got the rest of the soldiers together and they captured Rabbah. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 30He took the crown off of the king's head and put it on his own head. The crown was made of gold and had several gems in it, and it weighed about 75 pounds. He carried off many things of value. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 31And he made the people work as slaves with saws, picks, and axes, and to make bricks. He did this with all the Ammonite cities. Then David and his army returned to Jerusalem. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, keep me from sin so I don't have to suffer as David did. Help me repent early and completely. Amen.

2 Samuel 13

Amnon Rapes Tamar

1David had a beautiful daughter Tamar, the sister of Absalom. Amnon, her half brother, fell in love with her. 2But because he could not win her love, he was so frustrated he became ill. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 3Amnon's cousin Jonadab, the son of David's brother Shimeah, was a crafty man. 4One day he asked Amnon, "Why do you look so sad? What's the problem?" Amnon said, "I'm in love with Tamar, my half sister, but she doesn't pay any attention to me."
5Jonadab said, "Here's what to do. Pretend to be very sick. Then when your father comes to see you, ask him to have Tamar cook you something to eat while you watch and then serve you the food." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 6So Amnon pretended to be very sick. When

the king came to see him, Amnon asked that Tamar cook him something to eat, {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [7]and David agreed and told her to go cook some food for him.

[8]So she went to Amnon's house so he could watch her mixing dough and baking some bread. [9]When she brought it to him, he told all the servants to leave. [10]He then told her to bring the bread to his bedroom and for her to feed him there. So she did. [11]The he grabbed her and said, "Come to bed with me, my beautiful sister." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

[12]"No!" she said. "Don't do this. Such a wicked thing should never be done in Israel. [13]This would bring awful shame to me, and you would be known as one of the worst fools in all Israel. Just ask the king and he will let you marry me." [14]But he wouldn't listen, and since he was stronger than she was, he raped her. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [15]Then his love turned to hate and he yelled at her to get up and leave. [16]Then she said, "Don't send me away. That would be worse than what you have already done." But again Amnon wouldn't listen. [17] He called his servant to come and he said, "Get this woman out of here and lock the door."

[18]So the servant put her out. Like the king's other unmarried daughters, she was wearing a long beautiful robe. [19]In grief Tamar put ashes on her head and tore the robe she was wearing. Holding her head in her hands, she went away crying. [20]Her brother Absalom said to her, "I'm sorry Amnon has done this to you. But don't be so upset. After all, he's your brother." Tamar lived in her brother Absalom's house, and she was devastated beyond words. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [21]David heard of this and he was fuming mad. [22]Never again did Absalom speak to Amnon. He hated Amnon because of what he had done to his sister.

[23]Two years later Absalom's servants were cutting wool from his sheep in Baal-Hazor near Ephraim's border. [24]He invited all his brothers and half brothers and David and his officials to come join him for a feast. [25]David objected, saying they would all be too many for him. Absalom kept asking him, but David refused. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [26]Absalom finally suggested David send Amnon. [27]So finally David let Amnon and his other sons go.

[28]Absalom told his men, "I will get Amnon drunk, and then when I give the signal, kill him. Don't be afraid. Just do as I say, and be strong and courageous." [29]So Absalom's men murdered Amnon. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Then David's other sons all jumped on their mules and ran off. [30]Someone told David, "Absalom has killed all your sons." [31]He tore his clothes in grief, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} lay on the ground, and his servants also tore their clothes.

[32]Jonadab, David's nephew, said, "Not all your sons have been killed. Only Amnon. And Absalom has been planning this ever since Amnon raped Tamar. [33]Don't think all your sons are dead. Only Amnon was killed." Meanwhile Absalom escaped.

[34]A man standing on guard saw a lot of people coming down the side of the hill,

and he told David. 35Then Jonadab said to the king, "Your sons are coming, just as I said." 36Then the sons arrived, crying loudly. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} And David and his servants were crying bitterly.

37Absalom went to his grandfather Talmai, king of Geshur. 38Absalom stayed with Talmai three years. 39David finally got used to the loss of Amnon, but he longed for Absalom.

Lord, help us all control this powerful thing called sex. Amen.

2 Samuel 14

Joab Plans the Return of Absalom

1Joab knew how much the king wanted to see his son Absalom. 2So he sent someone to bring to him a wise woman from Tekoa. He said, "Put on funeral clothes and don't wear any perfume. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 3Pretend you have been grieving a long time and go to the king." Then Joab told her what to say.

4The woman from Tekoa went to David, bowed with her face to the ground, and said, "O King, please help me." 5David asked, "What's the problem?" 6She said, "I am a widow with two sons. They got into a fight, and one of them killed the other. 7Now the rest of my clan wants me to hand over my only son so they can kill him. But then there will be no one to continue my husband's name." 8David said, "Go on home, and I'll see that no one harms your son." 9She said, "I'll bear the blame if anyone accuses you for helping me." 10David said, "If anyone objects, bring him to me. I'll see that he never complains again." 11She said, "Please pray that the Lord will keep anyone from killing my son." David said, "You can be sure no one will even mess up your son's hair." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

12She said, "May I mention one other thing?" He said, "Sure." 13She said, "Why don't you do for God's people what you have said you will do for me? You said you would protect my son, so why don't you care for your son? 14All of us must die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Our lives end, like water spilled on the ground that can't be picked up again. But God doesn't take away life. He figures out ways to bring us back if we have been separated from Him. And may I suggest you should do the same?

15"I have come to you because I am afraid of what people might do to me and my son. 16I thought, 'Perhaps the king will listen to me and rescue me and my son from those who want to cut us off from God's people.' 17I know you will help me relax because you know the difference between good and evil for my lord the King is like an angel of God. May the LORD your God be with you." {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}

18The king replied, "I need to know one thing." "Yes?" she asked. 19He asked, "Did Joab put you up to this?" She replied, "Yes. I can't deny it. Joab sent me and told me what to say. 20He wanted to help you see the situation and to change it, and in your

wisdom like an angel of God you know everything that goes on."
21David sent for Joab and told him, "Okay. Go bring back Absalom." 22Joab fell to the ground to honor the king, and he said, "Now I know you approve of me because you have granted me this request." 23So Joab went to Geshur and brought Absalom back to Jerusalem. 24But the king said, "He may go to his own house, but I don't want to see him." So Absalom did not see his father. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
25No one in all Israel was as handsome and well-built as Absalom. 26He cut his hair only once a year and only then because it got too heavy. It weighed five pounds. 27He had three sons and a beautiful daughter Tamar. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 28After living in Jerusalem for two years without seeing his father, 29Absalom asked Joab to talk with David about seeing him, but Joab refused. Absalom sent for Joab a second time, but again Joab refused. 30So Absalom said to his servants, "Go set on fire Joab's barley field, which is next to mine." So they did. 31Joab went to Absalom and demanded, "Why did your servants set my field on fire?"
32Absalom replied, "I wanted you to ask my father why he brought me back from Geshur. Since I can't see him, I might as well have stayed there. I want to see my father. And if he thinks I'm guilty of murder, he may kill me." 33So Joab told the king what Absalom had said. Then David sent for Absalom, and he bowed low before David with his face to the ground. And David kissed him. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, like David, I mourn for those who sin and refuse to return to You. Amen.

2 Samuel 15

The Conspiracy of Absalom

1Later Absalom bought a fancy chariot and chariot horses, and had 50 men run in front of it. 2Every morning he got up early and waited by the side of the road that led to the city gate. Whenever anyone came that way to bring a problem to David for trial, Absalom would ask, "Where are you from?" and he would tell him his tribe. 3Then Absalom would say, "You have a strong case. It's too bad the king has no one to help him in cases like yours. 4If I were judge, people could bring their complaints to me, and I would see that he is treated fairly." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}
5Whenever anyone would start to bow down before Absalom, he would take him by the hands and hug him. 6In this way Absalom stole the hearts of all Israel from David. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 7Four years later Absalom said to David, "When I was in Geshur in Syria, I made a vow to the LORD. 8I told Him that if He brought me back to Jerusalem, I would go worship Him in Hebron." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 9The king said, "Okay. You may go." So Absalom went to Hebron.

10Then Absalom sent messengers to all the tribes of Israel, with this message: {471 Surveillance-Prayer, Ps. 59:1-3} "When you hear trumpets being played, you will know that I have been crowned king in Hebron." 11With him were 200 men from Jerusalem he invited as his guests, but they didn't know his plans. 12While Absalom was offering sacrifices in Hebron, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} he sent for Ahithophel, David's adviser, who lived in Giloh, to join him. And many others joined Absalom too.

13A messenger arrived in Jerusalem and told David that many people were joining with Absalom against David. 14David told his men, "We better leave Jerusalem right away. If we don't, he'll come here and kill us and everyone in our city." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 15His officials said, "We'll do whatever you say." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 16So he left with his family, but he left 10 concubines to take care of the palace. 17He stopped at the edge of the city 18to let his soldiers go past him, along with his bodyguard of Kerethites and Pelethites, and 600 men from Gath.

19One of the men from Gath was Ittai. David said to him, "Why are you here? You are a foreign resident. 20You arrived in Jerusalem just yesterday. So why should you go with us when you don't even know where I'm going? Take your troops and stay with Absalom. And may the Lord be kind and faithful to you." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 21But Ittai said, "As surely as you and the Lord lives, I will go wherever you go, even if it costs me my life." {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 22David responded, "Okay. Come along with us." So Ittai and his 600 men and their families continued on with David.

23The people of Jerusalem cried as David and his people passed by them and crossed the Kidron Valley, and went toward the desert. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 24Abiathar and Zadok and all the Levites were with David and were carrying the sacred chest. They set it down and Abiathar offered sacrifices while the people were leaving the city. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 25Then David said to Zadok, "Take the sacred chest back to Jerusalem. If it's the Lord's will, He will bring me back to the tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 26But if not, I am in His hands." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 27David said to Zadok, "You are a prophet, so your son Ahimaaz and Jonathan son of Abiathar could relay to me any message you receive from the Lord. 28I will wait at the shallow shores of the Jordan in the desert." 29So Zadok and Abiathar took the sacred chest back to Jerusalem and stayed there. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} 30David went up to the Mount of Olives, crying as he went. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} He had covered his head in grief and he was barefoot. Everyone with him was crying and covered their heads too. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21}

31Someone told David, "Ahithophel, your adviser, has joined with Absalom against you." David prayed, "LORD, have Ahithophel give Absalom foolish advice." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 32When

David got to the top of the Mount of Olives, Hushai the Arkite was waiting for him. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} His robe was torn, and dust was on his head.
33David told him, "If you go with me, you may slow us down because of your age.
34So I suggest you go to the city and tell Absalom you will be his adviser as you were mine in the past. Hopefully you can help me ruin Ahithophel's plans. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
35Zadok and Abiathar will be there, and you can tell them anything you hear in the palace about Absalom. 36Then their sons, Ahimaaz and Jonathan, can tell me what is happening." {471 Surveillance-Prayer, Ps. 59:1-3}
37David's friend Hushai got back to Jerusalem just as Absalom arrived from Hebron.

Lord, help me see through the lies that people tell me. Help me see through propaganda and false media reports. Keep me from panicking with the crowd. Help me always see things as they are. Amen.

2 Samuel 16

David and Ziba

1When David was going down the other side of the Mount of Olives, Ziba, a servant of Mephibosheth, met David. Ziba had two donkeys loaded with 200 loaves of bread, 100 raisin cakes, 100 fig cakes, and some wine. 2The king asked Ziba, "What are these for?" Ziba answered, "The donkeys are for your family to ride, the bread and cakes are for your men to eat, and the wine is for your men to drink when they get tired in the desert." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}
3David asked, "Where is Saul's grandson Mephibosheth?" Ziba answered, "He is staying in Jerusalem because he thinks the people will make him ruler over his grandfather Saul's kingdom." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
4David told Ziba, "Everything that used to belong to Mephibosheth is now yours." Ziba said, "I bow as your humble servant. I hope I continue to please you." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}
5As David and his men were near Bahurim, a man came out of the village and started cursing David. He was Shimei, son of Gera, and was of Saul's family clan. 6He threw rocks at David and his officials and David's bodyguards who were on each side of David. 7He said to David, "Get out of here, you murderer and rascal. 8The Lord is paying you back for murdering Saul and his family. The Lord has now handed your kingdom over to Absalom. You are finished because you are a murderer." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
9Abishai, David's nephew, said "Why should this dead dog curse the king? Let me go cut off his head." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10But David said, "No. I have so little in common with you and your brothers. If the Lord told him to curse me, who are we to tell him to stop?" {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 11Then David said to Abishai and all his officials, "My own son Absalom is trying to kill

me. And now this man from Benjamin is merely cursing me. So let him curse, because maybe the LORD told him to. 12And maybe the LORD will see the trouble I'm in and will bless me." {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

13David and his men continued on, and Shimei was on the hillside opposite him, cursing and throwing rocks and dirt at David. 14David and his men were tired when they reached their destination. So they rested and then felt better.

15Absalom and his men, with Ahithophel, arrived in Jerusalem. 16Hushai, David's friend, greeted Absalom, saying, "Long live the king." 17But Absalom said, "Why aren't you with your friend, the king?" 18-19Hushai said, "I will stay with and serve the one the LORD and His people have chosen. I served your father, so now I will help you."

20Absalom turned to Ahithophel and asked, "What's your advice? What shall I do next?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 21Ahithophel said, "Go have sex with the 10 concubines your father left to take care of the palace. Then everyone will know that you have shamed your father and ruined your relationship with him beyond repair. Then everyone will give you their full support." 22So a tent was set up for Absalom on the palace roof, and everyone watched as he went into the tent with his father's concubines. 23Absalom did whatever Ahithophel told him to do, just as David had done. Ahithophel's advice always seemed wise to both David and Absalom as though it came directly from God.

Lord, help me see through the compliments people give me, and help me see beyond the gifts people give me to get on my "good" side. They usually want me to do something for them. Lord, give me wisdom to see through compliments and bribes. I will not give "evil for evil" when people treat me in an evil way. Thank You for many friends who have provided for my needs throughout the year. Amen.

2 Samuel 17

Ahithophel's Plan

1Ahithophel then advised Absalom, "Choose 12,000 men to go with you after David. 2Attack him tonight while he is tired and discouraged. He will panic and the people with him will run off. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} But kill only David, 3and bring everyone else back. When the people learn of his death, they will be glad to return home." 4This plan sounded good to Absalom and Israel's tribal leaders. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

5Absalom said, "Let's ask Hushai what he thinks." 6When Absalom told Hushai what Ahithophel advised he said, "What do you think?" 7Hushai replied, "His advice is not good. 8You know that your father and his men are excellent soldiers. They can be as fierce as a mother robbed of her cubs. Also you know your father is an experienced fighter. 9Even now he's probably spending the night in a cave. As

soon as he attacks your men and a few are killed, you will think your entire army has been destroyed. 10Then the bravest of your soldiers who have hearts like lions will be afraid. Everyone knows that your father and his soldiers are brave fighters." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}
11"So here's my advice: Gather every fighting man in Israel from Dan to Beersheba, and you yourself lead them into battle. 12Fight David wherever he is, falling on his men, like dew falls on the ground, and killing every one of them. 13If he escapes into some city, then take ropes and pull down the walls of the city, dragging them into the nearest valley and don't leave even one stone in the city." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
14Absalom and all the others liked Hushai's advice better than Ahithophel's. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} This was the Lord's way of defeating Ahithophel's advice and bringing trouble on Absalom. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
15Hushai told Zadok and Abiathar, "Ahithophel has given Absalom advice on how he can defeat David, but I have given a different suggestion. 16Send someone right away to tell David not to spend the night at the shallow shores by the Jordan River but to cross the river so he and those with him won't be wiped out." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
17Jonathan and Ahimaaz were staying at En Rogel south of Jerusalem because they didn't want anyone to see them entering the city. A girl gave them the message for David. 18But a boy saw them leave, and he told Absalom. Jonathan and Ahimaaz went to the house of a man in Bahurim, and climbed into the man's well. 19His wife put a cover on the well and poured grain on the lid. 20When Absalom's men got to that house, they asked where Jonathan and Ahimahaaz were. She said, "They went across the brook." The men looked for them, but couldn't find them. So they went back to Jerusalem. 21After they left, the two climbed out of the well and went to David and said, "Hurry and cross the river," and they told them of Ahithophel's plan. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 22So David and all those with him crossed the Jordan, and by sunrise everyone was across. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
23Ahithophel heard that Hushai's advice, not his, was being followed. So he went to his home town of Gilo, set his affairs in order, and then hanged himself. He was buried in his family's burial place. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
24David went to Mahanaim, and Absalom with his many soldiers was crossing the Jordan. 25Absalom put Amasa in Joab's place as his army commander. Amasa was a cousin of Joab, a nephew of David, and Amasa's grandfather was Nahash, an uncle of David. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 26The Israelites under Absalom were in Gilead.
27When David arrived in Mahanaim, he was welcomed by Shobi from Rabbah, Machir from Lo Debar, and Barzillai from Rogelim. 28They brought bedding, towels, pottery jars, wheat, barley, flour, roasted grain, beans, lentils, 29honey, yogurt, sheep,

and cheese. They knew David and the people with him would be hungry, tired, and thirsty. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, teach me when it's best to settle down to wait and when it's best to keep going. Give me the ability to move quickly according to circumstances. Teach me how to use time effectively. Amen.

2 Samuel 18

The Death of Absalom

[1]David appointed officers in charge of groups of 100 men and 1,000 men. [2]He put a third of his soldiers under Joab, a third under Abishai, and a third under Ittai, and he told the troops he would go into battle with them. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [3]But the men objected to this idea. They said, "It won't matter to our enemy if all of us have to run or if they kill half of us. They want to kill you because that would be like killing 10,000 of us. You should stay here and send us help if we need it." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[4]David said, "Okay, if you think that is best." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} He then stood by the city gate as his men marched out. [5]He then ordered Joab, Abishai, and Ittai to be gentle with his son Absalom. And all the troops heard this. [6]The battle took place in the Ephraim Forest. [7]David's men defeated Absalom's troops, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} killing 20,000. [8]The battle ranged all over the countryside, and more died from the terrible terrain of the forest than from the battle itself.

[9]Absalom was riding his mule under a huge oak tree when his hair caught in the branches. His mule kept going, leaving him hanging in the air. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [10]One of David's men saw this and told Joab, "I saw Absalom hanging in a tree." [11]Surprised, Joab said, "Why didn't you kill him? I would have given you 10 pieces of silver and a fancy belt." [12]The man replied, "But I couldn't kill the king's son, even if you gave me a thousand pieces of silver. We all heard King David say to protect Absalom. [13]He always knows what is going on, and you would have told him I killed his son." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[14]Joab said, "I'm not going to waste my time with you." Then he took three spears and thrust them into Absalom's heart as he was hanging alive from the oak tree. [15]Ten of Joab's armor-bearers surrounded Absalom and made sure he was dead. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [16]Joab blew a trumpet to signal his troops {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} to stop fighting Israel's soldiers. [17]They put Absalom's body in a pit and piled huge stacks of rocks over him. And all the Israelites ran back to their homes. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}

[18]When Absalom was alive, he had set up a monument to himself in the King's Valley. He thought, "I don't have any sons to carry on my name." He named the column

Absalom's Monument, and it is still called that today.
19Zadok's son Ahimaaz said to Joab, "Let me run and take the good news to the king that the Lord has saved him from his enemy Absalom." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 20Joab said, "No, you aren't the one to take the news. You can be my messenger some other time but not today." 21Then Joab said to a man from Ethiopia, "Go, tell the king what you saw." The man bowed and ran off. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 22Ahimaaz asked Joab if he could run with the news. Joab replied, "Why? You won't get any reward for giving the news." {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} 23Ahimaaz said, "I know. But I still want to." Joab said, "Okay. Run!" then Ahimaaz took a shortcut across the plain and got to Mahanaim before the Ethiopian did. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}
24While David was sitting between the inner and outer gates of the city wall, a guard climbed to the top of the wall and saw a man running toward them. 25He shouted down to David to tell him this man was coming. David said, "If he is alone, he probably has good news." As the man got closer, 26the guard saw another man coming and shouted to David, "Here comes another man." The king said, "He must have good news too." 27The guard said, "The first one looks like Ahimaaz." The king replied, "He's a good man, so he's probably bringing good news."
28Ahimaaz yelled to David, "We won!" He bowed to the king and said, "Praise the Lord because He has given you victory." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 29When David asked, "Is Absalom all right?" Ahimaaz answered, "When Joab sent me, everyone was shouting but I don't know why." 30David told him to step aside, and he did. 31Then the man from Ethiopia arrived and said, "The good news is that the Lord has given you victory over your enemies." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 32The king asked, "Is Absalom all right?" and the man answered, "May all your enemies be like him." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 33Immediately the king was emotionally disturbed. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} So he went up to the room over the gate and cried and kept saying, "O my son Absalom! My son, my son Absalom! I wish I could have died instead of you. O Absalom, my son, my son!" {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

Lord, give me a love for my children, even as David loved Absalom the rebel. Amen.

2 Samuel 19

King David Returns to Jerusalem

1Joab heard that the king was mourning for Absalom. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} 2And when David's troops heard of his grief for his son, the joy of that day's victory turned to sadness. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 3They slipped back into Mahanaim like men ashamed after losing a battle. 4David held his hands over his face and kept on crying

aloud, "O my son Absalom! O Absalom, my son, my son!" {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}
5Joab went to the house where David was staying and said, "You have made your soldiers all feel ashamed. They saved your life and the lives of your sons, daughters, wives, and concubines. 6You seem to love those who hate you and hate those who love you. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} All of us seem to mean nothing to you. You would be happy if Absalom were alive and all of us were dead. 7I suggest you go out there and thank the troops for what they did. If you don't, they'll all leave during the night. Then you'll be worse off than ever before." 8So the king went out and sat at the city gate. As news spread that he was there, everyone went to see him. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
Meanwhile the Israelite soldiers had gone home. 9People everywhere started arguing, saying to each other, "David saved you from the Philistines, but then we made Absalom our king, and he chased David out of the country. 10But now that Absalom is dead, let's ask David to return and be our king again" {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
11So David sent a message to Zadok and Ahiathar, the priests, to tell the leaders of the tribe of Judah, "I've heard that the nation wants me to continue as their king. But you don't seem interested. Why? 12After all, we are related. So why haven't you done anything to welcome me back?" {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 13Then David told them to tell Amasa, "You are my nephew, and I am making you my army commander in place of your cousin Joab." 14Amasa convinced the leaders of Judah that he was David's commander, and so they told David to come back and bring his soldiers with him. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
15David started back, and when he got to the Jordan River, he saw that the people of Judah had come all the way to Gilgal to help him cross the river. {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 16Shimei, son of Gera the Benjamite, went from his hometown of Bahurim to welcome David back. He is the one who earlier had cursed David and thrown rocks and dirt at David. 17With Shimei were 1,000 Benjamites, Saul's servant Ziba and Ziba's 15 sons and 20 servants. They rushed to the Jordan, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 18and crossed over to bring the king's belongings across the river. After crossing the Jordan, Shimei fell down before David, 19and he said, "Please forgive me and forget the awful thing I did when you left Jerusalem weeks ago. 20I know I sinned. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} That's why I am one of the first ones to come greet you." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}
21Abishai, David's cousin said, "Shimei should be killed because he cursed the Lord's chosen king." 22David said, "What am I going to do with you and your brother Joab? This is a day for celebration, not killing anyone, because I have again been made king of Israel." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 23Then he promised Shimei he would not be killed.

[24]Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, was with those who went to meet the king. He had missed David, so he hadn't washed his feet or clothes or trimmed his beard since David left. [25]David asked him why he hadn't gone with him when he left Jerusalem. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [26]Mephibosheth said, "I wanted to and I told Ziba to saddle my donkey. [27]But Ziba lied about me, saying I didn't want to come. But you are wise like an angel of God, so I know you will do what is right. [28]You could have killed all my relatives and me. But instead you let me eat all my meals with you. So I have no complaints." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

[29]David replied, "Here's what I'll do. I'll divide all of Saul's property between you and Ziba." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [30]Mephibosheth responded, "No. Let him have it all. I'm glad to have you back." {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}

[31]Barzillai had come from Rogelim in Gilead to go across the Jordan with David. [32]he was about 80 years old and was very wealthy. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} He was the one who had given a lot of food to David and his soldiers in Mahanaim. [33]David invited him to come live in Jerusalem and would take care of him there. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [34]But Barzillai said, "No. I'm too old for you to have to do that. [35]At my age of 80 I don't enjoy food and I am hard of hearing. I would be nothing but a burden to you. [36]Just crossing the river with you will be a great honor. [37]Then I'll go to my hometown, where I can be buried near my parents. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Why not let Kimham here go with you and you can be kind to him." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

[38]The king said, "Good idea. I'll take Kimham with me and I'll do for him what I would have done for you." [39]All the people crossed the Jordan with David. He hugged Barzillai, {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} who then went home to Rogelim, [40]and David went on to Gilgal, taking Kimham with him. And all of David's soldiers and half of Israel's army went with him across the river. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [41]But the men of Israel went to him and said, "Why did the people from Judah do all the work in taking all your belongings across the river?" [42]The men of Judah heard this and said, "Why not? He is from our tribe. Why be so angry? We haven't eaten any of his food, and he hasn't given us any gifts." {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

[43]"True," they responded. "But Judah isn't the only tribe in our nation. We have 10 times as much right to him as you do. So why didn't you ask us to help? Don't forget that we were the first ones to suggest he come back as our king." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} The people of Judah spoke harshly in their replies.

Lord, may I listen to those You send to rebuke me about my failings. Amen.

2 Samuel 20

Sheba's Revolt and Defeat

[1]A scoundrel named Sheba, son of Bicri, a Benjamite, blew a trumpet and yelled, "We have nothing to do with David, this son of Jesse. Let's all go home; he's not our king." [2]So everyone except the people of Judah left David and followed Sheba. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} But the men of Judah stayed with David all the way from the Jordan River to Jerusalem. [3]When he got back to his palace in Jerusalem, he placed his 10 concubines whom he left there, and whom Absalom raped, in a separate house and under guard. He took care of their needs, but he did not sleep with them. They lived like widows the rest of their lives. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[4]David ordered Amasa to gather the troops in Judah in three days and report back to him. [5]But Amasa took longer than the three days. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} [6]So David said to Abishai, "Sheba the scoundrel may do us more harm than Absalom did. So take my bodyguard, the Kerethites and Pelethites, and go after him before he gets into a fortified city and we can't capture him." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [7]So Joab's men and David's bodyguard and David's best soldiers went out under Abishai's command to try to capture Sheba.

[8]As they arrived at the great rock at Gibeon, Amasa met them. Joab was wearing his uniform with a dagger at his belt. As he greeted his cousin, Amasa, he secretly slipped the dagger from its holder. [9]With his right hand he grabbed Amasa by his beard as if to kiss him. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [10]Amasa didn't see the dagger in Joab's left hand, and Joab stabbed him in the stomach, and his insides spilled out onto the ground. Amasa died after Joab stabbed him that one time. Then Joab and his brother Abishai went after Sheba. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[11]One of Joab's officers said to Amasa's troops, "If you are for David, come follow Joab." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [12]As Amasa was lying in his blood in the middle of the road, people stopped and stared at him. So Joab's officers dragged him to the side of the road and put a blanket over him. [13]Then everyone went with Joab to capture Sheba.

[14]Sheba went through Israel all the way north to the town of Abel Beth-Maacah. He enlisted more troops, some of whom were his relatives. [15]Joab's troops surrounded the city and built a ramp against the city wall and began battering against the wall. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [16]A wise woman called out to Joab to come listen to her. [17]When he did, she asked, "Are you Joab?" and he replied, "Yes. I am." [18]Long ago people used to say, "'If you want good advice go to Abel.' {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [19]We are a peace-loving and faithful people. You can trust us. Why are you trying to destroy a city that is loyal to Israel like a mother? Why destroy what belongs to the LORD?" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[20]Joab said, "No, I don't want to destroy your city. [21]All I want is a man in your town named Sheba, who led a rebellion against King David. Hand him over to me, and we will leave your city." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} The woman responded, "Okay. We will throw his head to you over the wall."

[22]The woman went to the town leaders and talked them into following her plan. So they cut off Sheba's head and threw it over the wall to Joab. Then he played his trumpet to signal his victory, and each of Joab's men went home. And Joab went back to David in Jerusalem. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[23]Joab was the Israelite army commander-in-chief; Benaiah, son of Jehoiada in charge of the king's bodyguard of Kerethites and Pelethites; [24]Adoram was in charge of the labor force; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud kept government records; [25]Sheva was royal secretary; Zadok and Abiathar were priests; [26]and Ira the Jairite was David's priest.

Lord, help me learn a negative lesson from Joab. Help me never do the right thing in the wrong way. I will pray for people who do right in a ruthless way. Amen.

2 Samuel 21

The Gibeonites Are Avenged

[1]When David was king, a famine lasted three years. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} When David asked the LORD about this problem, He said, "This is because Saul and his family murdered the Gibeonites." [2]So David asked the Gibeonites to come see him. They were not Israelites; they were Amorites. And the Israelites had promised not to kill them, but Saul had tried to kill them all. [3]David said to them, "What can I do for you to make up for what Saul did so that the LORD will bless His people again?" {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [4]They answered, "We don't want you to give us any money, and we don't want any Israelites to be put to death." "What then can I do?" David asked. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

[5-6]"Give us seven descendants of Saul, the one who almost killed us all, so we can kill them and hang their bodies near Gibeah, Saul's hometown." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} David said, "I'll give them to you." [7]He did not include Mephibosheth, Saul's grandson, because of the promise he made to Jonathan, Mephibosheth's father. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [8]But he gave them Armoni and another person named Mephibosheth, two sons of Rizpah, Saul's concubine. He also took five sons of Merab, Saul's daughter, and Adriel her husband. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [9]David gave these seven to the Gibeonites who killed them and hung their bodies on a hill. They died in March, at the beginning of the barley harvest.

[10]Rizpah spread a rough cloth on a rock and stayed there through the entire several-month-long harvest to keep birds from her sons' bodies in the daytime and wild

animals from eating them at night. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 11When David learned what she did, 12he had their bones buried in the grave of Saul's father Kish at Zela. 13(Earlier he had taken the bones of Jonathan and Saul from Jabesh Gilead and buried them in that grave. 14The men of Jabesh Gilead had taken their bodies from the public square of the Philistines town of Beth-Shan after they died in battle on Mount Gilboa.)

15On another occasion the Philistines were again fighting Israel. David was in the battle with his men, and he became weak and tired. 16Ishi-Benob, a giant whose spearhead weighed several pounds and who had a new sword, said he would kill David. 17But Abishai, David's nephew, killed the Philistine. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} David's men urged David never to go into a battle with them again. They said, "Why risk putting out the light of Israel?" {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

18Later the Philistines fought Israel in yet another battle. This was at Gob, and Sibbecai from Hushah killed Saph, another giant. 19In another battle at Gob Elhanan son of Jaare killed the brother of Goliath from Gath. The handle of his spear was huge like a weaver's beam. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 20In yet another Philistine-Israelite battle, this time at Gath, another giant there had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 21Jonathan, son of Shimeah, David's brother killed him. 22These four were descendants of giants in Gath, and David and his troops killed them all.

Lord, it appears the giant was about to kill David—and David would have died—if Abishai had not intervened. Thank You for people who saved me from destruction. Amen.

2 Samuel 22

The Song of David

1David sang the following song to the Lord after God had rescued him from Saul and his many enemies. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

2"The LORD is my rock, my fortress, and my Savior, 3my God where I am safe, the strength of my salvation. He is my shield and He is strong for me like the horn of an animal. I go to Him for security and safety; He rescues me from violent men. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

4"I call on the LORD, who deserves to be praised, and He saves me from my enemies. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

5"Death, like waves of the ocean, surrounded me, and its waves just about destroyed me. 6The grave wrapped its ropes around me, and I faced the trap of death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

7"But in my distress I called to the LORD, my God, and He heard me from heaven, His temple, and my cry reached His ears. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

8"The earth shook and trembled, the columns holding up the sky quaked because He was angry.
9"In His anger smoke poured from His nostrils and fire and burning coals came from His mouth.
10"He opened the heavens and came down to the earth, and He walked on dark clouds.
11"He rode on the backs of winged creatures, and He appeared in the wind as if He had wings.
12"Darkness was all around Him, and dark rain clouds were thick. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
13"Brightness shone around Him, and bolts of lightning flashed.
14"The LORD thundered from heaven, and it was like the Most High God shouting.
15"Then He shot arrows of lightning at His enemies, and they ran. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
16"At His command and the blast of His breath, the very bottom of the sea was revealed and could be seen. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
17"He reached down and grabbed me and pulled me out of the deep water.
18"He rescued me from my powerful enemies, from those who were stronger than me.
19"They attacked me when I was in trouble, but the LORD supported me.
20"He brought me to a place of safety and rescued me because He takes delight in me. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
21"The LORD rewarded me for doing what is right and because I lead a clean life {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
22"I follow what the LORD desires, and I have not sinned by turning away from Him.
23"I always keep God's laws in mind, and I have not turned from His commands.
24"I have been blameless before Him and have avoided sin.
25"The LORD has done so much for me because He knows I am clean spiritually. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
26"You are faithful to those who are faithful to You. And You are trustworthy to those who are innocent.
27"You show Yourself pure to those who are pure. And you are against those who are wicked.
28"You rescue the humble, but you keep watching the proud to bring them down.
29"You are like a lamp to me, LORD, turning my darkness into light.
30"With Your help I can defeat any army and climb up any wall to capture the city. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
31"God's ways are always perfect. And the LORD's word is true. He is like a protective shield for everyone who runs to Him for safety.
32"Our LORD alone is the true God. He is reliable like a solid rock.
33"God gives me strength and makes my way perfect. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
34"He helps me run as fast as a deer, and helps me stand on the mountainsides like a mountain goat.

35"He teaches me how to fight in war, and strengthens my arms to use a bow made of bronze.
36"You are like a shield giving me victory over my enemies, and Your help has made me great. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
37"You clear the way for me to keep me from stumbling.
38"I chased my enemies and crushed them, not stopping once till I defeated them.
39"I crushed them completely, and they could not get up. They fell at my feet. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
40"You have strengthened me for battle. You have made my enemies fall victims to me.
41"You made my enemies turn and run, and I destroyed them all.
42"They called for help, but no one answered. They even cried to the Lord, but He refused to respond.
43"I ground them to dust, and I stomped on them like mud in the streets. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
44"You have given me victory over attacks from my people. You kept me as the leader of many nations, and people I didn't even know now serve me.
45"Foreigners cringe before me, and as soon as they hear me, they obey me.
46"They lose courage and come trembling from their hiding places. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10}
47"The Lord lives. Praise to my Rock. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} May God, the Rock of my salvation be exalted.
48"He destroys those who are against me, and puts them under my power.
49"He frees me from my enemies, {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} keeps me where they can't reach me, and rescues me from violent enemies.
50"Therefore I will praise You, Lord, among the nations, and praise You with singing. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
51"God gives me, His king, great victories. He shows unfailing love to His chosen king, to me David and my descendants forever."

Lord, thank You for protecting me, guiding me, anointing me, using me, and allowing me to worship You. Amen.

2 Samuel 23

The Last Psalm of David

1David, the son of Jesse, speaks. "The Most High God made me king. I was anointed by the God of Jacob. I am known as Israel's psalmist.
2"The Spirit of the Lord spoke through me, telling me what to say. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}
3"He, the Rock of Israel, said to me 'The person who rules righteously and respects God 4is like a sunrise in a cloudless sky, and like refreshing rain that brings grass from the ground.' {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 5"He has chosen my family and made an eternal agreement with me, an agreement that is eternal and secure. He will always help me and fulfill my desires. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
6He will toss aside evil people like thorns.

They are not dug up by hand, [7]but with an iron tool or sharp spear and are burned on the spot." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[8]These are the names of David's best men: Chief of his three greatest soldiers was Josheb-Bassebeth the Tahkemonite. In a single battle he used his spear to kill 800 men. [9]Next was Eleazar son of Dodo, a descendant of Ahoah. He and David fought the Philistines of Pas Pammim. The Israelite soldiers retreated, [10]but Eleazar killed the Philistines till his hand was too tired to lift his sword. With this great victory, David's men simply returned and took the enemies' weapons and equipment. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[11]Next was Shammah son of Agee the Hararite. One time the Philistines at Lehi attacked the Israelites in a field of lentils. The Israelites fled, [12]but Shammah stood in the middle of the fields and killed the Philistines. The Lord gave Israel a great victory. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

[13]One year in the summer at harvest time these three went to see David in the Adullam Cave while the Philistines were at the Rephaim Valley. [14]The Philistines had occupied Bethlehem, and David was in a hideout. [15]David mentioned that he was thirsty for some good fresh water from the well near Bethlehem. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [16]The three broke through the Philistine lines, got water from the well, and took it to David. But instead of drinking the water, he poured it out as a sacrifice to the Lord. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [17]He explained, "I can't drink this because it is as precious as the blood of you three men who risked your lives to bring it to me."

[18]Abishai, Jacob's brother, was over the three. One time he speared and killed 300 men. [19]Because of this he was as famous as the three. But he was not one of them; he was their leader.

[20]Another great warrior, but not one of the three, was Benaiah, son of Jehoiada. He was from Kabzeel. His deeds included killing two of Moab's best warriors, killing a lion down in a snowy pit, [21]and killing a tall Egyptian soldier. Benaiah had only a club in his hand, and the Egyptian had only a spear. Benaiah grabbed the spear and killed the Egyptian with it. [22]These deeds made Benaiah as famous as the three, [23]and he was not one of the thirty. David put him in charge of his bodyguard.

[24]The thirty also included:
Asahel, Joab's brother,
Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem;
[25]Shammah from Harod;
Elika from Harod;
[26]Helez the Paltite;
Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa;
[27]Abiezer from Anathoth;
Mebunnai from Hushah;
[28]Zalmon from Ahoah;
Maharai from Netophah;
[29]Heleb son of Baanah from Netophah
Ittai son of Ribai from Gibeah (of Benjamin);
[30]Benaiah from Pirathon;
Hiddai from Nahale-Gaash;
[31]Abi-Albon the Arabathite;
Azmaveth from Bahurim;
[32]Eliahba from Shaalbon;
Bene-Jashen;

[33]Jonathan; Shammah from Harar;
Ahiam son of Sharar from Harar;
[34]Eliphelet son of Ahasbai from Maacah;
Eliam son of Ahithophel from Giloh;
[35]Hezro from Carmel;
Paarai from Arba;
[36]Igal son of Nathan from Zobah;
Bani from Gad;
[37]Zelek from Ammon;
Naharai from Beeroth (Joab's armor-bearer);
[38]Ira the Ithrite;
Gareb the Ithrite
[39]Uriah the Hittite.
There were 37 in all.

As you read the short stories of these great battles in this chapter, remember: (1) victory never came easy, (2) they always had to fight hard, (3) the enemy kept coming back, (4) they only enjoyed peace with strength, (5) but God always worked through strength. Lord, I will remember. Amen.

2 Samuel 24

A Census Is Taken

[1]Again the LORD was angry with the nation Israel. He led David to have a census taken of his soldiers (though God had allowed satan to encourage David to do this). {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [2]So David told Joab to go through all the tribes, from Dan in the north to Beersheba in the south to count the number of soldiers. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [3]Joab replied, "May you live to see your kingdom with 100 times more people than it has now. But why do you want this census taken?" [4]The king insisted they take the census, so Joab and his officers left to count the people. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[5]They first crossed the Jordan River and camped south of the Aroer and then went to Gad and on to Jazer. [6]From there they went north to Gilead and on west to Sidon. [7]Then they arrived at the fortress of Tyre and to all the cities of the Hivites and Canaanites. Then they went south all the way to Beersheba in the Southern Desert. [8]They got back to Jerusalem after nine months and 20 days. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [9]Joab told David the number of soldiers was 800,000 in Israel's 10 tribes and 500,000 in Judah.

[10]David's conscience then began to bother him, and he said to the LORD, "I have sinned greatly. Taking this military census was wrong. Please forgive me for doing this foolish thing." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [11]The next morning God spoke to the prophet Gad, who was David's seer. [12]The LORD told Gad to tell David that He was giving him a choice of one of three options. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} [13]So Gad said to David, "You may choose three years of famine throughout the land, or three months of running from your enemies, or three days of terrible disease throughout the land. Think this over and let me know what answer I should give to the Lord." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[14]David said, "That's a tough decision. But I would rather fall into the hands of the LORD because of His mercy than the

hands of our enemies." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 15So the LORD sent a disease that morning, and it lasted three days and 70,000 men in the nation died. 16But when the death angel was ready to destroy Jerusalem, the LORD felt sorry for what was happening, and He told the angel to stop. So the angel stopped at the threshing floor of Araunah the Jebusite. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
17When David saw the angel striking the people down with the disease, he said, "I have sinned terribly, but these people, my sheep, have done nothing wrong. Let your punishment be only on me and my family." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
18In response, Gad went to David and told him to build an altar to the LORD on Araunah's threshing floor. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 19So David went to see Araunah, 20and when Araunah saw David and his men coming, he bowed before the king with his face to the ground. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
21When Araunah asked David why he came to see him, David said, "I want to buy your threshing floor so I can build an altar to the LORD, so the disease on my people will stop." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 22Araunah said, "Use whatever you like. Here are oxen for the offering, threshing sledges and yokes for wood to build a fire. 23I will not sell these; I will give all of these to you." {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 24David said, "No. I insist on buying these things. I won't sacrifice something to the LORD that costs me nothing." So David paid him 50 pieces of silver for the threshing floor and oxen. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 25David built an altar there to the LORD and sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings. And the LORD answered his prayer and stopped the disease and no one else died from the illness. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, we never get too good that we're beyond sin. Keep me from being blind to evil, and keep me in the hour of temptation. I purpose not to sin against You. Amen.

1 Kings

Ch 1: Adonijah Attempts Take-Over of David's Throne 473
Ch 2: King David's Final Instructions to Solomon 475
Ch 3: King Solomon Receives Wisdom, Riches, and Honor 477
Ch 4: Solomon's State Officials 479
Ch 5: Building of the Temple of God 480
Ch 6: Building of the Temple of God 481
Ch 7: Other Building Projects of King Solomon 483
Ch 8: The Sacred Chest Is Brought into the Temple 485
Ch 9: The Lord Appears to Solomon a Second Time 488
Ch 10: The Queen of Sheba Visits King Solomon 489
Ch 11: King Solomon Turns Away from the True God 491
Ch 12: Rehoboam Ignores Wise Counsel of Older Men 493
Ch 13: The Man of God from Judah 494
Ch 14: Ahijah's Prophecy against Jeroboam 496
Ch 15: Abjiah Becomes King after Rehoboam 498
Ch 16: Baasha Rules over Israel 499

Ch 17: The LORD Takes Care of Elijah 501
Ch 18: Elijah Confronts King Ahab..... 502
Ch 19: Elijah Runs Away to Mount Horeb 504
Ch 20: Syria and Israel at War 506
Ch 21: The Vineyard of Naboth..... 508
Ch 22: The Prophet Micaiah Predicts Ahab's Defeat..... 509

1 KINGS

Key Words: *King Solomon* (1 Kings 1:30)

Key Verse: "And Zadok the priest took a horn of oil out of the tabernacle, and anointed Solomon. And they blew the trumpet; and all the people said, God save King Solomon" (1:39).

Theme: First Kings records the attempt by Adonijah, a son of David, to steal the throne of Israel. David wisely led Solomon to ascend properly to the office. Solomon built the temple, but fell away from God. The kingdom was separated under Jeroboam and Rehoboam, and First Kings traces the history of the divided nations until Jehoram was king over the southern godly kingdom of Judah, and Ahaziah was king over the northern ungodly kingdom of Israel.

We see how godly kings led the people to obey God's law and ungodly kings led the people away in disobedience. Since there is a principle that obedience brings blessings, we see events of prosperity when God's people obey Him, and likewise, events of suffering when God's people forsake Him. *Lord, may I never forsake You; may I always obey You from the heart. Amen.*

1 Kings 1

Adonijah Attempts Take-Over of David's Throne

1 In his old age King David couldn't keep warm in bed even with several blankets over
him. 2So his officials found a very beautiful young woman to lie beside him and
keep him warm. 3She was Abishag from Shunem. 4She took care of him, but he did not
have sex with her. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
5Adonijah, son of David and Haggith, decided to make himself king in place of his father.
So he hired chariots and horses, and 50 men to run in front of him. 6Unfortunately David
didn't ask him what he was doing. Adonijah was Absalom's younger brother and was very
handsome.
7Adonijah asked his half-brother Joab and Abiathar the priest to help him become king,
and they agreed. {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 8But Zadok the priest, Benaiah son
of Jehoiada, the prophet Nathan, Shimei, Rei, and David's bodyguard refused to support
Adonijah. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} 9Then Adonijah sacrificed sheep, oxen,

and calves at the Zoheleth stone near the En-Rogel spring, where he invited his brothers and royal officials of Judah to join him for his coronation. [10]But he did not invite the prophet Nathan or Benaiah or the king's bodyguard or his half-brother Solomon.

[11]Nathan asked Bathsheba, "Have you heard that your step-son Adonijah has made himself king, and David knows nothing about it? [12]Here's what I suggest you do to save your life and the life of your son Solomon. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [13]Go tell David, 'You promised me that Solomon will be the next king. So why is Adonijah king?' {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [14]When you are talking with David, I'll come in and tell him what you said is true."

[15]Bathsheba went to David's bedroom where Abishag was taking care of him, [16]and she bowed down to him. He asked her what she wanted. {464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30} [17]And she said, "You promised that Solomon would be the next king. [18]But I'm concerned that you don't realize Adonijah has made himself king. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [19]He has sacrificed a lot of oxen, calves, and sheep, and invited to his coronation all David's sons, Abiathar the priest, and Joab the army commander, but not Solomon. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [20]Everyone is waiting for you to announce the next king. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [21]If you don't, Solomon and I will be killed as soon as you die." {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11}

[22]The prophet Nathan arrived just then, [23]and he bowed before the king, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [24]and asked, "Did you say Adonijah would be the next king? [25]He has sacrificed many oxen, calves, and sheep in a coronation ceremony, and he invited all the king's sons, Joab your army commander, and Abiathar the priest. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} [26]But he did not invite me, Zadok the priest, Benaiah, and Solomon. [27]Did you do this without telling us who would be the next king?" {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

[28]David said, "Call Bathsheba." So she came in and stood there. [29]Then David said, "The Lord has been good to me. [30]Now I'll keep the promise I made to him that Solomon will be the next king." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [31]Then Bathsheba bowed with her face to the ground and said, "May you live many more years." {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [32]David then said, "Have Zadok the priest, the prophet Nathan, and Benaiah come in." When they arrived, [33]he said, "Take my servants and put Solomon on my mule and go to the Gihon Spring. [34]When you get there, have Zadok and Nathan announce that he is the next king. Blow a trumpet and shout, 'Long live King Solomon!' {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [35]Then bring him here to sit on my throne as Israel's next king." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[36]Benaiah responded, "Amen! May the Lord, the God of David, make it happen. [37]May He be with Solomon as He was with you, and may he be an even greater

king." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
38Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and David's bodyguard led Solomon to the Gihon Spring as he was riding on David's mule. 39Zadok took oil from the tabernacle and poured it on Solomon's head. They blew a trumpet, and everyone shouted, "Long live King Solomon." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 40On the way back to Jerusalem the people were playing flutes and were shouting for joy. They made such a noisy celebration that the ground shook. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}
41As Adonijah and his guests were finishing eating at a banquet, Joab asked, "Why all this noise?" {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 42Just then Jonathan, son of Abiathar the priest rushed in, and Adonijah said, "I assume you have good news." {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 43"Not so. David has made Solomon king. 44David put him on his own mule and sent him to the Gihon Spring with Zadok, Nathan, Benaiah, and David's bodyguard. 45Zadok poured oil from the tabernacle on Solomon, making him the next king. The noise you hear is the people celebrating and rejoicing. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 46Solomon is now sitting on the throne. 47David's officials have said to him, 'May God make Solomon an even greater king then you.' {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} David then worshiped in his bed {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} 48and prayed, 'Praise the LORD, the God of Israel, who has made my son king and let me live to see it.'" {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}
49Adonijah's guests quickly left the banquet, and went their separate ways because they were afraid for their lives. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 50And Adonijah, afraid that Solomon might kill him, ran to the tabernacle and grabbed the corners of the altar of burnt offering. 51Solomon heard about this 52and said, "If he behaves himself, I won't hurt him. But if he doesn't, I'll kill him." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} 53Solomon had some men get Adonijah. When he bowed down to Solomon, the king said, "Adonijah, go on home." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}

Lord, may I always go about Your work in the right way, at the right time, at the right place and may I seek the wisdom and approval of godly people when doing Your service. May I act quickly when a crisis approaches and may I wait patiently when time dictates problems will solve themselves. Then, Lord, teach me how to interpret the differences between these two periods of time. Give me good, godly, and smart counselors. I will listen to them to find Your plan for my life. Amen.

1 Kings 2

King David's Final Instructions to Solomon

1When David knew he was about to die, he gave these final words to Solomon: {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 2"I will soon die, as must everyone. I

encourage you to be strong and mature. {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} 3Obey God's laws, regulations, and commands in the Law of Moses. Then you will be successful in all you do and wherever you go. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4If you and your descendants obey the Lord wholeheartedly, then one of them will always be king of Israel. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

5"You know that Joab killed my two commanders, Abner and Amasa. He did it as an act of war, but it was in a time of peace, and their blood stained his belt and sandals. 6Do with him what you think is best, but don't let him die in peace. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

7"The sons of Barzillai the Gileadite helped me when I was escaping from Absalom. So be kind to them and let them eat their meals with you. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 8You remember Shimei son of Gera from Bahurim in Benjamin who cursed me when I was going to Mahanaim. Later when he came to greet me at the Jordan River, I told him I wouldn't kill him. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 9But he is still guilty. So plan to have him killed." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

10Then David died and was buried in Jerusalem. 11He had reigned over Israel for 40 years, seven and a half years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 12Solomon became king of Israel, and his reign went well. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

13One day Adonijah went to see Bathsheba, his stepmother. When she asked him if he was coming to make trouble, he said, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 14"No, I have a favor to ask." She said, "Go ahead; tell me." {325 Non-Anxiety Prayer, Phil. 4:6, 7} 15He replied, "You know that I was king for a short while. But now the Lord has made my brother king. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 16So I have a small request." She asked, "What is it?" 17He said, "Please ask Solomon to let me marry Abishag, the girl from Shunem. I know he won't say no to you." {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} 18Bathsheba said, "Okay. I will ask him." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

19When Bathsheba went to speak to Solomon, he stood up and then bowed down before her. He sat down and had another throne brought in for her. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 20She said, "I have a small request." He asked, "What is it, my mother?" 21She said, "Please let your half-brother Adonijah marry Abishag." {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}

22Solomon said, "What? Since he is my older brother, that is like asking that the kingdom be his. And Abiathar the priest and Joab the army commander are on his side. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} 23May God strike me dead if Adonijah doesn't die today. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 24The Lord has made me king of Israel and has promised that my descendants will also be Israel's kings." 25So the king had Benaiah go kill Adonijah. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

26Solomon then told Abiathar the priest, "Go back home to Anathoth. You should die too, but I won't kill you now because you carried the sacred chest, and you

suffered with my father in his troubles." {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[27]Solomon took away the priesthood from Abiathar. And this fulfilled God's promise made at Shiloh that Eli's descendants would not continue to serve as priests.
[28]When Joab heard about Adonijah's death, he ran to the tabernacle and grabbed the corners of the altar of burnt offering. [29]Solomon heard about this, and he told Benaiah to kill him. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [30]When Benaiah went to the tabernacle and told Joab that the king said to come out, Joab refused. He said, "Kill me here." Benaiah told this to Solomon, {148 Expedient-Prayer, Est. 4:16} [31]and Solomon said, "Do what he said. Kill him there. Then my family won't be responsible for his foolishly murdering innocent men. [32]He will be responsible for the death of Abner and Amasa. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [33]Joab and his descendants will always be guilty of these murders, but may the Lord give David and his descendants peace." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
[34]Benaiah killed Joab, and Joab was buried near his house in the desert. [35]Solomon then made Benaiah the army commander in place of Joab, and he made Zadok the priest in place of Abiathar. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}
[36]The king told Shimei, "Build a house here in Jerusalem, but don't go outside the city. [37]The minute you cross Kidron Valley, you will die." [38]Shimei said, "That's okay with me." So he lived in Jerusalem a long time. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [39]But three years later two of Shimei's slaves escaped to King Achish in Gath. [40]Shimei saddled his donkey, searched for them, found them, and brought them to Jerusalem.
[41]Solomon heard that Shimei had done this. [42]So he called in Shimei and said, "I warned you that if you left Jerusalem, you would die. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [43]So why have you broken this promise? {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [44]And by the way, I haven't forgotten all the terrible things you did to my father David. The LORD will punish you for what you have done. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [45]The LORD will bless me, and my descendants will be Israel's kings." {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1}
[46]Then Solomon told Benaiah to kill Shimei, and he did. Solomon was now in complete control of the kingdom with no one opposing him. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}

Lord, I will obey Your commands to demonstrate I have repented of the sins of my past. I will be decisive in dealing with sin, rebellion, and divisiveness in my heart. Forgive me! Cleanse me! Give me strength of resolve! Make me decisive for You; use me in Your service. Amen.

1 Kings 3

King Solomon Receives Wisdom, Riches, and Honor

[1]Solomon signed a treaty with Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and married his daughter.

She lived in the City of David until his palace, the temple, and the city wall were completed. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}
2Because the temple had not yet been built, people offered sacrifices at shrines on hilltops. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 3Solomon loved the LORD and followed his father David's instructions, except that he, like others, offered sacrifices and burned incense on hilltop shrines. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} 4The most important of the hilltop altars was in Gibeon, and Solomon offered there 1,000 animals as burnt offerings. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
5At Gibeon the LORD appeared to Solomon in a dream and told him to ask for anything he wanted. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 6Solomon answered, "You were kind to my father David because he was faithful and honest. And now You have given him a son as king. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 7You made me king in place of my father David, but I am young and inexperienced. 8And here I am among Your chosen people who are almost more than can be counted. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 9Make me wise and help me know the difference between right and wrong. No one by himself could lead this great people of Yours." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
10God said, "I like what you have asked for. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 11Since you didn't ask for a long life or riches or the defeat of your enemies but for wisdom, {414 Saint Paul Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8} 12I will give you wisdom and insight greater than anyone else. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} 13And I will give you what you didn't ask for – wealth and honor – greater than any other king. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 14And you will live a long time if you obey Me and follow My commands as your father David did." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
15Solomon woke up and realized that God had spoken to him in a dream. He went back to Jerusalem and into the tabernacle. He offered burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the altar of burnt offering as he faced toward (but could not see) the sacred chest. Then he gave a feast for all his officials. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
16One day two prostitutes went to Solomon to settle an argument. 17One of them said, "This woman and I live in the same house. My baby was born at home, 18and three days later her baby was born. 19Her baby died during the night when she rolled over on him. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 20So she got up and took my son from me while I was asleep, and she put her dead son next to me. 21And when I got up in the morning, I saw he was dead. Then in the morning light I could see it wasn't my son at all." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 22The other woman said, "Wrong. The dead son is yours and the living one is mine." They argued back and forth. 23Then Solomon said, "You each claim the living child is yours, and the dead one belongs to the other." {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor.

4:3-4} [24]The he said, "Bring me a sword." [25]And he ordered "Cut the baby in half. That way each mother can have half of the child."
[26]The woman whose son was alive said to the king, "Please don't kill my son. Give him to her." But the other woman said, "Go ahead and cut him in half." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [27]Then Solomon said, "Give the baby to the woman who wants him to live. Obviously she is his mother." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [28]Everyone is Israel was amazed when they heard the king's decision and realized that God had given him great wisdom.

Lord, give me wisdom. I will study; I will memorize Your Word; I will review often. For my work help me be smart. But that's only the beginning, I want Your indwelling Holy Spirit to speak to me and help me understand Your will for my life. Give me wisdom. Give me everything I need to serve You and worship You. Like Solomon, I know I'm weak and human. Give me Yourself. Amen.

1 Kings 4

Solomon's State Officials

[1]In Solomon's rule over Israel [2]he had these nine top officials: The high priest was Azariah son of Zadok. [3]Secretaries were Elihoreph and Ahijah, sons of Shisha. The government record-keeper was Jehoshaphat, son of Ahilud. [4]The army commander was Benaiah son of Jehoiada. The priests were Zadok and Abiathar. [5]In charge of regional officers was Azariah son of Nathan. A priest and adviser to the king was Zabud son of Nathan. [6]The manager of palace affairs was Ahishar. And in charge of the labor force was Adoniram son of Abda.
[7]The regional officers, one for each tribe, provided food for the king and his household, each one giving supplies for a month. [8]These are their names:
Ben-Hur was in charge of the hill country of Ephraim.
[9]Ben-Deker was in charge of the towns of Makaz, Shaalbim, Beth-Shemesh, and Elon-Beth-Hanan.
[10]Ben-Hesed was in charge of the towns of Arubboth and Socoh, and the region of Hepher.
[11]Ben-Abinadab was in charge of Naphoth-Dor and was married to Solomon's daughter Taphath.
[12]Baana son of Ahilud was in charge of the towns of Taanach and Megiddo. He was also in charge of the whole region of Beth-Shan near the town of Zarethan, south of Jezreel from Beth-Shan to Abel-Meholah to the other side of Jokmeam.
[13]The son of Geber was in charge of the town of Ramoth in Gilead and the villages in Gilead belonging to the family of Jair, a descendant of Manasseh. He was also in charge of the region of Argob in Bashan, which had 60 walled towns with bronze bars on their gates.
[14]Ahinadab son of Iddo was in charge of the territory of Mahanaim.

15Ahimaaz was in charge of the territory
of Naphtali and was married to Solomon's
daughter Basemath.
16Baana son of Hushai was in charge of the
territory of Asher and the town of Bealoth.
17Jehoshaphat son of Paruah was in charge
of the territory of Issachar.
18Shimei son of Ela was in charge of the
territory of Benjamin.
19Geber son of Uri was in charge of Gil-
ead, where King Sihon of the Amorites
and King Og of Bashan had lived. And
one officer was in charge of the territory
of Judah.
20So many people were living in Israel
and Judah at this time that they seemed
like grains of sand on a beach. Everyone
had plenty to eat and drink, and all were
happy. 21Solomon's reign extended from
the Euphrates River to the land of the Phi-
listines and south to Egypt. These king-
doms paid him taxes every year.
22Solomon's provisions for one day were
185 bushels of fine flour, 375 bushels of
coarsely ground flour, 2310 grain-fed cattle,
20 pasture-fed cattle, 100 sheep, and many
deer, gazelles, roebucks, and geese. 24His
reign extended over all the kingdoms west
of the Euphrates River, from Tiphsah to
Gaza. And there was peace in that entire
region. 25In Solomon's lifetime Judah and
Israel were free from warfare and each
family had its own grapevine and fig tree.
26Solomon had 40,000 stalls for chariot
horses and 12,000 charioteers. 27Each
month the regional officers brought food
to Solomon and his officials. 28They also
brought barley and straw for the horses.
29God gave Solomon great wisdom and
insight, and he had a lot of interests. 30He
was wiser than anyone else, including the
wise people of the East and in Egypt. 31He
was wiser than anyone else in the world,
including Ethan the Ezrahite, Heman,
Calcol, and Darda, sons of Mahol. He was
famous in all the countries around Israel
and Judah. 32Solomon wrote 3,000 prov-
erbs and 1,005 songs. 33He knew all about
animals, birds, reptiles, fish, and plant life
from the cedars of Lebanon to the hyssop
plant. 34Kings from nations everywhere
sent people to listen to his wisdom.

Lord, teach me to live wisely as I read Solomon's proverbs. I don't know all things, and I never will. Teach me what I need to know, and guide me where I need to go. Meet my needs when the time is necessary, and even when I can't learn what I need to know; work all things together for Your good. Amen.

1 Kings 5

Building of the Temple of God

1King Hiram of Tyre had always been
a good friend of David. So he sent offi-
cials to meet with Solomon. {115 Differ-
ence-Making Prayer, Jude 22} 2Solomon
wrote back this message: 3"As you know,
my father David wanted to build a tem-
ple for the Lord. But he couldn't because
of wars he was engaged in. {489 Trans-
fer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 4But now
the LORD my God has given us peace in

my kingdom with no threat of war anywhere. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 5So I am planning to build a temple for my LORD, just as He told my father that I should do. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 6Please have cedars from Lebanon cut down for me. I'll send some men to work with yours, and I will pay your men whatever you suggest. No one here can cut down timber the way you Sidonians can." {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

Lord, You gave David a promise that his son would build a temple, and it happened. You have promised that Your Holy Spirit would dwell in me and it happened (John 14:26). Thank You for keeping Your promises. Amen.

7Hiram was pleased to hear from Solomon. He said, "I am glad the LORD gave David a wise son {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} as king of Israel." 8Then he sent this reply to Solomon: "I will give you all the cedar and cypress logs you need. 9My men will carry them down from Lebanon to the Mediterranean Sea and build them into rafts and float them to wherever you want them. There we will untie the loop and your workers can take them from there. You can pay me with food for my workers." {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5}

10Hiram produced for Solomon all the cedars and cypress timber he needed. {379 Prevailing-Prayer, Jer. 12:1} 11And every year Solomon sent him 125,000 bushels of wheat and 115,000 gallons of olive oil. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 12The Lord blessed Solomon with great wisdom, and Hiram and Solomon signed a formal peace alliance. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

13Solomon ordered 30,000 workers from all over Israel to cut logs for the temple. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 14Each month he sent 10,000 workers to Lebanon, so that each worker was in Lebanon for one month and home for two months. Adoniram was in charge of the labor force. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 15Solomon also had 80,000 workers to cut stones, 70,000 men to carry the stones, {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} 16and 3,300 others to supervise the workers. 17They cut and shaped large blocks of stone for the temple foundation. 18Solomon and Hiram's men worked with men from Gebal in Lebanon in getting the logs and stones ready for the temple. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

1 Kings 6

Building of the Temple of God

1In the spring of Solomon's fourth year as king (966 B.C.) his workers began building the temple. This was 480 years after the Israelites left Egypt. 2The temple was 90 feet long, 30 feet wide 3and extended 15 feet from the front of the temple. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 4Narrow windows were made in the temple.

5Three levels of storage rooms were built along the sides and back of the temple.

[6]The rooms on the bottom level were 7 ½ feet wide, the rooms on the second level were 9 feet wide, and the rooms on the third level were 10 ½ feet wide. The rooms were connected to the temple walls by beams or ledges from the wall. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [7]To avoid the noise of hammers and chisels at the temple site, workers shaped the stones at the quarry. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

Lord, fit all the "stones" of my life perfectly together, just as the stones for Solomon's temple were cut in the quarry but assembled on site. May my life be a "temple" where You dwell and where You are worshiped. Amen.

[8]Entrance to the bottom rooms was on the south side of the building, with stairs leading to the other levels. [9]The temple roof was made of cedar beams. [10]The storage rooms around the temple were each 7 ½ feet high, and were attached to the temple by cedar beams. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22}

[11]The Lord told Solomon, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} [12]"If you follow My regulations and obey My commands, I will keep My promise to David. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [13]I will live among the Israelites and I will not leave them." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [14]So at last the temple was finished. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [15]The workers paneled the inside walls with cedar, and they covered the floor with cypress. [16]The most holy place at the back of the temple was 30 feet square. It was paneled from floor to ceiling with cedar. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [17]In front of this was the holy place, 60 feet long. [18]The inside stone walls were covered with cedar paneling that was decorated with carved gourds and flowers. [19]In the most holy place was the sacred chest. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [20]This room was 30 feet square and 30 feet high, and the walls and ceiling were covered with pure gold. The altar of incense, just outside the room, was covered with cedar. [21-22]The inside walls of the temple were covered with gold, and gold chains hung at the entrance to the most holy place, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} and the cedar-covered altar of incense was also covered with gold. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5}

[23]Solomon made two winged creatures of olive wood, each 15 feet high, for the most holy place. [24]Each one had two wings, 7 ½ feet long. [25]The creatures were identical in size, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [26]each 15 feet high. [27]Their spread-out wings extended from wall to wall, and touched each other at the center of the room, and [28]they were covered with gold. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5}

[29]Carved on the walls of the most holy place and the holy place were winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers. [30]And the floor of both rooms was covered with gold. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [31]The double doors to the most holy place were made of olive wood with five-sided doorposts. [32]Carved on the doors were winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers, all covered with gold. {14 Angel-Appreciation

Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 33Two doorposts to the main entrance to the temple were made of olive wood, 34and the two folding doors were made of cypress. 35Carved on these doors were winged creatures, palm trees, and flowers, all covered with gold.

36The walls of the inner courtyard had three levels of cut stones and one layer of cedar beams. 37The foundation of the temple was finished in May of Solomon's fourth year, {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 38and the entire building was completed in seven years in the fall of Solomon's 11th year (959 B.C.). {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}

Lord, I want Your presence in my life, and it's more than Your influence or "spiritual" presence. I want You living in me. Amen.

1 Kings 7

Other Building Projects of King Solomon

1However, Solomon's palace took 13 years to build. 2One of the largest rooms, called Lebanon Forest Hall, was 150 feet long, 75 feet wide, and 45 feet high. 3Cedar ceiling beams rested on four rows of cedar columns; with 15 columns in each row. 4Three rows of windows were on each wall, facing each other. 5And all six doorways were rectangular, hung in sets of three, facing each other. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

6Pillars Hall was 75 feet long and 45 feet wide, and had a porch at the front covered by a canopy supported pillars. 7The walls of Judgment Hall, which is where Solomon sat to hear legal cases, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} were paneled with cedar from floor to ceiling. 8The place where he lived was behind the Judgment Hall and surrounded a courtyard. He built a palace much like his palace for Pharaoh's daughter, his wife. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}

9All these structures from top to bottom were made entirely of huge stones cut to size and trimmed with saws. 10Some of the foundation stones were 15 feet long, and some were 12 feet long." 11Above these foundation stones were other stones cut to size, with cedar beams over them. 12The walls of the great courtyard had three layers of cut stones topped with one layer of cedar beams, just like the front porch and the inner courtyard of the temple. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

13Hiram was a bronze worker in Tyre. His father, now dead, had been a bronze worker too, and he was half Jewish because 14his mother was from the tribe of Naphtali. King Solomon asked Hiram to come to Jerusalem to do all the bronze work for the temple; and he did. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} 15He made two bronze columns 27 feet tall and 18 feet around. 16He made a bronze top for each column; each top was 7 ½ feet high. 17These tops were decorated with seven rows of chain-like designs 18and with two rows of designs that looked like pomegranates. 19The tops of the two columns were shaped like lilies

and were six feet high. [20]The chain-like designs were above the lily-shaped tops, and around each top were 200 pomegranates in each of two rows. [21]Hiram placed the columns on each side of the temple door. He called the one on the south Jakin (meaning "He Makes Secure") and the one on the north he named Boaz (meaning "He Is Strong"). [22]The tops of the columns were shaped like lilies. The construction of the columns was completed. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[23]Then Hiram made a large round water tank called "The Sea." It was 15 feet across from rim to rim, about 7 ½ feet deep, and 45 feet around. [24]Just below the rim were two rows of bronze gourds, 10 gourds to every 18 inches. [25]The tank was set on top of 12 bronze bulls, with these facing outward in each of four directions. [26]The sides were about three inches thick, and the rim flared out like a lily blossom. The tank held about 11,000 gallons.

[27]Hiram then made 10 movable bronze stands. Each one was six feet square and 4 ½ feet high, [28]and each stand had square side panels braced with crossbars. [29]On the panels were carved figures of lions, bulls, and winged creatures. [30]Each stand had bronze wheels and axles, and on each stand a basin rested on four supports with flower designs. [31]A round frame over each stand was 27 inches across, and an opening in each stand was 18 inches high and decorated with floral designs. The side panels of the stands were square. [32]The wheels under the panels were 27 inches across with axles attached to the stand. [33]The wheels were like chariot wheels. The axles, rims, spokes, and hubs were made of bronze. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

[34]Each stand had four handles, one at each corner. [35]At the top of each stand was a rim nine inches wide. The supports and panels were attached to the stands, [36]and the supports and panels were decorated with winged creatures, lions, palm trees, and floral designs. [37]The stands were all the same size and were alike, cast from the same mold. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

[38]Hiram also made 10 bronze bowls for washing, one for each stand. Each bowl was six feet across and could hold about 230 gallons. [39]He put five stands on the south side of the temple and five on the north. And he put the large basin at the southeast corner of the temple. [40]He also made pans, shovels, and sprinkling bowls.

These are the items Hiram made for King Solomon for the temple: {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [41]two columns, two bowl-shaped tops for the columns, two chain-like designs on the tops of the columns, [42]400 pomegranates for the chain designs, [43]10 moveable stands with their 10 basins, [44]the round water tank with 12 bulls under it, [45]and pots, shovels, and sprinkling bowls. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} All these items were made for the temple from bronze. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [46]These were made in clay molds in the Jordan Valley between Succoth and Zarethan. [47]Solomon did not weigh all the utensils because there were so many. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24}

[48]Solomon also had these items made from gold for the temple: the gold altar, the

gold table for the Bread without Yeast, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [49]10 lampstands in front of the most holy place, flowered designs, lamps and tongs, [50]dishes, lamp snuffers, bowls, incense bowls, fire pans, {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} and door sockets for the most holy place and door sockets for the main room of the temple. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

[51]When Solomon finished the construction of the temple he put into the storage rooms the gold and silver items David had dedicated to the Lord. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

Lord, I worship You who sat upon the mercy seat, on top of the sacred chest. Amen.

1 Kings 8

The Sacred Chest Is Brought into the Temple

[1]Solomon asked all the tribal leaders and family heads to come to Jerusalem {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} to see him moving the sacred chest from Zion, the City of David, to the temple. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} [2]This was during the Festival of Shelters in September. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [3]When all the leaders had arrived, the priests and Levites brought the sacred chest {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} [4]and the tabernacle and its furnishings to the temple. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [5]Solomon and many Israelites walked in front of the chest, and they sacrificed more sheep and cattle than could be counted. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5}

[6]The priests carried the sacred chest into the most holy place {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} and put it under the winged creatures. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [7]The wings of the creatures covered the chest and its carrying poles. [8]The poles were so long that their ends could be seen from the holy place. And they stayed there from then on. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [9]The only objects in the sacred chest were the two stone tablets Moses had put in it at Mount Horeb (Sinai), where God made an agreement with the Israelites after they left Egypt. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[10-11]When the priests went out of the temple, a cloud that pictured God's glory filled the temple so that the priests could not serve there. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [12]Then Solomon said, "This cloud, as the LORD said, shows God is with me. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [13]I have built for Him a great temple." {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [14]Then Solomon blessed the people, {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [15]and he said, "Praise the LORD, the God of Israel. He has kept the promise He made to my father David. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [16]He told David He had not yet chosen the city where His temple would be built, but He chose a man to be the leader of the people. [17]David wanted to build a temple for the LORD. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [18]But the LORD said, 'That's good that you wanted

to do that, {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 19but your son, not you, will build a temple to honor Me.' {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 20As He promised, the LORD has made me king, and I have built the temple for the LORD. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 21I also made a place in the temple for the sacred chest, and in that chest the two flat stones on which is written the agreement the Lord made with our ancestors." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

22Solomon stood facing the altar with his hands lifted toward heaven in front of all the Israelites. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} 23He prayed, "O LORD, God of Israel, no God is like You. You keep Your agreement based on Your unfailing love. You are loyal to Your servants who obey you. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 24Today You have kept Your promise to David my father. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} 25Now LORD, God of Israel, You promised David that his descendants will always be king of Israel if they obey You as he has done. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 26So now please keep this promise too. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

27"How could you live on the earth in this temple, when even the highest heavens cannot contain You? {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} 28Yet please hear and answer my prayer. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} 29Please watch over this temple day and night, where You said You would be worshiped. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} 30Hear my prayer and the prayer of Your people; hear from heaven and forgive them. {360 Power-Seeking Prayer, Matt. 9:8}

31"Suppose someone accuses a person of a crime, and the accused stands in front of the altar and says he is innocent. {308 Mizpah Benediction-Prayer, Gen. 31:49} 32Then in heaven decide who is right. Punish him if he is guilty, or let him go free if he is innocent. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} 33Suppose Your people sin and their enemies defeat them. Then if they confess and turn from their sin, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 34hear and forgive them and bring them back to this land You gave their ancestors. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

35"Suppose there is no rain because Your people sin against You. But if they confess their sin, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 36then hear and forgive them. Teach them to do what is right and send rain on the land you promised is theirs. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

37"If there is a famine in the land because of a crop disease or crops being eaten by locusts or caterpillars, as if enemies surround their cities, or Your people become deathly sick, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 38if the people pray with their hands lifted at the temple, {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} 39then hear and forgive them. Deal with each person as You should because You know what is in everyone's heart. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} 40Then they will revere You as they live in the land You gave their ancestors. {496 True-Worshippers Prayer, Ps. 15:1}

41-42"Foreigners will hear about You and Your mighty power. If they pray toward

the temple, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [43]hear them and answer their prayers. Then everyone on the earth will come to know You and revere You and will know that I have built this temple to honor You. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

[44]"Suppose You send Your people to war, and they pray to You toward the temple which I have built to honor You. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [45]Hear their prayer and help them {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [46]Everyone sins. But suppose Your people sin against You and You become angry and let their enemies take them captive to other countries. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [47]Then if they have a change of heart and repent and admit they sinned {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12} [48]and pray toward Jerusalem and the temple that honors You, {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [49]hear their prayer from heaven, where You live, and help them. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [50]Please forgive Your people of their sins against You, and make their captors be kind to them. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [51]They are Your people whom You brought out of Egypt, which was like being in a furnace. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [52]May Your eyes see and Your ears hear their plea for help. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [53]You brought our ancestors out of Egypt, and You told Moses that out of all the nations You had chosen them to be Your special people." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

[54]When Solomon finished this prayer, he had been kneeling with his hands lifted toward heaven. Then he stood up from before the Lord {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [55]and blessed the Israelites in these words: {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [56]"Praise the LORD! He has given us peace, as He promised. And every good promise has happened. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [57]May the LORD our God be with all of us as He was with our ancestors, and may He never leave us. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} [58]May He help us follow Him and obey the commands, laws, and regulations He gave our ancestors. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [59]And may He remember this prayer day and night, and may He meet all their needs. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} [60]Then people everywhere will know that the LORD is the true God. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [61]May you always be faithful to the Lord our God, obeying His laws and commands, just as you are doing now." {190 God-Hunger Prayer, Matt. 5:6}

[62]Solomon and the people dedicated the temple to the LORD {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [63]by offering 22,000 cattle and 120,000 sheep and goats as fellowship offerings. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [64]Also that day Solomon dedicated the courtyard in front of the temple. He offered burnt offerings, grain offerings, and the fat of the fellowship offerings there because the bronze altar of burnt offering was too

small for all the offerings being given. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
65Solomon and all Israel celebrated the Festival of Shelters for seven days. The people had come all the way from Lebo Hamath in the north to the brook of Egypt in the South. Actually they celebrated for two weeks, one week for the fellowship offerings and one week for the Festival of Shelters. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22}
66After the Festival, the people blessed the king and went home happy because the LORD had been good to David and His people Israel. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}

Lord, I will pray in Your church building, because I pray everywhere. Let my outward body posture reflect my inner reverence to You. Thank You for every time I've been able to enter Your presence in Your house. Amen.

1 Kings 9

The Lord Appears to Solomon a Second Time

1After Solomon finished building the temple, the royal palace, and other projects, {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
2the LORD appeared to him again in a dream as He had done in Gibeon. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
3The LORD said, "I heard your prayer and your request. I have set apart this temple you have built to honor My name. I will always watch over it. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}
4If you follow Me with integrity and sincerity, as your father David did, obeying My laws and commands, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
5I will see that a descendant of yours is always king over Israel, as I promised David. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
6"But if you or your descendants turn from Me and disobey My commands and laws, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and worship other gods, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
7I will take them from this land and I will reject this temple that I have set apart to honor Me. Israel will then be made fun of and ridiculed. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
8And the temple will become a pile of rocks, and people who see it in ruins will be shocked, and they will say, 'Why has the Lord done this to this land and the temple?' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
9Then they will answer, 'We know why. It's because they have rejected the Lord their God who brought their ancestors out of Egypt, and they worshiped false gods.'" {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}
10It took 7 years for Solomon to build the temple and 13 years to build the royal palace, 20 years in all. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
11Then he gave 20 towns in Galilee to King Hiram in Tyre as payment for all the cedar, cypress, and gold Hiram had given Solomon. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
12But when Hiram went to see the towns, he didn't like them.
13He said, "Solomon, my friend, why are you giving me these towns? {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} They are worthless." So Hiram called the

area Cabul (meaning "Worthless"). [14]Yet Hiram had sent Solomon almost five tons of gold. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [15]After Solomon's workers finished the temple and royal palace, he had them fill in the Millo with terraces on the east side of Jerusalem, build a wall around the city, and rebuild the towns of Hazor, Megiddo, and Gezer. {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [16]Earlier Pharaoh of Egypt had captured Gezer, burned it, and killed the Canaanite people who lived there. Then Pharaoh gave Gezer to his daughter when she married Solomon, {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [17]and Solomon rebuilt it. Also he built up Lower Beth-Horan, [18]Baalath, and Tamar in the Judean desert. [19]He also built towns for storing his grain supplies, and towns where he would keep his chariots and horses, and he built whatever he wanted in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and elsewhere in Israel. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}

[20]Some non-Israelites were still living in the land; they were Amorites, Hittites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites, who were not killed when Joshua conquered the land. [21]So Solomon made them slaves. [22]But he did not make slaves of his own people. Instead he made them his soldiers, government officials, army officers, commanders, chariot commanders, and chariot drivers. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [23]He appointed 550 men to oversee the slave labor. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

[24]After Pharaoh's daughter moved from the City of David to the royal palace, {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} he built the Millo by filling it with terraces. [25]Three times a year Solomon sacrificed burnt offerings and fellowship offerings on the temple altar, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and burned incense on it. [26]He had several ships at Ezion-Geber, near Elath in Edom on the shore of the Red Sea. [27]Hiram sent some of his sailors to work with Solomon's sailors. [28]They sailed together to Ophir and brought back 16 tons of gold for Solomon. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

Lord, You had a challenge for Solomon; You wanted him to be both wise and godly. I ask for wisdom from You (see James 1:5), but I also ask You to make me godly. Amen.

1 Kings 10

The Queen of Sheba Visits King Solomon

[1]When the Queen of Sheba heard how wise Solomon was, she went to Jerusalem to challenge him with some difficult questions. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [2]She arrived with many camels loaded with lots of spices, gold, and jewels. She asked him many difficult questions, {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [3]and he answered each one. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [4]She was amazed at his wisdom and at the beauty of his palace, and was overwhelmed [5]with all the food he served, and his officials and servants in their uniforms, the people who served his wine, and the burnt offerings

he made at the temple. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
6She said to Solomon, "In my country I heard about your wisdom and all you've done. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 7I didn't believe it until I saw it with my own eyes. But I hadn't heard even half of it. Your wisdom and wealth are greater than I was told. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} 8How happy your people and officials must be as they listen to your wisdom. {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} 9Praise be to the LORD your God, who is pleased with you and made you king. Because of His love for Israel He has made you king so you can rule with justice and make right decisions." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
10She gave Solomon 4 ½ tons of gold, and large amounts of spices and jewelry; in fact, this was the largest single gift of spices he ever received. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 11As stated earlier, King Hiram's sailors brought gold from Ophir, as they also brought large amounts of sandalwood and precious gems. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 12Solomon used the sandalwood to make steps for the temple and palace, and to make harps and lyres for his musicians. No one had ever seen so much sandalwood. 13Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba everything she asked for plus other items. Then she and her officials returned to her country. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}
14Every year Solomon received 25 tons of gold, 15besides what he collected from merchants, dignitaries, and Arabian kings. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
16He made 200 gold shields, using about 7 ½ pounds of gold for each shield, and 17300 smaller shields, using about four pounds of gold for each shield. He put them in his palace in the Lebanon Forest Hall. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
18His huge throne was made of ivory and covered with gold. {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} 19It had six steps, a rounded back, and the statue of a lion on each side. 20Also it had two lions on each step, 12 in all. Nothing was like his throne in any other kingdom. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
21His cups and dishes and household items in his Lebanon Forest Hall were made of gold. 22His many trading ships sailed with Hiram's ships, and every three years they brought back gold, silver, ivory, and apes and peacocks. 23King Solomon was richer and wiser than any other king. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 24Everyone wanted to meet with him to hear the wisdom God had given him. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 25Every year people brought him gifts of silver and gold, and clothes, weapons, spices, horses, and mules. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 26He also had 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses that he kept in Jerusalem and other cities. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 27Silver was as common as rocks, and cedar was as common as Sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
28-29His merchants purchased horses and chariots in Egypt and Cilicia, paying about 15 pounds of silver for each chariot

and almost four pounds of silver for each horse. His merchants also sold chariots and horses to the Hittite and Syrian kings.

Lord, may I use my business ability as a Christian testimony to outsiders, even as Solomon's business impressed the Queen of Sheba. I will be a good witness so others will see You are the greatest God...that You are the only God. Amen.

1 Kings 11

King Solomon Turns Away from the True God

1-2The LORD told the Israelites not to marry women from other nations because they worship foreign gods and they could influence the Israelites to worship those gods. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} However, Solomon loved not only Pharaoh's daughter. He also loved women from Moab, Ammon, Edom, Sidon, and the land of the Hittites. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 3Seven hundred of his wives were daughters of kings, and he also had 300 concubines, and they turned his heart from the Lord. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} 4As he grew older, some of his wives led him to worship their gods instead of trusting completely in the LORD, as his father David had done. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 5He worshiped Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Molech, the disgusting god of the Ammonites. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 6This was sinful, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} and he did not follow the LORD completely, as David had done. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 7He even built a shrine on the Mount of Olives for Chemosh, the disgusting god of Moab, and one for Molech. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 8He built shrines for each of his wives so they could burn incense and offer sacrifices to their gods. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

9The LORD was very angry with Solomon because he turned away from Him, even after the LORD appeared to him twice {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 10to warn him against worshiping foreign gods. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 11He said, "Because you have not kept My agreement and have disobeyed My laws, I will take the kingdom from you {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and give it to one of your officials. {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} 12But because David was your father, I won't do this while you are alive. I will take the kingdom from your son. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 13But I will still let him be king of one tribe because of David My servant and the city of Jerusalem." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

14The LORD brought against Solomon an enemy Hadad, a descendant of the Edomite king. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} 15Years before, when Joab, David's army commander, had gone to Edom to bury some Israelite soldiers, 16he stayed in Edom six months killing every male, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 17except Hadad, then a boy, and some Edomite officials who escaped to Egypt.

{142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}
18 After leaving Midian, they went to Paran,
where some others joined them. Pharaoh
gave Hadad a house, land, and food. {170
Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 19 And
Pharaoh gave him his sister-in-law, Queen
Tahpenes, as his wife. 20 They had a son
Genubath, who was raised in Pharaoh's
palace as his son.
21 While in Egypt Hadad heard that David
and Joab had died. So he asked Pharaoh if
he could return to his country. {23 Ask-
ing-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 22 Pharaoh asked,
"Why? Don't you have everything here
that you need?" Hadad answered, "Yes, I
do. But I just want to visit my country."
{353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1
Cor. 15:46} 23 God brought against Solo-
mon another enemy, Rezon son of Eliada,
who had escaped from Hadadezer, king of
Zobah. {91 Correction-Response Prayer,
Heb. 10:9, 10} 24 After David destroyed
Zobah, Rezon led some rebels to Damas-
cus and controlled the city. 25 Rezon and
Solomon were enemies from then on.
{347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
26 Another rebel against Solomon was
Jeroboam son of Nebat. He was one of Sol-
omon's officials, and he came from Zere-
dah in Ephraim. {349 Persecution-Prayer,
2 Tim. 3:12} 27 When Solomon was build-
ing the terraces on the east wall of the City
of David, 28 he put Jeroboam in charge of
the labor force because he saw he was a
hard worker. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim.
2:15} 29 One day when Jeroboam was leav-
ing Jerusalem, Ahijah, a prophet from Shi-
loh, 30 grabbed Jeroboam's new robe and
tore it into pieces. 31 He said to Jeroboam,
"God said, 'I will tear 10 tribes from Sol-
omon's kingdom and give them to you.
{92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
32 But I will give Judah and Benjamin to
Solomon, since David was My servant and
Jerusalem is My city. {521 Vow-Prayer,
Rev. 10:6}
33-34 "I'm doing this because Solomon has
turned from Me and is worshiping Ast-
horeth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and
Chemosh, the god of Moab, and Molech,
the god of the Ammonites. He is not fol-
lowing Me, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer,
Eph. 4:22} and he has not done what I
consider right, and he has disobeyed My
laws and commands. 35 I will take the king-
dom from his son and make you ruler over
10 tribes. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts
5:4, 9} 36 That way David will always have
a descendant ruling in Jerusalem, where I
have chosen to be worshiped. {377 Pres-
ence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 37 You will
rule over Israel, and every nation you
want. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8}
38 I will be with you if you obey Me and do
what is right and keep My commands and
laws, as David did. And I will have your
descendants rule Israel. {92 Covenant-Ful-
filling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 39 I will punish
David's descendants, but not forever." {91
Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9,
10} 40 Solomon tried to kill Jeroboam, but
he escaped to Egypt, where he was with
Pharaoh Shishak until Solomon died. {99
Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
41 Everything Solomon did as king and his
wisdom are recorded in the book about
him. 42 He ruled in Jerusalem 40 years, {8
Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} 43 and then died

and was buried in the city of his father David. His son Rehoboam became king. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord, Solomon was a sex addict! Keep me from illegal sex, keep me from addiction. May I find my greatest love in You. I give You first place in my life. Sit on the throne of my life and rule me from the inside out. Amen.

1 Kings 12

Rehoboam Ignores Wise Counsel of Older Men

[1]Rehoboam went to Shechem, where he was to be crowned king. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [2]Jeroboam heard about this while he was still in Egypt. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [3]Some Israelite leaders sent for Jeroboam. Then they said to Rehoboam, [4]"Your father Solomon was a hard taskmaster. We will serve you but only if you lighten our workload." {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [5]Rehoboam responded, "I'll think about it and I'll give you an answer in three days." {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} [6]He asked the elders who served his father Solomon what they thought. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [7]They said, "If you do as they suggest, and make their workload easier, they will serve you well." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [8-9]Then Rehoboam asked for advice {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} from the young men he knew growing up. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [10]They answered, "Tell them, compared to my load, my father's load was light. It will be like saying my little finger is bigger than his waist. [11]He made you work hard, but I will make you work harder. He used whips on you, but I will use whips with sharp metal tips that will feel like scorpion stings." {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4}

[12]Three days later Jeroboam and all the people went to see Rehoboam in Schechem. [13]He told the people he would follow the advice of the young men, {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [14]He said, "My father used whips on you, but I'll use scorpions." [15]He refused to do what the people wanted. Actually this was of the LORD because it carried out what God had said to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} [16]The people then said, "We don't need to follow David and his family. Let's all go home, and [17]Rehoboam can rule his own people." {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} So the people of Israel went home, but the tribe of Judah accepted Rehoboam as their king.

[18]When Rehoboam sent Adoram, who was in charge of the forced labor, to talk with the people, they stoned him to death. Then Rehoboam jumped in his chariot and hurried home to Jerusalem. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [19]And Israel has continued to oppose David's family in Judah. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [20]When the Israelites heard that Jeroboam

was back from Egypt, they made him king over all Israel, except for Judah and Benjamin. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14}
21When Rehoboam got back to Jerusalem, he called together his army of 180,000 soldiers, and planned to force the 10 tribes of Israel to accept him as their king. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
22But God told the prophet Shemaiah to warn Rehoboam {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 23not to go to war against Israel because they are all his relatives, 24and to tell him to tell the soldiers to go home, {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} because this was planned by the LORD. So the soldiers all went home. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}
25Jeroboam rebuilt Shechem in Ephraim and moved there and made it his capital. And he built Peniel. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 26-27Later he got to thinking, "Everyone goes to Jerusalem to offer sacrifices at the temple, {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} and so they may become loyal again to Rehoboam. They might kill me and go back to Rehoboam as their king." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 28On the advice of his counselors he made two gold calf-idols and told the people, "You don't need to go to Jerusalem to worship. Here are your gods who rescued your ancestors from Egypt." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 29He put one of these idols in Bethel and the other in Dan. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} 30This was a terrible sin for the Israelites to worship these idols. {422 satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} 31Jeroboam also made shrines on hills and appointed as priests people who were not descendants of Levi, the priestly tribe. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 32Jeroboam also said that the Festival of Shelters would be held in October, not in September. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 33He went to Bethel on that day and offered sacrifices to the calf-idol he had made. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Lord, help me to listen to the advice of older people, give me the wisdom of the elders, and I will always measure it by the Word of God before I follow any advice. Amen.

1 Kings 13

The Man of God from Judah

1As Jeroboam was at the altar in Bethel, ready to burn incense to the calf-idol, a man of God came up from Judah {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 2and said, "O altar, the LORD says that a son named Josiah will be born to David's descendants, and he will sacrifice on you, O altar, the priests who make offerings here, and human bones will be burned on you." {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} 3He added, "Proof that my message is from God is that the altar will split in half and the ashes will fall to the ground." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
4This made Jeroboam angry. So he pointed to the prophet and said, "Grab him!" But Jeroboam's arm shriveled up and he couldn't move it. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts

5:4, 9} 5And the altar split in two and its ashes poured out, as the prophet had said. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6Jeroboam begged the man of God to ask the LORD to heal his arm. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} The prophet prayed, and the LORD healed his arm. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
7The king then asked the prophet to go with him to his palace and have something to eat and he would give the prophet a gift for healing his arm. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 8The prophet answered, "No, I wouldn't do that even if you gave me half your palace. Why? {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9Because the Lord told me not to eat or drink anything here and not to go home the same way I came." {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} 10So he went home a different way. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
11"An old prophet was living in Bethel, and his sons told him about the prophet from Judah. 12"Which way did he go?" the father asked. After his sons told him which road the prophet took to go home, {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} 13the old man said, "Saddle my donkey." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} 14He found the prophet sitting under an oak tree. "Are you the man of God from Judah?" he asked. "Yes, I am." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 15So the old man said, "Come home with me and have a nice meal." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 16"I can't," the young prophet said. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 17"The LORD told me not to eat or drink anything in Bethel. And He told me to go home by a different road." {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} 18But the old man said, "I'm a prophet too. And an angel told me to tell you to come home with me and have a meal and a drink." But the old man was lying. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 19So the man of God went with him and ate and drank in his home. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} 20As they were eating, a message came from the LORD to the old prophet. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 21The old man said to the prophet from Judah, "The LORD says you have disobeyed Me {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 22by coming here and eating and drinking when I told you not to do it. So you will not be buried in your father's tomb." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23The man of God finished eating and the old man saddled the prophet's donkey. 24On the way a lion attacked and killed him, and the lion and the man's donkey stood there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 25Some people saw the body and the lion there and told the city officials. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}
26The old prophet heard about this and said, "This must be the prophet from Judah. The LORD warned him, but he disobeyed and so a lion has killed him." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 27So he told his sons to get his donkey ready. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 28He found the body lying on the road, with the lion and donkey standing there. The lion had not eaten the body or attacked the donkey. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 29The old man put the body on

his donkey and took it to Bethel where he was buried. And he mourned for him, and said, "Oh, my brother." {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}
30He buried the prophet {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} 31and said to his sons, "When I die, bury me in the grave next to this prophet. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 32What he said will happen to the altar in Bethel and the shrines on the hills." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 33Jeroboam did not turn from his evil ways. He kept on appointing non-Levitical people to be priests at the shrines. Anyone who wanted to be a priest could be one. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 34This sin of Jeroboam led to the downfall of his kingdom. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, I know there are lying prophets in the world. Give me wisdom to discern who they are and courage to not let them influence my life. I know the devil as a roaring lion walks about trying to eat me up (see 1 Peter. 5:8). Protect me when I am defenseless. Enlighten me when I am wrong. Empower me to stand against my enemy (1 John 4:4). Amen.

1 Kings 14

Ahijah's Prophecy against Jeroboam

1Jeroboam's son Abijah got sick. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 2So Jeroboam told his wife to disguise herself, go to Shiloh and see the prophet Abijah. "He's the one who said I would be king of Israel. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 3Take 10 loaves of bread, some cakes, and a jar of honey to him, and ask him what will happen to our son." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 4So Jeroboam's wife got ready and left. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}
5Abijah was old and blind, but the LORD told him the king's wife was coming to ask about their son. "I will tell you what to say." {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 6When Abijah heard her walking to the door, he shouted, "Come in, Jeroboam's wife! Why are you pretending to be someone else? 7The LORD has told me to give your husband this bad news: 'I made you a leader of My people Israel. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 8I even took tribes from David's descendants and gave them to you. But you have not kept My commands and obeyed Me and done what is right. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9In fact you have done more sinful things than any king before you. You made false idol-gods out of gold, and I am very angry because you have rejected Me. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10Therefore I will destroy your family by killing every male in it, whether slave or free. I will wipe out your family the way fire burns up trash. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 11Dogs will eat the bodies of your relatives who die in Jerusalem, and birds will eat the bodies of those who die in the country. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
12"'Go back home, Mrs. Jeroboam, and as soon as you get home, your son will die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 13All Israel

will mourn his death. And he is the only one of Jeroboam's relatives who will have a proper burial, because he is the only one of Jeroboam's family the LORD is pleased with. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [14]I will very soon choose a new king of Israel, who will destroy Jeroboam's family. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [15]When I strike Israel, it will shake like a reed swaying in the water. I will remove them from this land and scatter them as far away as the Euphrates River. This will all be because they made Asherah poles, which made Me angry. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]I will desert Israel because Jeroboam sinned and caused Israel to sin.'" {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[17]Jeroboam's wife left and went home to Tirzah. The minute she stepped in her house, her son died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [18]All Israel mourned him, just as the LORD's servant Abijah had said. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2} [19]The other events of Jeroboam's reign, including his battles, are written in the book about the kings of Israel. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [20]He reigned for 22 years and died. His son Nadab became king. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[21]Rehoboam, king in Judah, was 41 years old when he began to reign, and he ruled for 17 years in Jerusalem, the city God had chosen where He is to be honored. His mother was Naamah, an Ammonite. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [22]The people of Judah, like those in Israel, sinned and caused the LORD to be angry. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [23]They built shrines and sacred stones and Asherah poles on hills and under every green tree. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [24]Male shrine prostitutes were in the land, and the Israelites did the very same disgusting things as the nations the LORD had forced out of the land. {422 satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13}

[25]In Rehoboam's fifth year, Shishak king of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [26]He took everything of value from the temple and the royal palace including the gold shields Solomon had made. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [27]So King Rehoboam made bronze shields to replace the gold shields, and the palace guards used them. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [28]Whenever he went to the temple, the guards carried the shields and then put them back in the guardroom. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

[29]The other events of Rehoboam's reign are written in the book about the kings of Judah. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [30]War continued between Rehoboam and Jeroboam. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [31]Rehoboam died and was buried in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} His mother was Naamah an Ammonite, and his son Abijah was the next king.

Lord, I will faithfully tell others what You say in the Bible. Amen.

1 Kings 15

Abijah Becomes King after Rehoboam

[1]When Jeroboam had been king of Israel for 18 years, [2]Abijah became king of Judah, and he ruled for 3 years in Jerusalem. His mother was Maacah, daughter of Absalom. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [3]He was sinful like his father Rehoboam. He did not obey the LORD as his great-grandfather David had done. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [4]But for David's sake the LORD allowed David's line to continue and for Jerusalem to be strong. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [5]All his life David had done what pleased the LORD and obeyed the LORD's commands except when he had Uriah the Hittite murdered. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[6]The war between Rehoboam's line and Jeroboam continued, with Abijah and Jeroboam fighting. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} [7]The events of Abijah's reign are recorded in the book about the kings of Judah. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [8]He died and was buried in the City of David. And his son Asa became king. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[9]When Jeroboam was in his 20th year as king of Israel, Asa became king of Judah [10]and Asa ruled in Jerusalem 41 years. His grandmother was Maacah, daughter of Absalom. [11]He pleased the LORD as David did. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [12]He forced the male shrine prostitutes to leave the country, and he destroyed the idols his ancestors had made. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [13]His grandmother Maacah had made a disgusting idol of Asherah, and so Asa burned it and got rid of her as queen mother. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [14]He was faithful to the LORD even though he didn't destroy all the hilltop shrines. [15]He placed in the temple all the silver and gold objects he and his father had dedicated to the Lord. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

[16]Asa and King Baasha of Israel were constantly at war. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [17]So one time Baasha went to Ramah in Judah, and he kept soldiers there so people couldn't leave or enter Judah. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [18]When Asa heard about this, he sent silver and gold to Damascus for Ben-Hadad, king of Syria. [19]Asa suggested they make a treaty like the one their fathers had and that Ben-Hadad break his treaty with Baasha so that Baasha would leave Judah. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[20]Ben-Hadad agreed and sent soldiers to capture the Israelite towns of Dan and Abel-Beth-Maacah, and the territories of Kinnereth and Naphtali. [21]So Baasha left Ramah and went to Tirzah. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [22]Then Asa ordered everyone in Judah to go take the stones and wood Baasha had at Ramah, and build up Geba and Mizpah. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [23]Asa's victories and towns he rebuilt are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. As he grew older, his feet became diseased. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps.

41:3, 4} [24]Then he died and was buried in the City of David. And his son Jehoshaphat became king. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[25]When Asa was in his second year as king of Judah, Jeroboam's son Nadab became king of Israel and reigned two years. [26]Nadab disobeyed the Lord and did as his father did in causing the people to sin. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [27]Baasha from the tribe of Issachar killed Nadab when Nadab was attacking the Philistine town of Gibbethon. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [28]Baasha then became king of Israel, replacing Nadab in Asa's third year. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[29-30]The LORD's prophet Abijah had said that Jeroboam's whole family would be killed because Jeroboam had made the LORD angry with his sins. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} And Baasha killed Jeroboam's entire family. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [31]Nadab's reign is recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[32]Asa of Judah and Baasha of Israel were constantly at war. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
[33]When Baasha became king of Israel, Asa was in his third year as king of Judah. Baasha ruled for 24 years from Tirzah. [34]Just like Jeroboam, he disobeyed the Lord and caused the Israelites to sin. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, I know You have used non-Christians to accomplish Your will. Thank You for working behind the scenes to bless my life through those who don't live for You. I give myself to You. I want to be godly and useful. So use me to accomplish Your will in my life and in the lives of many others. Amen.

1 Kings 16

Baasha Rules over Israel

[1]The Lord sent the prophet Jehu son of Hanani to say to Baasha, [2]"You were a nobody, but I made you king of Israel. As you are doing the same thing Jeroboam did, sinning and causing My people Israel to sin, I am very angry, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]so I will destroy you and your family just as I did Jeroboam. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [4]Dogs will eat the bodies of your relatives who die in the city, and birds will eat those who die in the country." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
[5]The other events of Baasha's reign are written in the book of the kings of Israel. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [6]He died and was buried in Tirzah. And his son Elah became the next king. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [7]The LORD spoke to Baasha through His prophet Jehu because of Baasha's sins, which made the LORD angry, and because he killed all Jeroboam's family. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
[8]After Asa had been king of Judah 25 years, Elah son of Baasha became king of Israel. He reigned in Tirzah only two years. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession,

1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [9]Zimri had charge of half of Elah's chariots, and he planned to kill Elah when Elah was drunk at the home of Arza who was in charge of the palace. {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} [10]Zimri simply walked over to him and killed Elah, and made himself king. [11]Then he killed all Elah's relatives and close friends. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [12]This killing was just as God had said through His prophet Jehu. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [13]Baasha and Elah both sinned by worshiping idols, and this made the LORD angry. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [14]Other events in Elah's short reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.

[15]Zimri ruled Israel only one week. The Israelite army was camped at Gibbethon, a Philistine town, where Nadab was killed. [16]The soldiers heard that Zimri had killed Elah, so they made Omri king. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} [17]Omri left Gibbethon and went to Tirzah, Israel's capital. [18]Zimri realized he was cornered, so he went into the palace at Tirzah and set it on fire. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [19]He died in the flames because he had disobeyed the LORD and followed Jeroboam's evil example. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [20]The other events of his brief reign and his rebellion are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[21]Some Israelites wanted Tibni son of Ginath as king, but others wanted Omri. [22]Omri's followers were stronger than Tibni's, so Tibni was killed and Omri became king. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [23]This happened in Asa's 31st year as king in Judah. Omri reigned for 12 years, six of them in Tirzah. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [24]He bought the hill of Samaria from Shemer for 150 pounds of silver, and built the town of Samaria on that hill. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [25]Omri did more sinful things than any king before him. [26]He followed Jeroboam's sinful ways, and like Jeroboam he caused the Israelites to sin by worshiping idols, and made the LORD angry. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [27]The events of Omri's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [28]He died and was buried in Samaria, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his son Ahab was the next king. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[29]When Asa had reigned 38 years in Judah, Ahab was made king of Israel, and he ruled for 22 years in Samaria. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [30]Ahab committed more sins than any king before him. [31]Following in the ways of Jeroboam was bad enough, but worse than that, he married Jezebel, daughter of King Ethbaal of Sidon, and worshiped the false god Baal. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [32]He even built an altar and temple for Baal in Samaria. [33]Also he built a repulsive Asherah pole. He did more to make the Lord angry than any king of Israel before him. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[34]A man named Hiel from Bethel was rebuilding the town of Jericho. When he was laying the foundation of the town, his oldest son Abiram died, and when he was

finishing the gates his youngest son Segub died. This was the LORD's curse on Jericho as Joshua had spoken centuries earlier. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, help me turn away from false religion and false worship. I pray against evil religions so You will stop the spread of their influence. I pray that You will destroy false religions. Amen.

I Kings 17

The LORD Takes Care of Elijah

1Elijah was a prophet from Tishbe in Gilead. One day he went to King Ahab and said, "I worship and serve the living LORD, God of Israel. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} He says there will be no dew or rain for several years." {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} 2Then the LORD told Elijah {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} 3to leave right away and go across the Jordan River to the Kerith Brook. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 4The LORD said, "You can drink water from the brook, and I have told the ravens to bring you food." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 5So Elijah did what the LORD said and went to the Kerith Brook. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} 6Ravens brought him bread and meat twice every day, and he drank water from the brook. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 7Then later the brook dried up because there was no rain. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

8-9Then the Lord told Elijah {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} to go to Zarephath, where a widow would feed him. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 10-11He saw a widow at the town gate gathering sticks and he asked her for a drink of water {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} and some bread. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 12She said, "I don't have any bread. All I have is a little bit of flour and a little olive oil. With these sticks I'm going home to cook a last meal for my son and me, and then we'll die from starvation." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 13Elijah said, "Here's my suggestion. Bake me some bread first and give it to me. Then bake some for you and your son. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 14The LORD, the God of Israel, will see that you have plenty of flour and oil until He sends rain for the crops." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 15She did as he said, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and she and her son had plenty of food for a long time. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 16As the LORD promised, she did not run out of flour and oil. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

17Later her son got sick and kept getting worse and finally died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 18She said to Elijah, "What have you done to me? Have you caused my son to die as punishment for my sins?" {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} 19Elijah took her son upstairs, {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} 20and he prayed, "LORD my God, why did you let this woman's son die?" {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 21He

stretched himself over the boy three times and asked the Lord to bring the boy back to life. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 22The LORD answered Elijah's prayer, and the boy came back to life. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} 23Then Elijah carried the boy downstairs, gave him to his mother, and said, "Your son is alive." {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} 24The woman said to Elijah, "Now I know you are prophet of God and that the LORD speaks through you." {89 Convergence-Faith Praying, 1 Cor. 13:2}

Lord, help me look only to You when I pray, and not keep my eye on surrounding circumstances. I will pray according to Your Word, not according to pressures around me. I will not look to the stock market, nor to jobs to provide for my needs. I look to You. Yet, I'll not be lazy and refuse to work. Teach me faith's balance—to trust You to supply my needs as I work daily at the jobs You give me. Amen.

I Kings 18

Elijah Confronts King Ahab

1Three years after the drought began, God told Elijah to go tell Ahab He would soon send rain again. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} 2So Elijah did. The famine was very serious in Samaria. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 3Obadiah, who worshiped the Lord, was in charge of Ahab's palace. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 4When Jezebel was trying to kill the LORD's prophets, he hid 100 of them in two caves and gave them food and water. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 5Ahab told Obadiah to look for some grass for his horses and mules so they wouldn't have to kill them. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} 6Obadiah went in one direction, and Ahab in another. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

7Obadiah saw Elijah, bowed to the ground before him and said, "Is that really you, Elijah?" {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} 8"Yes," Elijah replied. "Go tell Ahab I am here." 9Obadiah said, "But if I do that, he'll kill me. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 10He has been looking everywhere for you, and if anyone said he wasn't there, Ahab made them swear you weren't. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} 11So suppose I go tell him I saw you {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 12and then the LORD takes you someplace else. If he can't find you, he'll kill me. I have served the LORD all my life, {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 13and I risked my life by hiding 100 prophets in two caves to keep them safe from Jezebel. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 14And now you want me to tell Ahab you are here? If I do, he'll kill me." {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

15Elijah said, "I serve the LORD of the Heavens, and I will go see Ahab today." {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} 16So Obadiah told Ahab that he had seen Elijah, {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} and Ahab went to meet him. 17Ahab said, "Is it really you, you

troublemaker?" {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 18Elijah replied, "I'm not a troublemaker; you are. You have disobeyed the Lord by worshiping the false god Baal. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 19Here's a suggestion: Have all the people of Israel meet me on Mount Carmel, with 450 prophets of Baal and 400 prophets of Asherah, who are supported by Jezebel." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23}

20So Ahab did. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 21And Elijah said to the people and the false prophets, "How long will you try to worship the true God and false gods too? If the LORD is God, follow Him. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} But if Baal is god, follow him." But the people said nothing. 22Then Elijah said, "I am the LORD's only prophet, but Baal has 450. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23Bring two bulls, and the Baal prophets can choose one and cut it up and put the pieces on the wood on an altar, but don't light the fire. I will cut up the other bull and put it on the wood of my altar without lighting a fire. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24} 24Then you pray to your god, and I'll pray to mine. And the one who starts a fire is the true god." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} They agreed to this plan. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

25Elijah told the prophets of Baal to go first because there were more of them. 26So they cut up their bull and shouted their prayers to Baal all morning, dancing wildly around the altar. But there was no answer. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 27At noon Elijah began making fun of them. "Pray louder, "he said. "Baal may be thinking of other things or relieving himself. Or maybe he's away on a trip or is asleep." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 28So they shouted louder and cut themselves with swords and knives. 29They kept doing this all afternoon, but there was no answer at all. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}

30Then Elijah asked the people to gather around him as he repaired the LORD's altar, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 31-32using 12 stones representing Israel's 12 tribes. He dug a trench around the altar to hold about three gallons. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24} 33Then he piled wood on the altar, cut the bull into pieces, and put the pieces on the wood. Then he told the people to fill four large jars with water and pour it on the offering and the wood. After they did this, {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 34he said, "Do it again." Then he said, "Do it a third time." 35The water ran down the altar and filled the trench. {222 Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer)}

36When it was time for the evening sacrifices, Elijah prayed, "O LORD, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} show that You are the true God and that I am Your servant. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 37Please answer me, O LORD, so that these people will know that You are the true God and that {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} You are turning their hearts back to You."

38The Lord immediately sent fire, and it burned up the sacrifice, the wood, and the stones. It scorched the ground around the altar and dried up the water in the trench. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 39Seeing this, the people bowed down and shouted, "The LORD is God. The LORD is God." {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 40Then Elijah told the people to catch all 450 prophets of Baal. They did, and Elijah took them down to the Kishon Valley and killed all of them there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

41Elijah told Ahab to go get something to eat and drink because a rainstorm is coming. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 42So Ahab left, but Elijah climbed back on Mount Carmel and prayed. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} 43When he told his servant to look toward the sea, his servant looked but he said he didn't see anything. Elijah told him seven times to look, and each time the servant saw nothing. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} 44Finally the seventh time the servant said, "I see a small cloud {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24} no bigger than a man's hand." Then Elijah shouted, "Hurry and tell Ahab to get into his chariot and go home before the rain stops him." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

45Soon the sky was black with clouds, and it was windy, and a heavy rain poured down as Ahab was driving back to Jezreel. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} 46Elijah tucked his coat into his belt and he ran ahead of Ahab all the way to Jezreel, a distance of about 25 miles. {360 Power-Seeking Prayer, Matt. 9:8}

Lord, I know there is nothing in false religion, and prayers to false gods are not answered. You, Lord, are the only God. I will stand for You, no matter what other believers do. Even if no one stands with me, I will stand alone. Amen.

I Kings 19

Elijah Runs Away to Mount Horeb

1When Ahab told Jezebel what Elijah had done {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} on Mount Carmel and that he had killed the 450 Baal prophets, 2she sent him a message saying, "Tomorrow I'll kill you." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} 3Elijah was afraid, and so he went south {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} to Beersheba. 4Leaving his servant there, he walked another whole day, {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} sat down under a tree, and prayed to die. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} He said, "Take my life. I'm no better than my ancestors." 5He lay down in the shade and went to sleep. An angel woke him up and told him to eat. 6So he ate some baked bread that was by his head and he drank some water, and went back to sleep. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 7The angel woke him up again and told him to eat some more because he would need strength for his long trip. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

8So Elijah got up and ate and drank again. That gave him strength to travel 40 days

to Mount Horeb (Sinai), the mountain of God, {132 Elijah Fast and Prayer, 1 Kings 19:4-16} [9]and he slept in a cave there. Then the LORD asked him, "Why are you here, Elijah?" {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [10]He answered, "I have served You, the LORD of the Heavens, enthusiastically, but the Israelites have not kept their agreement with You. They have torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets, and I'm the only one left. And now they want to kill me." {251 Interchange with God, Gen. 18:23-33}

[11]The LORD said, "Go stand before me on the mountain." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} As Elijah stood there, a windstorm hit the mountain causing a landslide and an earthquake. But the Lord was not in the wind. [12]Then there was a fire, but the LORD was not in the fire either. Then Elijah heard a soft whisper, {437 Silent-Worship Prayer, Rev. 8:1} [13]and he covered his face with his cloak {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} and stood at the cave's entrance. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} He heard a voice ask, "Why are you here, Elijah?" {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} [14]He said, as he had said before, "I have served You, the LORD of the Heavens, enthusiastically, {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} but the Israelites have not kept their agreement with You. They have torn down Your altars and killed Your prophets, and I'm the only one left. And now they want to kill me."{99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[15]The Lord told him, "Elijah, go back the way you came and keep going till you get to the Damascus desert. There I want you to appoint Hazael king of Syria, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [16]and anoint Jehu son of Nimshi king of Israel. Also have Elisha son of Shaphat to be My prophet in your place. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [17]Jehu will kill anyone who escapes from Hazael, and anyone who escapes from Jehu will be killed by Elisha. [18]I have 7,000 in Israel who have not worshiped Baal {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} by bowing to him and kissing him." {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3}

[19]Elijah found Elisha plowing a field with two oxen. Ahead of him were 11 farmers each with a pair of oxen, and Elisha had the 12th pair. Elijah went over to Elisha and threw his cloak over him. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [20]Elisha left his oxen, ran after Elijah, and said, "I'll go kiss my parents good-bye, and then I'll go with you." Elijah said, "Okay, but don't forget what I have done to you." {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62}

[21]So Elisha left and then came back and killed his oxen. He used the wood from his plow to make a fire. He cooked the meat and shared it with the other plowmen. Then he left with Elijah and became his assistant. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

Lord, help me realize I need food and rest to be physically strong so I can remain spiritually strong. I will look after the needs of my body. Keep me from discouragement and despondency. Help me look at everything in

life through Your eyes, not through my eyes. Keep me from doubt and fear. I confess my sin of feeling sorry for myself. I look at my problem rather than looking to You and searching for Your solutions to my predicament. I will listen for Your whisper. Come to me in the darkness of my lonely night and speak to me in quietness. Lord, when I'm seeking answers from You, speak. Amen.

I Kings 20

Syria and Israel at War

1Ben-Hadad II, king of Syria, called his soldiers together, and 32 kings with their chariots and horses joined him and marched against Samaria, Israel's capital. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} 2Ben-Hadad sent this message to King Ahab: 3"Give me your gold and silver and your best wives and children." 4Ahab replied, "Okay, all I have is yours."

5Ben-Hadad sent another messenger to Ahab: "Besides your giving me your gold, silver, wives, and children, {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} 6my officials will search your palace and your people's homes, and take whatever is valuable." {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} 7Then Ahab called a meeting of the elders and said, "Ben-Hadad is causing trouble. I agreed when he said he wanted my wives and children and gold and silver." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 8The elders and the people said, "Don't give in to his demands."

9So Ahab told the messengers of Ben-Hadad that he couldn't meet their demands. {216 Heavy-Prayer, Matt. 11:28:30} 10Then Ben-Hadad said, "I'll completely destroy Samaria. There won't even be enough dust for each of my soldiers to have a handful." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 11Ahab told the messengers, "Don't brag about winning a battle before you've even begun to fight." {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 12When Ben-Hadad heard this, he and the 32 kings were drinking in their tents. So he said, "Get ready to attack Samaria." {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8}

13Just then a prophet told Ahab, "Look at all these enemy soldiers. The LORD will help you defeat them, and then you will know that I am the LORD." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 14Ahab asked, "How will this be done?" And the prophet said, "The young officers of the district governors will do it." When Ahab asked, "Who will lead them in battle?" the prophet answered, "You will." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

15So Ahab called together the 232 young soldiers and the 7,000 troops. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 16At noon Ahab and the 32 kings with him were getting drunk, {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} 17but the young officers marched out of the city. Ben-Hadad's scouts told him some troops were coming from Samaria. 18Ben-Hadad said, "Capture them, whether they have come to fight or surrender." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

19The young officers led Israel's troops into battle, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 20and each Israelite killed an enemy soldier. Then the rest of the Syrian army ran, and the Israelites went after them. But Ben-Hadad and a few others escaped on horses. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
21The Israelite soldiers destroyed most of the Syrian chariots and killed their horses, and many Syrians were killed. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} 22Later the prophet told Ahab to be ready for another attack by the Syrians next year. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
23Ben-Hadad's officers told him, "The Israelite gods are gods of the hills. That's why Israel's army defeated us. But if we fight them on the plains, we will win. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 24So next time get rid of the 32 kings and put commanders in their places. 25Get the same number of horses, chariots, and soldiers, and if we fight them on the plains, we will win." So Ben-Hadad did as they suggested. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
26In the spring Ben-Hadad led his army against Israel at Aphek. 27The Israelites prepared to fight, but their small number made them look like two flocks of goats compared with the Syrian soldiers who filled the countryside. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} 28The prophet said to Ahab, "The Syrians think the LORD is a God of the hills and not the plains. But God will help you defeat their vast army, and then you will know that He is the LORD." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
29The two armies faced each other for a week. Then on the seventh day the Israelites killed 100,000 Syrian soldiers in that one day. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
30The other Syrian soldiers ran to Aphek, but the city wall collapsed and killed another 27,000 Syrians. Ben-Hadad ran to the city and hid in a back room of a house. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
31Ben-Hadad's officers said to him, "We've heard that the Israelite kings are kind. So let's put coarse cloth around our waists and ropes around our heads, and ask Ahab to let us live." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 32So they did that and said to Ahab, "Your servant Ben-Hadad asks you to let him live." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} Ahab asked, "Is he still alive? He is my brother." 33Glad to hear him say Ben-Hadad was his brother, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} they said, "Yes, you two are like brothers." Then Ahab said, "Bring him here." When Ben-Hadad arrived, Ahab had him get into his chariot with him. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 34Ben-Hadad said, "I'll give back to you the towns my father captured from your father, and you can set up shops in Damascus as my father did in Samaria." Ahab said, "Okay. If you will do this, I will set you free." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
35Then a prophet told a man nearby to hit him. But the man refused. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 36So the prophet said, "You disobeyed the LORD, and so as soon as you walk off a lion will kill you." And as he left, a lion attacked and killed him. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 37Then the

prophet asked another person to beat him up, and the man did. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [38]The prophet placed a bandage over his eyes to disguise himself, and he stood by the road, waiting for Ahab. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8} [39]The prophet said to the king, "I went into battle, and someone brought a prisoner to me and told me to guard him. He said if the prisoner gets away, I would be killed or I would have to pay 75 pounds of silver. [40]When I was busy doing something else, the prisoner got away." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[41]The prophet pulled the bandage off his eyes, and Ahab saw he was a prophet. [42]He said to Ahab, "The LORD told you to kill Ben-Hadad, but you let him go. Therefore you, not Ben-Hadad, will die and your people, not his, will die." {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} [43]Ahab then went back to his palace in Samaria, depressed and angry. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, You are my strength and wisdom. I know I win battles in Your strength and with Your guidance. Thank You for Your presence in my life. I do not boast in myself, I glory in Your protection. Amen.

I Kings 21

The Vineyard of Naboth

[1]Naboth owned a vineyard near King Ahab's palace in Jezreel. [2]Ahab said to Naboth, "I would like to buy your vineyard and use it as a vegetable garden since it's so close to my palace. I'll give you a better vineyard or pay you cash for yours." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [3]Naboth responded, "No way. This vineyard has been in my family for years. I won't sell it or trade it." {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [4]Ahab went home, depressed and angry, and he lay on his couch in a bad mood, and wouldn't eat. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [5]Jezebel said, "What's wrong? Why don't you eat something?" {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} [6]Ahab said, "I asked Naboth to sell me his vineyard or trade it, and he refused." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

[7]Jezebel said, "But you are Israel's king. So get up and eat, and I'll get his vineyard for you." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [8]Jezebel then wrote letters in Ahab's name and sent them to the leaders of Jezreel. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [9]The letters said, "Have everyone come together and not eat anything. Put Naboth in a central place. [10]Then have two rascals accuse him of cursing God and the king. Then take him outside and stone him to death." {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}

[11]Then the leaders in Jezreel did what Jezebel said. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [12]They told the people not to eat anything that day. They put Naboth in a central place, [13]and two rascals sat opposite him and accused him of cursing God and the king. Then they took him outside and stoned him to death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [14]The

leaders sent word to Jezebel that Naboth was dead. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 15When she got this message, she told Ahab, "You can now have Naboth's vineyard. He is dead." {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 16So Ahab got up and took over the vineyard. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

17The LORD then told Elijah 18to go to Ahab, who was in Naboth's vineyard, 19and to say to him, "You have murdered a man and stolen his property. And so in this very place where dogs licked his blood, they will lick your blood." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 20Ahab said, "So you, my enemy, have found me." "Yes, I have. You have done everything sinful before the LORD. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 21So every male in your family will die, whether slave or free. 22You have made Me angry {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} by sinning and causing Israel to sin, so your whole family will be wiped out just like the families of Jeroboam and Baasha. 23And dogs will eat Jezebel's body in Jezreel. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 24Dogs will eat the bodies of your relatives who die in the city, and birds will eat the bodies of those who die in the country." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

25No one was as sinful as Ahab, and his wife Jezebel influenced him to do all kinds of evil. 26He was especially sinful in worshiping idols, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} just as the Amorites had done before the Lord forced them out of the land. 27In grief Ahab tore his clothes, {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12} put on coarse clothing, and refused to eat. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 28Later the LORD said to Elijah, 29"I'm sure you've seen how Ahab is sorry. Therefore I won't punish his family while he is alive. I will destroy his descendants." {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}

Lord, You are my strength and wisdom. I know I win battles in Your strength and with Your guidance. Thank You for Your presence in my life. I do not boast in myself; I glory in Your protection. Amen.

I Kings 22

The Prophet Micaiah Predicts Ahab's Defeat

1For three years there was peace between Israel and Syria. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 2During the third year Jehoshaphat king of Judah went to visit Ahab. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 3Ahab said to his officials, "You know that the Syrians took Ramoth-Gilead from us, and yet we haven't done anything about it." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 4Then he asked Jehoshaphat to go with him to Ramoth {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} and attack the Syrians. 5Jehoshaphat said, "Sure. We can join forces. But first let's ask the LORD." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

6So Ahab asked 400 prophets if they should attack the Syrians. They all said, "Yes. The LORD will help you." {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3} 7But Jehoshaphat said, "Isn't there a prophet of the LORD? I'd like to ask him." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 8Ahab said, "Well, Micaiah son of Imlah is a prophet, but I hate him. He's always giving me bad news." Jehoshaphat said, "Don't talk like that. Let's see what he says." {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} 9So Ahab had an official bring Micaiah. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

10Ahab and Jehoshaphat, dressed in their royal robes, were sitting on their thrones at the threshing floor by the Samaria city gate, and the prophets were prophesying to the kings. {422 satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} 11Zedekiah, one of the prophets, made horns out of iron and said, "Ahab will destroy the Syrians like a bull killing people with its horns." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 12All the other prophets predicted victory for Ahab too. "Attack Ramoth-Gilead and you will defeat the Syrians." {422 satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13}

13The man who went to get Micaiah told him that all these other prophets were predicting victory over the Syrians, and that Micaiah should say the same thing. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 14But Micaiah said, "I can say only what the Lord tells me to say." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 15Ahab then asked him if he should go attack the Syrians at Ramoth. Micaiah answered, "Yes. And the LORD will give you victory." {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} 16But Ahab said, "How many times have I told you to tell me the truth? What did the LORD really say?" {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

17Micaiah responded, "I saw Israel scattered on the hills like sheep without a shepherd. Since they have no leaders, they should all go home." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

18Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "I told you he would give us bad news." {222 Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer)} 19Then Micaiah added, "I saw the LORD seated on his throne in heaven with all the armies of heaven around him. And the 20LORD said, 'Who can trick Ahab into going into battle {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} so he can be killed there?' They talked about it for a while, 21and then a spirit said, 'I will trick him.' When the LORD asked 'How?' {422 satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} 22the spirit said, 'I'll cause a spirit to lie to the prophets.' {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} The LORD replied, 'Okay, go ahead.'" 23Then Micaiah said, "Ahab, the Lord has made your prophets lie to you, and you will be defeated." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

24Zedekiah walked up to Micaiah and slapped him in the face, and said, "What makes you think the LORD left me to speak to you?" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 25Micaiah said, "You'll find out when you are hiding for safety in a back room of a house." 26Ahab shouted, "Arrest Micaiah. And take him to Joash, Jehoshaphat's son, and to Amon, the mayor of Samaria. 27Put him in prison,

and give him only bread and water until I get back to Samaria." {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [28]Micaiah said, "If you come back, then the Lord didn't speak through me." Then he told the people, "Remember what I said." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}
[29]Ahab and Jehoshaphat went to fight against Ramoth-Gilead. [30]Ahab suggested that Jehoshaphat wear his royal robes and that he, Ahab, disguise himself. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [31]The king of Syria told his 32 chariot commanders to attack only Ahab. [32]When they saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robe, they thought he was Ahab. When they started to attack him, he shouted. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [33]So the chariot commanders stopped chasing him.
[34]A soldier shot an arrow at Ahab's troops, and it hit Ahab between the joints of his armor. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} He told his chariot driver, "I've been hit. Get me out of here." {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [35]The battle continued on all day, and Ahab was propped up in his chariot so he could see the battle. The blood from his wound covered the bottom of the chariot, and that evening he died. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [36]At sunset someone shouted, "Go home. The king is dead." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [37]Ahab was buried in Samaria. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [38]They washed his chariot at a pool in Samaria, and the dogs licked his blood just as God had predicted. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [39]The other events in Ahab's reign, including the towns he rebuilt and the palace he built using lots of ivory, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [40]Ahaziah, Ahab's son, became the next king. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[41]When Ahab had ruled for four years, Jehoshaphat son of Asa became king of Judah. [42]He was 35 years old and ruled from Jerusalem for 25 years. His mother was Azubah, daughter of Shilhi. [43]Jehoshaphat obeyed the LORD as his father Asa had done, and he did what pleased the LORD. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} However, he did not remove the hilltop shrines, and the people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense there. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [44]During his reign he was at peace with the king of Israel. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[45]The events of Jehoshaphat's reign and his military victories are written in the book of the kings of Judah. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [46]He got rid of the male shrine prostitutes who were still there in his father Asa's reign. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [47]Edom had no king at the time, so a deputy ruled. [48]Jehoshaphat built seagoing vessels to sail to Ophir for gold. But they were wrecked at Ezion-Geber. [49]Ahab's son Ahaziah suggested that his sailors sail with Jehoshaphat's sailors, but Jehoshaphat refused. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [50]Jehoshaphat died {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. And Jehoram his son was the

next king of Judah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
51Ahab's son Ahaziah became king of Israel in Jehoshaphat's 17th year as king of Judah. And Ahaziah reigned for two years.
52He disobeyed the LORD, just as Ahab, Jezebel, and Jeroboam had done and led Israel to sin. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 53He worshiped Baal {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} and made the LORD very angry just as his father Ahab had done.

Lord, there are false prophets in my world, just as false prophets deceived King Ahab. I will judge them by the Word of God. Not every preacher who claims to be a Christian actually speaks the truth. Help me see things from Your perspective of time. While You wait patiently to judge sin, I'm impatient. Lord, open my eyes to see as You see. Amen.

2 Kings

Ch 1: Elijah Predicts Death of King Ahaziah.... 515
Ch 2: Elijah Taken up to Heaven..... 516
Ch 3: Moab Rebels against Israel..... 517
Ch 4: Elisha Helps a Widow..... 519
Ch 5: Naaman Cured of Leprosy..... 521
Ch 6: An Iron Ax Head Floats..... 522
Ch 7: Open Windows of Heaven..... 523
Ch 8: The Shunammite Woman Returns..... 524
Ch 9: Jehu Is Privately Anointed King of Israel 526
Ch 10: Ahab's Descendants Are Killed..... 527
Ch 11: Joash Becomes King 529
Ch 12: King Joash Rules over Judah..... 530
Ch 13: Jehoahaz Rules over Israel..... 531
Ch 14: Jeoboam II Rules over Israel..... 532
Ch 15: Uzziah Rules over Judah 533
Ch 16: Ahaz Rules over Judah..... 535
Ch 17: Hoshea Rules over Israel 536
Ch 18: Hezekiah Rules over Judah 538
Ch 19: King Hezekiah Seeks Avdvice from Isaiah..... 540
Ch 20: The LORD Heals King Hezekiah..... 541
Ch 21: Manasseh Rules over Judah 542

Ch 22: Josiah Rules over Judah 544
Ch 23: King Josiah Enforces God's Laws 545
Ch 24: Jehoiakim Rules over Judah 547
Ch 25: The Fall of Jerusalem 548

2 KINGS

Key Words: *Babylon Captivity* (2 Kings 24:15)

Key Verse: "And he carried away Jehoiachin to Babylon, and the king's mother, and the king's wives, and his officers, and the mighty of the land, those carried he into captivity from Jerusalem to Babylon" (24:15).

Theme: This book records two great tragedies as the result of God's people who disobeyed Him and polluted themselves with idols. First, in 723 B.C. the northern kingdom of Israel fell to Assyria and was carried away in slavery. Second, in 586 B.C. the southern kingdom of Judah fell to Babylon, Jerusalem was destroyed and the people were carried away in slavery.

This book emphasizes the ministry of Elijah and Elisha (plus warnings from other prophets) to the northern kingdom. It also contains the ministry of Isaiah and Jeremiah (plus warnings from other prophets) to the southern kingdom. The lesson is obvious; when people turn away from God to give themselves to sin; they end up in slavery to sin. *Lord, I want to be Your slave; keep me from addictive slavery of sin. Amen.*

2 Kings 1

Elijah Predicts Death of King Ahaziah

1 After Ahab died, the country of Moab rebelled against his son Ahaziah.
2 Ahaziah had fallen from an upstairs room of his palace and was badly
injured. So he sent messengers to Ekron to ask the god Baal-Zebub if he would get well.
{159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 3 The angel of the LORD told Elijah to meet these messengers and ask them, "Why are you going to Baal-Zebub instead of trusting the LORD?
4 Because the king has done this, he will die." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
5 When the messengers went back to Ahaziah, he was surprised they were back so soon.
6 They said, "A man met us on the road and told us that because you are going to Baal-Zebub, {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} you will soon die." 7 The king asked, "What did he look like?" 8 They replied, "He was hairy and was wearing a leather belt." The king said, "That was Elijah!"

9Then Ahaziah sent 50 men with a captain to arrest Elijah. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} Finding Elijah sitting on a hilltop, the captain ordered him to go with them to see the king. 10Elijah responded, "If I am a man of God, fire will come from heaven on you and your 50 men." Then lightning killed them all. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11So the king sent another 50 men and a captain to arrest Elijah. 12Again Elijah said, "If I am a man of God, fire will come from heaven on you and your 50 men." Again lightning killed them all. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 13A third time Ahaziah sent 50 men and a captain. But the captain begged Elijah to spare their lives. {464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30} 14"Please don't destroy us," he said. 15The angel of the LORD then told Elijah to go with them to see the king. So he did. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

16Elijah asked Ahaziah, "Why did you send messengers to Baal-Zebub to ask about your injury? Why didn't you ask the God of Israel? Because you did this, the LORD said you will die." 17Then Ahaziah died, just as the LORD had said. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Since Ahaziah did not have a son to be the next king, his brother Jehoram became the king. This was in the second year of the reign of Jehoram, son of Jehoshaphat, king of Judah. 18The other events of Ahaziah's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.

Lord, if I'm spiritually blinded to anything like an idol in my life, please reveal it to me. I will repent and put it out of my life. I will worship You alone. I will follow and serve You alone. Amen.

2 Kings 2

Elijah Taken Up to Heaven

1The LORD was soon going to take Elijah to heaven in a strong wind. 2Leaving Gilgal, Elijah told Elisha, "Why don't you stay here {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} while I going on to Bethel?" Elisha said, "I prefer to stay with you no matter what." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} So they went together to Bethel. 3Some prophets at Bethel asked Elisha, "Did you know that the Lord will take Elijah from you today?" Elisha replied, "Of course. But I don't want to talk about it." 4Then Elijah said, to Elisha, "Why don't you stay here in Bethel while I go on to Jericho?" Elisha replied, "I prefer to stay with you no matter what." So they went together to Jericho. 5Then some prophets in Jericho asked Elisha, "Did you know that the LORD will take Elijah from you today?" {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} Elisha replied, "Of course. But I don't want to talk about it."

6Then Elijah said to Elisha, "Why don't you stay here in Jericho while I go on to the Jordan River?" Elisha replied, "I prefer to stay with you no matter what." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} So they went on to the river. 7As 50 prophets watched from a distance 8Elijah hit the water with his cloak, and the river divided, and the

two of them walked across on dry ground. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
9On the other side Elijah said to Elisha, "Can I do something for you before I am taken away?" Elisha replied, "Yes, let me have twice as much power as you have." {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} 10"That's a difficult request. But it will happen if you see me as I am taken away." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
11As they were walking along and talking, a fiery chariot pulled by horses of fire suddenly appeared between them. 12Elisha saw this and shouted, "Israel's chariots have taken my master away." Then he tore his clothes in grief. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 13He picked up Elijah's cloak 14and hit the bank of the Jordan River with it, as Elijah had done. Wondering if Elijah's God would be with him, Elisha saw that the river divided, and he went across on dry ground. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
15When the prophets of Jericho saw this, they said, "Yes, Elisha has Elijah's power." They bowed down before him in respect, 16and they said, "Fifty of us will be glad to go hunt for your master. Perhaps the Spirit of the LORD carried him off to some mountain or valley." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} Elisha said, "No. There's no need to do that." 17They kept urging him to let them send 50 prophets to hunt for Elijah. So finally he said, "Okay, go ahead." The 50 look for three days and couldn't find him. 18When they got back to Jericho, Elisha told them, "I told you not to go look for him." {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6}
19One day some city officials of Jericho told Elisha, "We have a problem. Our city is in a nice location, but the water is bad and so we have no crops." 20Elisha said, "Bring me a new bowl filled with salt," and they did. 21Then he threw the salt into the city well, and said, "The LORD has made the water good again. Now crops will grow." 22The water was fine ever since then. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6}
23As he was walking from Jericho to Bethel, some young boys began making fun of him because of his bald head. {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} 24He looked at them and cursed them in the name of the LORD. Just then two bears came out of the woods and killed 42 of the boys. 25Then Elisha went to Mount Carmel and then to Samaria.

Lord, I want to experience Your presence when You manifest Yourself among Your people. Since I don't know what will happen, I'll always be in church because You command it (Heb. 10:25) and You promise to be there (Matt. 18:20). I want to have the faith of Elisha—give me a double portion. I will pay the price. Amen.

2 Kings 3

Moab Rebels against Israel

1Ahab's son Jehoram began reigning over Israel in the 18th year of Jehoshaphat king of Judah. He ruled for 12 years in Samaria. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2He was evil, but not as bad

as his parents. For one thing he tore down the stone column to Baal that his father made. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 3But he kept doing the sinful things Jeroboam son of Nebat had done.

4King Mesha of Moab and his people raised sheep, and as a subject of Israel he had to pay Israel 100,000 lambs and the wool of 100,000 rams. 5But after Ahab died, Mesha rebelled against Israel. 6So Jehoram got his army together. 7And he sent his message to Jehoshaphat king of Judah: "Moab has rebelled against us. I need your help to defeat him." Jehoshaphat agreed {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 8and said, "But which way should we go?" {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Jehoram said, "Let's go through the Edom Desert south of the Dead Sea."

9The king of Edom joined them, and all three armies traveled in a roundabout way for a week. Then the soldiers had no more water for themselves or their animals. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} 10Jehoram said, "What can we do? Has the LORD brought us here to be captured by Moab's army?" {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 11Jehoshaphat asked, "Is there a prophet of the LORD here so we can ask him what to do?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} One of Jehoram's officers said, "Elisha, Elijah's assistant, is here. You could ask him." 12Jehoshaphat said, "Yes, he can tell us what to do." So the three kings went to see him. 13But Elisha said to Jehoram, "Don't ask me. Go ask the false prophets of your parents." Jehoram replied, "I can't do that because the LORD has brought us here, so we need His help."

14Elisha said, "I wouldn't have anything to do with you except for the fact that Jehoshaphat is here. 15So bring to me someone who can play the harp." {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} As the harp was being played, this message came to Elisha: 16"Dig a number of ditches in this valley. 17You won't hear any wind or see any rain, but this valley will be filled with water, plenty for you and your animals. {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} 18This is an easy thing for the LORD to do. Greater than that is the fact that He will help you defeat Moab's army. 19You will conquer the best of their cities. You will chop down every good tree, stop up all their springs, and cover their fields with stones." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

20Then next day at the time of the morning sacrifice, water began flowing from Edom toward Moab and water was everywhere. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} 21The Moabites had heard that three armies were coming against them, so everyone who could fight was stationed at the border. 22When they got up next morning the sun shining on all the water made it look red. 23The Moabites looked and shouted, "Blood! Those kings must have killed each other. Let's go take what's left in their camps." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

24When the Moabites got to the Israelite camp, the Israelites attacked them and they turned and ran. The Israelites chased the Moabite soldiers all the way back to Moab. 25They destroyed their towns, tossed stones in their fields, stopped up their springs, and chopped down every

good tree. The only city left standing was Kir-Hareseth, but the soldiers with slings surrounded it and defeated it too. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[26]King Mesha of Moab saw that he was almost defeated. So he took 700 soldiers with swords to break through the enemy line next to the king of Edom, but they failed. [27]Then he offered his son as a sacrifice on the city wall, where everyone could see it. The Israelites were so horrified they left and went home.

Lord, give me Your eyes to see my problems. Lord, give me faith to obey Your commands. Lord, give me courage to "dig holes." And help me do it quickly before the water passes me by. Amen.

2 Kings 4

Elisah Helps a Widow

[1]One day the widow of one of Elisha's prophets said to Elisha, "As you know, my husband who served you and the LORD is dead. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He owed a man some money, and now that man says he'll take my two sons as slaves." [2]"How can I help you?" Elisha asked. "What food do you have?" She said, "I have only a little bit of olive oil." [3]Elisha said, "Borrow a lot of empty jars from your neighbors. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [4]Then pour your olive oil into one jar, and it will fill up. Then keep doing this with all the jars you have." [5]So she did this, and as each jar was filled, she told her sons to bring her another jar. [6]When all the jars were filled, the oil stopped flowing. {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} [7]When she told Elisha what happened, he said, "Sell the oil and pay what you owe to the man. And you and your sons can live on the money left over."

Lord, give me faith to provide things I must provide as the widow had to provide empty vessels. Continue the flow of oil in my life. Amen.

[8]One day when Elisha was in Shunem a rich woman invited him to dinner. Then whenever he was there in town, he stopped at her place for a meal. [9]The woman said to her husband, "Since he is obviously a prophet, [10]we should make a small room for him on our flat roof, and put in it a bed, table, chair, and lamp. Then he can stay overnight whenever he's in town." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
[11]One day when Elisha was staying in this room, [12]he told his servant Gehazi to have the woman come up to see him. [13]Gehazi said to her, "We appreciate your kindness. Now what can we do for you? Can we put in a good word for you to the king or the army general?" She replied, "No, I don't need anything." [14]Elisha then asked Gehazi, "What do you suggest we do for her?" He said, "Her husband is old, and I know she doesn't have a son."
[15]Elisha then asked her to come back, and as she stood in the doorway, he said, [16]"Next year at this time you'll be holding your baby boy in your arms."

{34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} She objected, "No. Please don't lie to me."
17Soon she became pregnant and she gave birth to a son, as Elisha had said. 18One day when her child was older, he went to a field to see his father who was harvesting crops. 19Suddenly he said, "My head hurts." {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 20A servant took him home, and about noon the boy died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 21His mother put him in Elisha's bed, 22and then she sent a message to tell her husband, "Send me a donkey so I and a servant can go see the prophet." 23He asked, "Why today? It's not the new moon festival or a Sabbath." She said, "That's not the problem."
24So she saddled the donkey and told the servant, "Hurry. Don't slow down unless I tell you to." 25Elisha was at Mount Carmel, and when he saw the woman coming, he told Gehazi {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} to 26run and ask her if she, her husband, and son are okay. She responded, "Yes, everyone is fine." 27But when she got to Elisha, she grabbed his feet. When Gehazi started to push her away, Elisha said, "Don't. Something is bothering her, but I don't know what it is." {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22}
28She said to Elisha, "I told you not to get my hopes up. Remember, I didn't even ask for a son." 29Sensing something was wrong with her son, Elisha told Gehazi to hurry and put his (Elisha's) rod on the boy's face."
30But the woman said to Elisha, "Please come with me." So he did. 31Gehazi went on ahead and put Elisha's rod on the boy's face, but there was no response. Gehazi ran back to Elisha and said, "The boy is still dead." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 32Elisha saw the boy lying on his bed. 33He shut the door so he could be by himself and the boy, and he prayed for the boy. 34Then he stretched out on the boy's body, put his mouth to the boy's mouth, his eyes on the boy's eyes, and his hands on the boy's hands. And the boy's body became warm. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
35Elisha walked back and forth, and he stretched out on the boy again. This time the boy sneezed seven times and opened his eyes. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 36"Call the boy's mother," Elisha said to Gehazi. When she came in, Elisha said, "Here is your son."
37She bowed down at Elisha's feet and then took the boy downstairs. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
38Later Elisha went back to Gilgal, and a famine was in the land. He told his servant to cook some stew for the prophets who were there with him. 39One of them went out to get some vegetables, and he came back with some gourds from a wild vine. He put them in the kettle, not knowing they were poisonous. 40When the men began to eat the stew, they knew it was poison, so they stopped eating it. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 41Elisha said, "Put some flour in with the stew." Then the stew was okay for them to eat. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
42One day a man from Baal-Shalishah brought Elisha some grain and 20 loaves of barley bread baked from the first barley that was harvested. Elisha told him to give

it to the people so they could eat. 43But the man said, "This isn't enough to feed 100 people." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} Elisha responded, "Just give it to them. The Lord says there will be enough and then some." 44And as the LORD promised, they ate and some was left over. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20}

2 Kings 5

Naaman Cured of Leprosy

1Naaman was the commander of the Syrian army. The king of Syria, Ben-Hadad II, appreciated him because the LORD had helped Naaman and his troops defeat their enemies. But Naaman had leprosy. 2His army had captured a young Israelite girl who became a maid for Naaman's wife. 3One day the girl told Naaman's wife, "Naaman should go to the prophet in Samaria. He could heal him."

4So Naaman told the king what she said. 5And the king responded, "Fine with me. Go ahead and I'll give you a letter of introduction to Israel's king." Naaman left with 750 pounds of silver, 150 pound of gold, and ten sets of clothing. 6The letter said, "I am sending my servant Naaman to you. Please heal him of his leprosy."

7When the king read the letter, he tore his robes in disgust and said, "Who does he think I am? I have no power over life and death. He's just trying to get an excuse to attack us again." 8Elisha heard about the king's reaction, and he sent him this message: "Don't be upset. Send Naaman to me, and he'll see that there is a true prophet of God here in Israel."

9When Naaman arrived with his horses and chariots at Elisha's place, 10Elisha sent someone outside to tell him, "You want to be healed? Then go wash yourself seven times in the Jordan River." 11This made Naaman angry. He said, "I thought he would come out and wave his hand over my leprosy and ask the LORD his God to heal me. 12Why couldn't I have washed in the Abana River or the Pharpar River in Syria? They are better than any river in Israel." So Naaman stormed off mad.

13Naaman's servants said to him, "If the prophet had told you to do something really difficult, you would have done it. So why not just do this simple thing and wash in the Jordan and be healed?" 14This persuaded Naaman, so he dipped himself seven times in the Jordan. And he was cured right away, and his skin was like that of a young child.

15Naaman then went to see Elisha, and he said to him, "Now I know that there is no god in all the world like the God of Israel. So please accept these gifts." 16Elisha said, "No, I won't take any gifts from you." Naaman kept urging him to take the gifts, but he refused. 17So Naaman said, "Okay. Then let me take home as much soil as two mules can carry. From now on I will offer sacrifices only to the LORD. 18However, I pray that the LORD will forgive me if I bow with my king to the temple of the God Rimmon." 19Elisha said, "No problem. May you have a safe trip home." So Naaman started toward home.

20Gehazi said to himself, "Elisha should
have accepted some of Naaman's gifts. So
I will chase him and get some of those gifts
for myself." 21When Naaman saw Gehazi
running after him, he stopped his chariot,
got out, and asked if something was wrong.
22Gehazi said, "Everything is okay, but my
master sent me to tell you that two young
prophets have come from Ephraim to see
him. So could you spare 75 pounds of sil-
ver and two sets of clothing for them?"
23Naaman said, "Of course. Here are 75
pounds of silver and clothes for them." He
tied the silver and two sets of clothing in
two bags, and had two of his servants go
back with Gehazi to take the gifts. 24When
Gehazi got back, he hid the silver and
clothes in his house, and sent the servants
away. 25When he went to see his mas-
ter, Elisha asked him where he had been.
"Nowhere," he replied. 26But Elisha said,
"Don't you realize that I was there in spirit
when Naaman got off his chariot to meet
you. This is not the time to receive money
and clothing or anything else like olive
groves, vineyards, sheep, oxen, and ser-
vants. 27Because you have done this, you,
your children, and your grandchildren will
suffer from leprosy." When Gehazi left, his
skin suddenly turned white with leprosy.

2 Kings 6

An Iron Ax Head Floats

1One day some prophets said to Elisha,
"The place where we meet is too small.
2We suggest we all go to the Jordan River,
get logs, and build a new meeting place."
Elisha said, "Good idea; go ahead." 3One
of them asked Elisha to go with them, and
he agreed. 4So they got to the Jordan River,
and as they began chopping down trees,
5the ax head of one of the men fell into
the river. He shouted, "Oh, no. I had bor-
rowed this ax." 6Elisha asked him where it
fell. So he showed him the place, and Eli-
sha cut a stick and tossed it into the river at
that spot. Then the ax head floated to the
top, 7and the worker grabbed it.
8The Syrians and Israelites were at war. The
king of Syria would check with his officers
and then decide where to have their sol-
diers set up camp. 9Elisha would say to the
king of Israel, "Don't go that way because
the Syrians are going there." 10So the king
of Israel would warn the Israelite troops to
be on guard in those places. 11When the
Syrian king heard what was happening,
he got very mad. He asked his officers,
"Which of you has been telling the king
of Israel our plans?" 12One of his men said,
"It's not us. Elisha the prophet tells Israel's
king everything, even what you say in your
bedroom."
13The king said, "Go find where he is so
I can send soldiers to capture him." They
learned he was in Dothan, 14so one night
the Syrian king sent many soldiers with
chariots and horses to surround the town.
15Early the next morning Elisha's servant
saw this army and said, "What shall we
do?" 16Elisha responded, "No need to be
afraid. More troops are on our side than
are on theirs." 17Elisha prayed, "LORD,
open his eyes." And when the servant
looked up, he saw the hillside was covered
with fiery horses and flaming chariots.

18When the Syrian army marched toward
Elisha, he prayed, "Lord, make these sol-
diers blind." And He did. 19Then Elisha
told them, "You've taken the wrong road.
This isn't the right city. I'll lead you to the
men you are looking for." And he led them
to Samaria. 20As they arrived in Samaria,
Elisha asked the LORD to let them see.
And the LORD did, and the soldiers saw
that they were in the middle of the city of
Samaria.
21The king of Israel asked Elisha if he
should kill them, 22and Elisha said, "No.
These are like prisoners of war, and we
don't kill POWS. Instead feed them and
send them home." 23So the king gave them
a great feast and sent them on their way.
Then for a while the Syrians stayed away
from Israel.
24However, sometime later King Ben-Ha-
dad sent his army against Samaria. 25As a
result, the people in Samaria had nothing
to eat. Things were so scarce that the head
of a dead donkey sold for two pounds of
silver, and a bowl of pigeon's droppings
sold for about two ounces of silver.
26One day the king of Israel was walking
on the city wall when a woman shouted,
"Help me, my king." 27He said, "I can't help
you. Only the LORD can. I don't have any
food or wine to give you. 28What's your
problem?" She replied, "Another woman
and I were so hungry we agreed to eat
our sons. 29So we cooked my son and ate
him. Then the next day, when we were to
kill her son, she said she had hidden him."
30The king tore his clothes in despair, and
people could see coarse clothing under his
outer cloak. 31He said, "May God kill me if
I don't kill Elisha today."
32Elisha was meeting in his house with Isra-
el's leaders when a messenger arrived. But
before he arrived, Elisha said, "A man will
arrive to kill me. But when he comes, shut
the door tight. His master the king of Israel
will come right behind him." 33While Eli-
sha was talking, the messenger came. Then
King Joram said, "The LORD has brought
this problem on us. Why should I expect
any help from Him?"

2 Kings 7

Open Windows of Heaven

1Elisha answered, "Listen to what the
LORD says. By this time tomorrow you
will be able to buy several quarts of flour or
ten quarts of barley for only half an ounce
of silver each." 2A special assistant to the
king asked, "How can that be? Even if the
LORD sends a rainstorm that much grain
couldn't be produced tomorrow." Elisha
responded, "You will see it appear, but you
won't eat any of the food."
3Four men with leprosy were sitting just
outside the Samaria gate. 4They said, "The
famine is so bad that we'll die whether we
stay here or go in the city. But if we sur-
render to the Syrians, they might kill us
but then maybe they won't." 5So that eve-
ning they walked to the Syrian camp, but
no one was there. 6The Syrians had heard
what sounded like speeding horses and
chariots and a great army. And, thinking
the king of Israel had hired Hittite and
Egyptian kings to attack them, 7they left

their tents, horses, and donkeys and ran for their lives. 8When the men with leprosy got to the Syrian camp, they entered one tent after another eating and drinking. And they carried off clothes and silver and gold and hid them.
9Then the four got to thinking, "This isn't right to keep this good news to ourselves. If we wait till morning, we might be punished. So let's go to the king's palace and tell the news." 10So they went back to Samaria and told the gatekeepers what happened. They said the soldiers were gone, horses and donkeys were tied up, and no one was there. 11The gatekeepers shouted the news to the people in the palace. 12The king got out of bed and said, "It's obvious what the Syrians have done. They are hiding in the fields, thinking we'll go there for food and then they'll attack us."
13One of his officers suggested scouts take five horses and see what happened. He said, "It may be risky, but we may all die anyway." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 14So they got two chariots, and the king sent them on their way. 15On the way to the Jordan River the scouts saw clothes and equipment the Syrians had thrown away as they hurried to leave. The scouts went back and told the king what they saw, {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 16and the people in Samaria ran to the Syrian camp and took what was left. They took so much that prices went way down. As the Lord had said, half an ounce of silver would buy several quarts of flour or ten quarts of barley. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
17The king put his special assistant in charge of the gate, but he was trampled on as people ran out of the city, and he died. 18This is the man who questioned what Elisha had said about flour and barley selling for so little. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 19This officer had said those prices wouldn't happen even if the LORD sent a rainstorm. Elisha had said to him, "You will see it happen, but you won't eat any of the food." 20And that is what happened because the assistant was trampled to death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I don't want money, but I wrongly want the joy that money gives. Give me Your joy, even if I live in poverty on this earth. Teach me satisfaction that comes from Your presence. Amen.

2 Kings 8

The Shunammite Woman Returns

1Elisha had told the woman whose son he brought back to life, "A famine will last here for seven years. So you and your family should move away for a while." 2She moved to Philistine territory {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and lived there seven years. 3Then she moved back to Israel and went to see the king about getting back her house and land. 4The king was asking Gehazi, Elisha's servant, to tell about the things Elisha had done. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 5Just then the woman came in with her son, and Gehazi said to the king, "This is the

woman, and here is her son." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 6The king asked her about this, and then he said to an official, "See that she gets back her house and land, and give her the money her crops would have made since she left Israel." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

7Later Elisha went to Damascus to see Ben-Hadad II, king of Syria, who was sick. 8When Ben-Hadad II heard Elisha was there, he asked Hazael to take him a present and ask if the king would get well. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 9So Hazael took 40 camel-loads of the best things made in Damascus. Hazael asked Elisha if Ben-Hadad would get well, 10and Elisha said, "Yes, he will recover, but he will soon die." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 11Elisha stared at Hazael and then started crying. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 12Hazael asked, "Why are you crying?" Elisha replied, "Because I know you will burn down Israel's walled cities, kill their young men, crush their babies against rocks, and rip open their pregnant women." 13Hazael said, "I'm not a dog. I would never do that." But Elisha said, "The LORD told me you will be the next king of Syria." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

14When Hazael went back, Ben-Hadad asked him what Elisha said, and Hazael said, "He told me you will get well." 15The next day Hazael soaked a thick blanket in water and held it over the king's face until he died. Then Hazael became king of Syria.

16Jehoram, Jehoshaphat's son, became king of Judah in Joram's fifth year as king of Israel. Jehoram reigned with his father Jehoshaphat. Judah's king 17Jehoram began reigning when he was 32, and he reigned in Jerusalem for eight years. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 18He was as evil as Ahab had been in the northern kingdom, and he even married one of Ahab's daughters. 19But the Lord did not destroy Judah, because he had promised that a descendant of David would always rule in Judah.

20When Jehoram was king, Edom revolted from Judah and set up their own king. 21Jehoram went with his cavalry to Zair, but the Edomites surrounded him. At night he tried to attack the Edomites, but his soldiers escaped. 22Edom continued to rebel against Judah, and Libnah did the same. 23Jehoram's other events are recorded in the books of the kings of Judah. 24He died and was buried in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} And Ahaziah his son became the next king. 25When Ahaziah began to rule over Judah, Joram was in his 12th year as king of Israel.

26Ahaziah was 22 years old when he became king, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and he reigned only one year. His mother was Athaliah, granddaughter of king Omri of Israel. 27Ahaziah was an evil king, and this was no surprise because he was related to Ahab by marriage. 28He joined King Joram of Israel in war against King Hazael and his Syrian troops at Ramoth-Gilead. Joram was surrounded in that battle, 29and Ahaziah king of Judah went to Jezreel to see Joram.

Lord, I know You use evil men to punish Your rebellious children. Don't punish me. I repent of my rebellion. I look to You for grace. Amen.

2 Kings 9

Jehu Is Privately Anointed King of Israel

[1]Elisha asked a prophet to take some olive oil, go to Ramoth-Gilead [2]and find Jehu, son of Jehoshaphat, [3]and pour oil over his head {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} in a private room. "Tell him he is to be the next king of Israel. Then leave quickly." [4]So the prophet went to find Jehu and told him [5]he had a message for him. [6]The two of them went into a house and the prophet poured oil on Jehu's head, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} and said, "The LORD says, 'I anoint you king of Israel. [7]you are to destroy Ahab's family. This way Jezebel will be punished for killing the prophets and my servants. [8]Every male in Ahab's family will die, whether slave or free. [9]I will destroy Ahab's family just as I destroyed the families of Jeroboam son of Nebat and of Baasha son of Ahijah. [10]Dogs will eat Jezebel in Jezreel, and she will not be buried.'" Then the prophet left quickly. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[11]When Jehu went back to his officers, one of them asked, "What did that crazy guy want? Is everything okay?" Jehu replied, "You know who he is." [12]They said, "No. We don't. Tell us." So he told them that he, Jehu, had been made king of Israel. [13]They quickly put their coats down on the steps where Jehu was standing, and they shouted, "Jehu is king."

[14]King Jehu formed a plot against King Joram, [15]who had been wounded fighting against Hazael of Syria at Ramoth-Gilead. Joram was in Jezreel, and King Ahaziah of Judah was visiting him there. Jehu told his men, "Don't let anyone skip out and tell people in Jezreel that I am to be king. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [16]Jehu got in his chariot and rode to Jezreel. [17]A watchman on a tower saw Jehu coming and he shouted, "Troops are coming." Joram said, "Send someone out to ask him if this is a friendly visit or not." [18]So a horseman rode out and asked Jehu if he was coming in peace. Jehu said, "What do you know about peace? Get behind me." Then the watchman told the king the rider wasn't coming back. [19]So the king sent a second rider who asked Jehu if he was coming in peace. Jehu said, "What do you know about peace? Get behind me." [20]The watchman told King Joram, "The second rider isn't returning either. The chariot driver is so reckless it must be Jehu."

[21]So King Joram said, "Get my chariot ready right away." He and Ahaziah rode out together to meet Jehu, and they met at the field of Naboth. [22]Joram asked Jehu, "Are you coming in peace?" Jehu replied, "How can there be peace when your mother Jezebel caused everyone to worship idols and practice witchcraft?" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [23]Joram turned the chariot around and said, "Ahaziah, this is

a trap. Let's get out of here." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}
24Jehu shot an arrow between Joram's shoulders and then it went through his heart. He sank down dead in his chariot. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 25Jehu told Bidkar, his chariot commander, to throw Joram's body out in Naboth's field. He said, 26"You'll remember that the Lord told Ahab he would be punished in the field where he had killed Naboth and his sons. So throw him out." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
27Meanwhile King Ahaziah of Judah had tried to escape to Beth-Haggan. Jehu chased him and shouted, "Kill him too." So they shot him in his chariot where the road goes up to Gur, near Ibleam. He got as far as Megiddo, but he died there. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 28His officials took him in a chariot back to Jerusalem and buried him in the City of David. 29His reign over Judah had started when Joram, Ahab's son, was in his 11th year.
30Jezebel heard that Jehu was on his way to Jezreel. So she painted her eyes and fixed her hair. She watched at a window for Jehu, and when he entered the city gate, 31she shouted at him, "Why have you come here? You are a murderer just like Zimri." 32He looked up toward the window and said, "Is anyone there on my side?" Two or three men looked out, 33and he said, "Throw her down." So they did, and her blood spattered on the wall and on the horses that trampled on her. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
34Jehu got something to eat and drink. Then he told some workers, "Even though she was wicked, she was a king's daughter. So please bury her." 35But when they went to bury her, they found only her skull, her feet, and her hands. 36They told Jehu and he said, "The LORD told Elijah this would happen. He said her body would be eaten by dogs here in Jezreel, 37and her bones would be spread out like manure, so no one could tell who it was." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, Your prophecies always come true. Forgive me when I don't believe Your predictions. I will take comfort in Your sovereignty, that You rule in the affairs of men. Amen.

2 Kings 10

Ahab's Descendants Are Killed

1Ahab had 70 sons living in Samaria. Jehu wrote a letter to the leaders of Samaria, in which he said, 2"You have chariots and horses, a fortified city, and weapons. When you receive this letter, 3choose one of Ahab's sons to be your king and to fight for Ahab's family." 4But they were afraid. They said, "Since Jehu has already killed King Ahaziah and King Joram, how can we stand against him?"
5So the city mayor, manager of the palace affairs, and city council members, and others sent this message to Jehu: "We are your servants, and will do whatever you say. We won't choose a king. You do what you think is best." 6Jehu sent this answer: "If you are on my side and will obey me, then bring me the heads of Ahab's sons in 24

hours." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} These sons had been living with some important people in the city. 7So when the leaders of Samaria read the letter, they murdered all 70 sons, put their heads in baskets, and gave them to Jehu in Jezreel.
8When a messenger told Jehu the heads had been delivered, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} he said, "Put them in two piles by the city gate and leave them there overnight." 9Then in the morning Jehu spoke to the people, "You are innocent. I'm the one who had Jorum killed. But I didn't kill these 70. 10They were killed because the LORD had told Elijah this would happen to Ahab's sons."
11Jehu then killed the rest of Ahab's relatives in Jezreel, and his officials, friends, and priests. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12Then he went to Samaria and at Beth-Eked of the Shepherds. 13He met some relatives of Ahaziah king of Judah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} When he asked who they were, they said, "We are relatives of King Ahaziah. We are going to visit his family and the queen mother." 14Jehu shouted, "Grab them." So they took them to a nearby well and killed all 42 of them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
15As he left, he met Jehonadab's son of Recab, who was coming to meet Jehu. Jehu asked him, "Are you on my side?" Jehonadab said yes. 16"Then get with me in my chariot, and I'll show what I have done for the LORD." 17When they arrived in Samaria, Jehu killed any remaining relatives of Ahab, just as the Lord had predicted through Elijah. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
18Jehu called a meeting of the people and said, "Ahab served Baal a little but I'll serve him a lot more. 19So get together all the prophets, servants, and priests of Baal. Have every Baal worshiper here because I will hold a great sacrifice for Baal. I will kill anyone who doesn't come." Actually this was a trick because Jehu was planning to kill all the worshipers of Baal. 20Jehu said, "Announce the day when all are to assemble to worship Baal." So they did. 21All of Baal's priests came and crowded into the Baal temple. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 22He told the men in charge of the priestly robes to be sure every priest had a robe.
23Jehu and Jehonadab went into the temple, and Jehu said, "Allow only Baal worshipers in here. Don't let anyone in who worships the LORD." {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} 24As Baal's priests began sacrificing to Baal, Jehu had 80 men posted outside and told them, "Don't let any of them escape. If you do, you will be killed."
25After Jehu sacrificed a burnt offering, he told the 80 men to come in and kill them all. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} So they did and they tossed their bodies outside. Then they went back into the Baal temple and 26brought out the image of Baal and burned it. 27They broke it into pieces and destroyed the temple. And since then the place has been a public toilet. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}
28That is how Jehu got rid of Baal worship. 29But he did not stop the people from

worshiping the calf-idols that Jeroboam had set up in Bethel and Dan. 30Later the Lord told Jehu that because he had destroyed all Ahab's relatives, the next four kings in Israel would be Jehu's descendants. 31Yet Jehu did not obey the Lord completely. He kept sinning as Jeroboam had done. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

32Then the Lord began to reduce the size of Israel's territory. King Hazael of Syria defeated the Israelites 33east of the Jordan, taking over the regions of Gilead and Bashan—the land of the tribes of Eastern Manasseh, Gad, and Reuben—north from Aroer near the Arnon River.

34The other events in Jehu's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. 35Jehu died and was buried in Samaria, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his son Jehoahaz became king. 36Jehu reigned over Israel for 28 years.

Lord, I will obey outwardly, as did Jehu. But, my obedience will also come from the heart. I worship You. Amen.

2 Kings 11

Joash Becomes King

1Athaliah was the mother of King Ahaziah of Judah. When she heard that he was dead, she killed all his children so she could be queen. But one son she did not kill was Joash. 2Ahaziah's half-sister Jehosheba, who was the priest's wife, hid her nephew Joash {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} and his nurse in a room in the temple. 3And they were hidden there for six years while Athaliah was queen. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

4In Athaliah's seventh year Jehoiada the priest sent for the commanders of units of hundreds and bodyguards to come to the temple. He made them promise to be loyal to the temple, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} and then he showed them Joash. 5He said, "A third of you are to guard the palace, 6a third are to be at the Sur Gate, and a third are to be guarding the palace gate. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

7Though two-thirds of you normally go off duty on the Sabbath, please stay here and protect the young king. 8Surround the king with your weapons in hand. And kill anyone who tries to get near the king. Stay beside him all the time." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

9The commanders did what Jehoiada the priest ordered. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Those going on duty and also those normally going off duty 10were given spears and shields that had been David's and were kept in the temple. 11The guards with their weapons in hand surrounded the king from the south of the temple to the north side and around the altar of burnt offering. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

12Jehoiada placed a crown on young Joash's head and gave him a copy of the Law and said, "He is king." Olive oil was poured on his head, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} and the people clapped and shouted, "Long live the king."

13Athaliah heard all this noise and so she
went to the temple to see what was going
on. 14She saw young Joash crowned and
standing by one of the columns, the usual
place for the king. The officers and trum-
peters were around him, and people were
rejoicing and blowing trumpets. When
Athaliah saw all this, she tore her clothes
in anger and shouted, "This is a trick. You
betrayed me."
15Then Jehoiada the priest told the com-
manders of units of hundreds, "Take her
out of the temple and kill her. Don't kill
her here in the temple. And kill anyone
who tries to rescue her." 16So they grabbed
her and led her to the gate where horses
enter the palace grounds, and they killed
her there. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5}
17Then Jehoiada encouraged the people to
agree {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps.
55:22} to be the LORD's faithful people.
18Then the people tore down the Baal tem-
ple, smashed altars to Baal, {399 Repen-
tance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and other idols,
{441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John
5:16} and killed Mattan the priest of Baal.
Jehoiada posted guards at the temple.
19Then the commanders of units of hun-
dreds, and bodyguards, and all the people
led the new king from the temple to the
palace, and he sat on the throne. 20Every-
one was glad. And the city was peaceful
{347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
because Athaliah had been killed. 21Joash
was seven years old when he was made
king.

Lord, I thank You for Jehosheba who changed history. In a small way, I can change history. Lord, thank You for Jehoiada the high priest who changed history. Use me in the same way. Amen.

2 Kings 12

King Joash Rules over Judah

1When Joash became king, Jehu was in his
seventh year as king of Israel. Joash ruled
in Jerusalem from age 7 to 47. His mother
was Zibiah from Beersheba. 2All his life
Joash did what pleased the Lord because
Jehoiada taught him. {39 Bible-Bless
Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 3But Joash didn't
destroy the hilltop shrines, and so people
still offered sacrifices and burned incense
at the shrines.
4Joash told the priests to collect money
from the people {310 Money-Prayer, Acts
2:44}—money from offerings, payments
of vows, voluntary gifts—5to repair the
temple. 6But by Joash's 27th year the priests
still hadn't repaired the temple. 7So Joash
called Jehoiada and the other priests and
asked why they hadn't repaired the temple.
He said, "Don't take any more money for
yourselves. From now on use the money
you receive for temple repairs." 8So the
priests agreed not to use any money for
themselves. And they also decided not to
do the repairs themselves. {102 Dedica-
tion of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}
9Jehoiada cut a hole in the top of a wooden
box and set it to the right of the altar of

burnt offering. The priests guarding the temple put money from the people in the box. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 10When it seemed that the box was getting full, Jehoiada and the royal secretary counted the money and put it in bags. 11Then they gave money to the construction supervisors who paid the workers—carpenters, builders, 12masons, and stonecutters. They also bought lumber and stones and whatever else was needed. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

13Money was not used to make silver cups, lamp snuffers, bowls, trumpets, and other gold or silver articles. 14The money was paid to the workers, who used it for repairs. 15The supervisors were honest men, so no one kept a record of money given to them. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 16However, the money the people gave with guilt offerings and sin offerings was given to the priests.

17King Hazael of Syria attacked and captured the Philistine city of Gath. Then he went to attack Jerusalem. 18When Joash heard about this, he gathered up all the objects he and his ancestors Jehoshaphat, Jehoram, and Ahaziah had dedicated to the Lord, and all the gold in the storage rooms in the temple and the palace, and he sent all these to Hazael. So Hazael did not attack Jerusalem.

19The rest of Joash's events in his reign are written in the books of the kings of Judah. 20But his officials killed him at Beth-Millo, on the road to Silla. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 21The assassins were Jozacar, son of Shimeath, and Jehozabad, son of Shomer. Joash was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. His son Amaziah became king.

Lord, I want to be like those carpenters and stone cutters who could be trusted. I commit myself to honesty. Use me in Your work. Amen.

2 Kings 13

Jehoahaz Rules over Israel

1In the 23rd year of Joash's reign over Judah, Jehoahaz, son of Jehu, became king of Israel. He was king for 17 years. 2He sinned by following the example of Jeroboam who worshiped idols and led Israel to sin. 3This made the LORD angry with Israel, and so He let Hazael of Syria and his son Ben-Hadad defeat Israel and rule over them for a long time. 4Jehoahaz, Jehu's son, prayed for help from the LORD, and He responded. Seeing how Syria was treating Israel, 5the Lord rescued the Israelites and Israel lived in peace again. 6But the people continued to sin following Jeroboam's example. They even set up in Samaria a repulsive pole used in worshiping the goddess Asherah. 7Jehoahaz's army had nothing left except 10 chariots, 50 cavalrymen, and 10,000 regular soldiers. Hazael had killed all the others and made them like dust. 8Everything else Jehoahaz did as king is recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. 9He was buried in Samaria. And Jehoash became king.

10 Jehoash became king of Israel in the 37th
year of Joash's rule in Judah, and he ruled
for 16 years from Samaria. 11 He did what
was evil just like Jeroboam who worshiped
idols and led Israel to sin. 12 The rest of his
reign, including his war with King Ama-
ziah of Judah, is recorded in the book of
the kings of Israel. 13 When he died, he was
buried in Samaria. His son Jeroboam II
became the next king.
14 Elisha was sick and about to die. King
Jehoash of Israel went to visit him and he
cried, and he said, "My father, you are the
strength of Israel, like chariots and horse-
men." 15 Elisha said, "Get a bow and some
arrows." And the king did so. 16 Then Eli-
sha said for the king to hold the bow, and
Elisha put his hands on the king's hands.
17 Then he told the king to open the win-
dow facing east, and he opened it. And Eli-
sha said, "Shoot." So he did. Then Elisha
said, "This arrow means the LORD will
give you victory over Syria at Aphek."
18 Then Elisha said, "Pick up the other
arrows and hit the ground with them. The
king did this three times. 19 Elisha was dis-
appointed with him. He said, "You should
have hit the ground five or six times. Then
you would have defeated Syria and com-
pletely destroyed it. But now you will have
victory over Syria three times." 20 Then Eli-
sha died and was buried.
Moabite soldiers invaded Israel every
spring. 21 One time some Israelites were
burying a man's body and they looked up
and saw some Moabite soldiers. So they
quickly tossed the dead man's body into
Elisha's tomb and when the body touched
Elisha's bones the dead man came to life
and stood up.
22 King Hazael of Syria kept controlling
Israel all during Jehoahaz's reign. 23 But
the LORD in His grace did not let Syria
destroy Israel. He was concerned for them
because of His agreement with Abraham,
Isaac, and Jacob, and so He has never com-
pletely rejected Israel. 24 After Hazael died,
his son Ben-Hadad became king of Syria.
25 Jehoash, Israel's king, defeated Ben-Ha-
dad three times and took back from
Ben-Hadad all the towns Hazael had cap-
tured from his father Jehoahaz.

2 Kings 14

Jeroboam II Rules over Israel

1 Amaziah, Joash's son, became king of
Judah in the second year of Jehoash, king
of Israel. 2 He was 25 years old, and he
reigned in Jerusalem 29 years. His mother
was Jehoaddin, from Jerusalem. 3 He
obeyed the Lord, following the example of
his father Joash, but he was not as faithful
to the LORD as David was. 4 He did not
destroy the hilltop shrines, and so peo-
ple continued to offer sacrifices and burn
incense there.
5 Amaziah killed the men who had assas-
sinated his father. 6 But he didn't kill their
children for that would have violated the
law of Moses which says, "Parents are not
to be put to death because of their children,
nor children for the sins of their parents."
7 Amaziah killed 10,000 Edomites in
the Salt Valley, and captured Sela and
renamed it Joktheel. 8 One day he wrote to

Israel's king Jehoash, Jehu's grandson, and asked him to face him in battle. [9]Jehoash replied, "A small thorn bush in Lebanon said he wanted to marry the daughter of a big cedar tree. But a wild animal crushed the small bush. [10]True, you have defeated Edom and you are proud of it. But I suggest you stay home and celebrate. Don't bring trouble on you and Judah."
[11]Amaziah didn't listen, so Jehoash marched to Beth-Shemesh in Judah, [12]and caused Amaziah's soldiers to run in defeat. [13]Jehoash captured Amaziah at Beth-Shemesh and went to Jerusalem and tore down 600 feet of the city wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. [14]He took all the gold and silver and valuable articles from the temple and the palace treasury. He also took hostages and went home to Samaria.
[15]Other events in the reign of Jehoash, including his war with Amaziah, are written in the book of the kings of Israel. [16]After he died, he was buried in Samaria with Israel's king. And Jeroboam II became the next king.
[17]Amaziah lived for 15 years after Jehoash died, [18]and the rest of the events in his reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. [19]Some people in Jerusalem were plotting against Amaziah, and so he escaped to Lachish. But some men caught up with him and killed him. [20]They brought him back to Jerusalem and buried him in the city of David. [21]The people made 16-year-old Uzziah king in Amaziah's place. [22]He recaptured and rebuilt the town of Elath.
[23]Jeroboam II, son of Jehoash, began reigning in Israel in Amaziah's 15th year in Judah. He reigned in Samaria 41 years. [24]He followed the sinful example of Jeroboam I in worshiping idols and influencing Israel to do the same. [25]Jeroboam II recovered the land from Lebo-Hamath to the Dead Sea, as God had promised through Jonah, son of Amattai from Gath-Hepher. [26]The LORD saw how the people, both slaves and free people, were suffering and had no one to help them. [27]The LORD had said He wouldn't let Israel be destroyed, so He used Jeroboam II to rescue them. [28]The other events in Jeroboam's reign, including his power and wars and how he recaptured for Israel the towns of Damascus and Hamath, are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [29]When he died, he was buried with other kings of Israel. And his son Zechariah became the next king.

2 Kings 15

Uzziah Rules over Judah

[1]Uzziah son of Amaziah became king of Judah in the 27th year of Jeroboam II's reign over Israel. [2]Uzziah was 16 years old when he became king, and he reigned for 52 years in Jerusalem. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} His mother was Jecoliah from Jerusalem. [3]He obeyed the Lord as his father Amaziah did, [4]but he did not destroy the hilltop shrines, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} where people continued to offer sacrifices and burn incense to their idols. [5]The Lord punished Uzziah with leprosy

for the rest of his life, and he lived in a house by himself. His son Jotham ruled in place of Uzziah. [6]The rest of the events in Uzziah's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. [7]When he died, he was buried near his ancestors in Jerusalem. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} His son Jotham became Judah's next king.

[8]Zecharaiah, son of Jeroboam II, became king of Israel in Uzziah's 38th year. And he was king in Samaria for only six months. [9]He sinned against the Lord, as his ancestors had done, following Jeroboam's idolatry and leading Israel to sin. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [10]Shallum son of Jabesh assassinated Zechariah as people looked on. And Shallum became the next king. [11]The events of Zechariah's brief reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [12]The LORD had told Jehu that the next four kings of Israel would be his descendants, and this came true. Those four were Jehoahaz, Jehoash, Jeroboam II, and Zechariah.

[13]Shallum son of Jabesh became king in Azariah's 39th year. But he reigned in Samaria only one month. [14]Menahem son of Gadi assassinated Shallum {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and became the next king. [15]The other events in Shallum's short reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.

[16]Menahem destroyed the town of Tappuah and surrounding towns. He killed everyone in Tappuah and ripped open pregnant women. [17]He became king of Israel in the 59th year of Azariah king of Judah, and he ruled in Samaria 10 years. [18]Like many kings before him, he disobeyed the LORD by following the sins of Jeroboam who caused Israel to worship idols. [19]Then Tiglath Pileser, king of Assyria, invaded Israel. But Menahem gave him about 37 tons of silver to gain his support. [20]Menahem then required every rich person to give him 20 ounces of silver, and he gave that money to Tiglath-Pileser, who then left Israel.

[21]The other events in Menahem's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [22]When he died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} his son Pekahiah became the next king. [23]Pekahiah began reigning in Uzziah's 50th year in Judah. He reigned in Samaria only two years. [24]He too sinned against the LORD by following the sins of idol worship Jeroboam caused Israel to commit. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[25]Pekah, an officer of Pekahiah, and 50 men from Gilead assassinated him along with Argob and Arieh in the palace at Samaria. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Then Pekah became king of Israel. [26]The other events in Pekahiah's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel. [27]Pekah began his 20-year reign in Samaria in Uzziah's 52nd year. [28]But like many before him, he disobeyed the LORD by not turning from the worship of idols Jeroboam had caused Israel to commit. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

[29]During Pekah's reign Tiglath-Pileser king of Assyria attacked Israel again and captured the towns of Ijon, Abel-Beth-Maacah, Janoah, Kedesh, and Hazor.

He also conquered the regions of Gilead, Galilee, and Naphtali. And he took people as captives to Assyria. [30]Then Hoshea son of Elah assassinated Pekah {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and began to reign over Israel in the 20th year of Jotham, son of Uzziah. [31]The events in Pekah's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Israel.

[32]Jotham son of Uzziah began to reign over Judah in the second year of Pekah. [33]Jotham was 25 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned in Jerusalem 16 years. His mother was Jerusha, a daughter of Zadok. [34]Jotham pleased the Lord, just as Uzziah had done. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [35]But like other kings before him, he did not destroy the hilltop shrines where people offered sacrifices and burned incense. He rebuilt the upper gate of the temple.

[36]The other events of Jotham's reign are written in the book of the kings of Judah. [37]In those days the Lord began to send Rezin king of Syria and Pekah king of Israel to attack Judah. [38]When Jotham died, he was buried in the city of David, and his son Ahaz became king.

Lord, You are my ultimate ruler, no matter who sits in power on this earth. I will obey You, follow Your commands, and worship Your majesty. Come sit on the throne of my life. Whatever Your word commands, I will do. Whatever You want me to say, I will speak. I yield to Your leadership and rule. Amen.

2 Kings 16

Ahaz Rules over Judah

[1]Ahaz son of Jotham began to reign over Judah in the 17th year of Pekah king of Israel. [2]Ahaz was 20 years old when he became king, and he ruled for 16 years. But Ahaz did not please the Lord as David had done. [3]He was even more wicked than Israel's kings because he sacrificed his own son in the fire and he followed other terrible practices of nations the LORD had forced out of the land. [4]He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the hilltop shrines and under every green tree.

[5]King Rezin of Syria and King Pekah of Israel attacked Jerusalem but could not take it. [6]Rezin recovered the Edomite city of Elath, drove out Jews who were there, and sent Syrians to live there. [7]Ahaz sent messengers to tell Tiglath-Pileser that he was his servant and that he was asking the Assyrian king to rescue him from the armies of Syria and Israel. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [8]Then Ahaz took silver and gold from the temple and the palace treasury and sent them to Tiglath, just as Menahem, Israel's king, had done. [9]So the Assyrians left Judah and attacked Damascus and took its people away to Kir. And Tiglath killed Rezin.

[10]Ahaz went to Damascus to meet Tiglath of Assyria, and while there he saw an unusual altar. He sent Uriah the priest to make a sketch of the altar, and he asked Uriah to build one like it. [11]So Uriah did and he finished before Ahaz got back. [12]When Ahaz got back, he made offerings on it, [13]including a peace offering, a burnt

offering, a grain offering, and a drink offering. He sprinkled the blood of the peace offering on the altar. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 14Then he moved the old bronze altar of burnt offering to the north side of the new altar. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

15Then Ahaz told Uriah the priest, "Offer morning and evening sacrifices and gifts of grain and wine on this new altar. And sprinkle blood from the animal sacrifices on this altar. I will use the old altar to ask the LORD what I should do." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

16Uriah did everything Ahaz told him.

17Then Ahaz removed the side panels and barriers from the moveable stands. He also removed the large water tank that sat on the backs of 12 bronze oxen and he set it on a stone base. 18He also removed the canopy that had been built at the temple and the king's outer entrance to the temple. He did all this to please Tiglath-Pileser. 19The other events in Ahaz's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. 20When Ahaz died, he was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Hezekiah his son became the next king.

Lord, stop me when I take a first step away from You. Give me ears to hear Your warnings, and eyes to see spiritual dangers, and an obedient heart to follow You. Amen.

2 Kings 17

Hoshea Rules over Israel

1Hoshea son of Elah became king over Israel in Ahaz's 12th year as king of Judah. He reigned in Samaria for nine years. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2Though he sinned before the Lord, he wasn't as bad as some of the kings before him. 3Hoshea had to pay heavy taxes to Shalmaneser king of Assyria as a result of the Assyrian king's attack against Israel. 4Then Hoshea asked So, king of Egypt, for help against Assyria, and Hoshea stopped paying the taxes to Assyria. So Shalmaneser put Hoshea in prison. 5Then Shalmaneser attacked Samaria for three years. 6Finally in Hoshea's last year, Samaria fell, and the king of Assyria took Israelites away as prisoners to his country. He put some of them in Halah near the Habor River in Gozan and in some towns of the Medes. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

7This happened because the Israelites sinned against the LORD who had rescued them from slavery in Egypt. 8They worshiped the idols of the people God had forced out of their land, and they were sinful like the Israelite kings before them. 9They secretly had done these sinful things {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} even building hilltop shrines in all their towns, whether small or large fortified cities. 10They set up sacred stones and poles for worshiping Asherah on every hilltop and under every open tree. 11They burned incense at these shrines just like the nations the Lord forced to leave the land. The Lord was very angry because of

all these terrible sins. 12The Lord had kept telling them not to do these things, but they did them anyway. 13God had sent His prophets to warn them to turn from their sinful ways and obey His commands and laws {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} that He gave to their ancestors.

14But they were as stubborn as their ancestors in refusing to trust the LORD. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 15Rejecting His laws and the agreement He made with their ancestors, they worshiped worthless idols and they became worthless themselves. God had told them not to follow the ways of the nations around them, but they did anyway. 16Ignoring the LORD's commands, they made two idols shaped like calves, set up an Asherah pole, and worshiped Baal and the stars. 17They even sacrificed their children and practiced fortune-telling and witchcraft and sold themselves to evil. No wonder the Lord was angry with them. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

18So in His anger the LORD allowed them to be taken away to Assyria as prisoners. Only the tribe of Judah was left, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19but they too did not obey the LORD. They sinned just as the Israelites did, 20so the LORD punished the Israelites by letting them be defeated. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 21When the LORD took the 10 northern tribes from David's family, the people there chose Jeroboam son of Nebat as their king. And he is the one who led the people away from the LORD. 22Stubbornly the people refused to turn from his evil ways, including the worship of idols. 23So as the LORD had warned through His prophets, Israelites were taken captive to Assyria, and that's where they remained. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

24The king of Assyria took many people who were living in Babylon, Cuthah, Avva, Hamath, and Sepharvaim and made them move to Israel and other towns in Samarai. 25These people from Assyria did not worship the Lord, so He sent lions to kill some of them. 26A messenger told the king of Assyria that the people he relocated to Israel did not know how to worship the LORD, so He sent lions {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} to kill them. 27The Assyrian king responded, "Send back to Israel one of the priests we took captive. Have him teach the new residents how to worship the LORD." 28One of the Israelite priests went back, and he lived in Bethel and taught the people how to worship the LORD. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7}

29However, many of these new residents from Assyria worshiped their own gods, placing their idols in the Israelites' hilltop shrines. 30People from Babylon worshiped the God of Succoth Beneth, people from Cuthah worshiped Nergal, and the people from Hamath worshiped Ashima. 31The Avvites worshiped Nibhaz and Tartak. And the people from Sepharvaim sacrificed their children in the fire to their gods Adrammelech and Anammelech. 32They also worshiped the LORD, but they chose their own people to serve as priests at the hilltop shrines. 33Though they worshiped the LORD, they followed the religious practices of their homeland nations. {323

"No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 34And they still do this even now. None of them worships only the LORD. They follow their former practices instead of obeying the LORD's laws, regulations, and commands that He gave to the descendants of Jacob, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} whom He renamed Israel. 35The Lord had told them, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} "Don't worship other gods or bow down to them or serve them or offer them sacrifices. 36Worship only the LORD, who rescued you from Egypt with great power. Offer sacrifices only to Me. 37Always obey My laws, regulations, instructions, and commands, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and worship no other gods. 38And don't forget the agreement I made with you. 39Worship Me, the LORD your God, and I will give you victory over your enemies."

40But the people in Israel refused to listen and continued to sin. 41Instead of worshiping the LORD, they worshiped their idols. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} And their descendants do the same thing.

Lord, I'm a member of the true Body of Christ. May the world see Your powers in the true church and may they not focus on the people. May the world see Your presence in my life, and not focus on me. Not I, but Christ. Amen.

2 Kings 18

Hezekiah Rules over Judah

1Hezekiah son of Ahaz began to rule over Judah when Hoshea was in his third year as king of Israel. 2Hezekiah was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 29 years. His mother was Ahijah, a daughter of Zechariah. 3He obeyed the LORD just as David had done. 4He destroyed the hilltop shrines, smashed the sacred stones, and cut down the detestable pole used in worshiping Asherah. He also broke into pieces the bronze snake Moses had made. The people had named it Nehushtan (meaning "Snake" or "Bronze") and were burning incense to it.

5Hezekiah was an unusual king. No king before or after him trusted the LORD as he did. 6Faithful to the LORD in everything, he carefully obeyed all His commands. 7So the LORD gave him success in all he did. He refused to pay the king of Assyria tribute. 8He also defeated the Philistines, destroying their small and large cities all the way to Gazu.

9In Hezekiah's fourth year, which was Hoshea's seventh year in Israel, King Shalmaneser of Assyria attacked Samaria 10and finally defeated it after three years. This was in Hezekiah's sixth year. 11As noted earlier, Shalmaneser took some Israelites as prisoners and forced them to live in Halah near the Habor River in Gozan and in some cities of the Medes. 12This is because the people had refused to obey the LORD and had not kept His agreement given though Moses.

13In Hezekiah's 14th year as king of Judah
Sennacherib of Assyria attacked every
walled city in Judah except Jerusalem. 14So
Hezekiah sent this message to Sennacherib
at Lachish: "I admit that I've done wrong
in not paying you tribute. But if you stop
attacking Jerusalem, I'll pay you whatever
you say." So Sennacherib required him to
pay 11 tons of silver and a ton of gold.
15So Hezekiah collected the silver from
the temple and the royal treasury. 16And
he stripped gold from the temple doors
and doorposts, and gave it to the Assyrian
king.
17But the Assyrian king sent his three high-
est military officers with many soldiers to
go see Hezekiah. In Jerusalem they stopped
outside the city at the aqueduct from the
Upper Pool, near the road that leads to the
field where cloth is bleached. 18They called
for Hezekiah to meet them. But he sent
three officials instead. They were Eliakim
son of Hilkiah, who was the palace admin-
istrator, Shebna the royal secretary, and
Joah son of Asaph, the royal historian.
19One of the Assyrian leaders said, "The
king of Assyria says, 'Why is Hezekiah so
sure of himself? 20Does he think he can
win a battle with mere words? Who will
help him? 21If you depend on Egypt, it will
be like leaning on a broken stick that will
go through your hand. You can't rely on
Egypt's Pharaoh. 22If you are depending
on the LORD, didn't Hezekiah tear down
His shrines and altar and make everyone
worship here in Jerusalem?'
23"'The king of Assyria says that if you
can find 2,000 horsemen, he will give you
2,000 horses to ride on. 24Then with this
small cavalry you can try to defeat us. But
don't get your hopes up. You won't be able
to defeat our lowest ranking officer even if
you had help from Egypt. 25Besides that,
the Lord has told us to come here and
destroy your nation.'"
26Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah said to the
Assyrian spokesman, "Speak to us in Ara-
maic; we understand it. If you speak in
Hebrew, our people will know what you
are saying." 27But Sennacherib's represen-
tatives said, "My master sent me to speak
so everyone hears this, not just you. These
people will soon become so hungry they
will eat their own body waste and drink
their own urine." 28Then he shouted in
Hebrew, "Listen to what the great king
of Assyria says. 29'Don't let Hezekiah
fool you. He can't save you. 30Don't trust
him when he says the LORD will rescue
you and that the city won't be conquered
by the Assyrian king. 31Stop listening to
Hezekiah. If you surrender, I will let you
eat from your own garden and drink from
your own well. 32Then I will take you to
another land where there is plenty of
grain, new wine, bread, vineyards, olive
trees, and honey. You can really enjoy life
there, but if you stay here, your choice is
death.
"So don't listen to Hezekiah. He says the
LORD will save you, but he was wrong.
33Have the gods of any other nation saved
them from Assyria? 34What about the
gods of Hamath and Arpad? And the gods
of Sepharvaim, Hena, and Ivvah? Did they
save their nations from me? 35None of
these gods saved their countries from me.

So what makes you think the LORD can save Jerusalem?'"
36The people of Jerusalem kept silent because Hezekiah told them not to say anything. 37Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah tore their clothes in grief and went back to Hezekiah and told him what the Assyrian representatives had said.

2 Kings 19

King Hezekiah Seeks Advice from Isaiah

1When Hezekiah heard their report, he too tore his clothes in grief, and went into the temple to pray. 2Then he asked Eliakim, Shebna, and the leading priests, all in coarse clothing, to go to the prophet Isaiah son of Amoz and tell him, 3"Hezekiah says we are in difficult and disgraceful times. This is like a woman about to give birth but she's too weak to deliver. 4We hope the LORD your God has heard the Assyrian representative insulting Him, and will punish him. Pray for those of us who are still alive." 5When the leaders told this to Isaiah, 6he said, "Tell Hezekiah not to worry about the words of these messengers from the Assyrian king. 7The LORD will cause the Assyrian king to receive bad news from home. So he will leave Jerusalem, and when he gets home, I will have him killed."
8The Assyrian representative heard that Sennacherib had gone from Lachish to Libnah, so he went to Libnah. 9Then Sennacherib heard that Tirhakah king of Ethiopia was on his way to fight the Assyrian king. Then the Assyrian king sent this word to Hezekiah: 10"Don't let your God fool you into thinking He can keep me from capturing you. 11You know how we have destroyed other nations. And your situation won't be any different. 12Have the gods of other nations like Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden in Tel-Assar delivered them? No, the former Assyrian kings destroyed them all. 13Also, think what happened to the kings of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharraim, Hena, and Ivvah."
14When Hezekiah read this letter, he spread it in the temple for the Lord to see. 15Then he prayed, "O LORD, God of Israel, your throne is above the winged creatures. You alone created the heavens and the earth. 16So please listen to the way Sennacherib has insulted You. 17True, the Assyrian kings have destroyed many nations. 18And they have burned the idols these other nations have worshiped. Of course they could do that because those gods were made of wood and stone. 19Now LORD our God, rescue us from the Assyrians. Then everyone will know that You are the only God."
20Then Isaiah told Hezekiah that the LORD, the God of Israel, said, "I have heard your prayer about Sennacherib, 21and this is what I say to him: 'The virgin daughter of Zion despises you and makes fun of you. They laugh behind your back. 22Who is it you have been insulting, and against whom have you shouted? Against whom have you looked down in pride? The Holy One of Israel!
23'Your messengers have insulted the LORD and you said, "With my many

chariots I have gone to the highest mountain in Lebanon. I have cut down its cedars and cypress trees. I have gone deep into its forests. 24And I have dug wells in several countries and have drunk water there, and I even stopped up the rivers of Egypt."
25"But have you heard, Sennacherib? I planned long ago what I will now make happen. I planned that you will turn fortified cities into ruins. 26This is why the people have so little power and are ashamed. They are as weak as wild flowers or grass growing on housetops, scorched by the sun before they mature.
27"But I know everything about you—where you come and where you go and how you are so angry against Me. 28Because of your anger and your pride, I will put a hook in your nose and a bit in your mouth and I will make you go back where you came from.'"
29Then Isaiah said to Hezekiah, "Here is proof that the LORD will protect Jerusalem from Assyria. This year you will eat crops that grow on their own, next year you will eat what springs up from that, and in the third year you will plant crops and then have a wonderful harvest. 30Those who survive in Judah will be like a vine that takes root and then bears fruit. 31Some survivors will leave Jerusalem and Mount Zion. Because of My devotion to My people I will see that this happens. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
32"And this is what the LORD says about the king of Assyria: 'He will not enter Jerusalem and shoot arrows there. He will not surround the city and then build a bank of earth against it. 33He will go back to Assyria and will not even enter Jerusalem. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 34I will defend this city for My sake and for the sake of My servant David.'" {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
35That night the angel of the Lord killed 185,000 Assyrian troops. Some Assyrians survived, and when they got up in the morning, they saw corpses everywhere. 36Then Sennacherib went home to Nineveh. 37One day while he was worshiping in the temple of Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech and Sharezer killed him. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} They escaped to the land of Ararat, and his son Esarhaddon became the next king of Assyria.

Lord, I will listen to those who know Your Word and do Your will. I will listen to those who will pray for me and have my best interests at heart. Speak to me through the godly counsel of Your servants. Amen.

2 Kings 20

The LORD Heals King Hezekiah

1Hezekiah became terribly sick and almost died. The prophet Isaiah went to see him and said, "The LORD says you will soon die, so you need to take care of your affairs." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 2Then Hezekiah prayed, 3"Remember, LORD, I have been faithful to You and have done what is right." Then he cried bitterly. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

4As Isaiah was leaving, the LORD told
him to 5go back to Hezekiah and tell him,
"The LORD says, 'I have heard your prayer
and seen your tears. I will heal you {214
Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} in three days
and you will worship Me in the temple.
6I will give you another 15 years to live.
And I will rescue you and this city from
the king of Assyria. {416 Salvation-Prayer,
Luke 18:13} I will do this for My sake and
to honor My servant David.'"
7Isaiah told Hezekiah's servants to crush
some figs and put them on the king's sore.
They did this, and he got well. 8Hezekiah
had asked Isaiah, "How will I know the
Lord will heal me so I can go worship Him
in three days?" 9Isaiah said "Here's how:
You can ask that the shadow on the sun-
dial go forward on the stairway 10 steps
or backward 10 steps." 10Hezekiah replied,
"The shadow often goes forward, so please
make it go backward." {466 Supernatu-
ral-Praying, Acts 15:18} 11Isaiah asked
the LORD to do this, and He caused the
shadow from the sun to go 10 steps back-
ward on Ahaz's sundial.
12Merodach-Baladan, son of Baladan, king
of Babylon, heard that Hezekiah had been
very sick, and so he sent him a letter and
a gift. 13Hezekiah welcomed the messen-
gers {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and
showed them all the silver, gold, spices,
and oils in his storehouse. He also showed
them where he kept his weapons, and He
showed them everything in his palace.
14Then Isaiah asked Hezekiah, "What
did these men want? And where are they
from?" Hezekiah said they came from
Babylon. 15And Isaiah asked, "What did
you show them in your palace?" Hezekiah
said, "Actually everything in my palace."
16Then Isaiah told the king, 17"One day
everything you and your ancestors have
stored up will be taken to Babylon. 18Some
of your own descendants will be taken as
captives to Babylon and they will be made
servants in the Babylonian king's palace."
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19Heze-
kiah thought, "At least our nation will be
at peace for a while." {347 Peaceful-Living
Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
20The other events in Hezekiah's reign,
including the pool he built and the tunnel
he dug to bring water into Jerusalem, are
recorded in the book of the kings of Judah.
{517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 21When
Hezekiah died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer,
Ps. 88:3} his son Manasseh became king.

*Lord, I'm in good health today; use pre-
ventive medicine to keep me in good health.
When I need it, use therapeutic healing to
return my health. And, if it's Your will that
I die, I pray with Paul, "For I am in a strait
betwixt two, having a desire to depart and
be with Christ, which is far better" (Phil.
1:23). Lord, I yield my body to You today.
Heal me when I need it, but always glorify
Yourself through my body. Amen.*

2 Kings 21

Manasseh Rules over Judah

1Manesseh was 12 years old when he
became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem
55 years. His mother was Hephzibah. 2He

disobeyed the Lord, following the disgusting practices of the nations the Lord had forced out of the land. 3He rebuilt the hilltop shrines his father Hezekiah had demolished. He built altars to Baal and made a sacred pole for use in worshiping Asherah, just as Ahab king of Israel had done. He worshiped the stars. 4He even built altars to pagan gods and placed them in the temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 5These altars for all the stars he placed in the courtyards of the LORD's temple. 6He sacrificed his son in the fire, and practiced witchcraft and fortune-telling and consulted mediums and psychics. All these terrible evil practices made the LORD very angry.

7Manasseh even set up an Asherah pole in the temple, where God has said He was to be honored forever. 8God had said, "I won't make My people leave this land if they obey the law I gave Moses." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9But the people disobeyed the Lord and followed Manasseh's ways and were more evil than the nations the Lord had destroyed.

10Then the LORD said to some of His prophets, 11"Manesseh has done things more terrible than the Amorites, and he caused the people to worship idols." 12So the LORD says, "I will destroy Jerusalem and Judah {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} and those who hear about it will be horrified. 13I will judge Jerusalem by the same standard I used for Samaria, and for Ahab's family. I will wipe away the people of Jerusalem as one wipes a dish and turns it over. 14I will reject even those who survive, and their enemies will rob them. 15Why? Because all their sins have made Me angry ever since their ancestors left Egypt."

16Manasseh killed so many innocent people that the streets of Jerusalem were covered with blood. And this was causing so many people in Judah to disobey the Lord. 17The other events in Manasseh's life, including his deeds and his many sins, are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. 18When he died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} he was buried in the Uzza Garden near his place. Amon, his son, became the next king.

19Amon was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem two years. His mother was Meshullemeth, daughter of Haruz from Jotbah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 20He sinned against the LORD just as his father Manasseh did, 21worshiping the same idols Manasseh had worshiped. 22He rejected the LORD the God of his ancestors, and he refused to obey the LORD. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 23Amon's own officials assassinated him. 24Then the people killed the assassins and made Josiah his son king. 25The events in Amon's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. 26He was buried in the Uzza Garden near the palace. His son Josiah was the next king. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, I know the deception of my evil heart, so be faithful to "pull" me toward righteousness. Don't give up on me when I am tempted to sin. Capture my soul and make me pure. Amen.

2 Kings 22

Josiah Rules over Judah

[1]Josiah was eight years old when he
became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem
31 years. His mother was Jedidah, daugh-
ter of Adaiah from Bozkath. [2]He obeyed
the Lord as his ancestor David had done.
He always did what was right. {194 Good-
Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
[3]In the 18th year of his reign, Josiah
told the royal secretary Shaphan, son of
Azaliah and grandson of Meshullam, [4]to
ask Hilkiah the high priest to count the
money the gatekeepers had received in
donations for repairing the temple. [5]He
then told Shaphan to tell Hilkiah to give
the money to the project supervisors who
were to pay the temple workers, [6]includ-
ing carpenters, builders, and masons. {536
Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Also the
supervisors were to buy wood, and stones
for repairing the temple. [7]"But," Josiah
said, "these are honest men so the supervi-
sors don't need to record their responses."
{310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
[8]Hilkiah said to Shaphan, "Guess what I
found here in the temple—a copy of the
law of Moses!" Hilkiah gave him the scroll
and Shaphan read it. {41 Bible-Prayer,
John 15:7} [9]Then Shaphan told the king
that the officials gave the money to the
project supervisors who will pay the work-
ers. [10]Then he said, "I have something here
you'll be interested in. It's a scroll Hilkiah
gave me." Then Shaphan read it to Josiah.
{535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}
[11]When the king heard what Shaphan read
from the law of Moses, he tore his clothes
in despair. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8} [12]The he told Hilkiah, Ahikam
son of Shaphan, Achor son of Micaiah,
Shaphan, and his personal servant Asaiah,
[13]"Go to the temple and ask the LORD
about what we've read today. He must be
angry with us because we and our ances-
tors have not been obeying the laws writ-
ten in this book." {399 Repentance-Prayer,
Matt. 3:2, 8}
[14]The five men went to talk with Huldah
the prophetess. Her husband was Shallum
son of Tikvah and grandson of Harhas, in
charge of the temple wardrobe. She lived
in the Mishneh (northern) section of
Jerusalem. [15]She said, "Go tell Josiah that
this is what the Lord says to him: [16]'I will
destroy this city and its people, just as this
book says. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos.
5:15} [17]The people of Judah have rejected
Me and burned incense to false gods, and I
am angry because of everything they have
done. I am utterly disgusted with them.'
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [18]Tell
the king that the LORD says, this about
what you read: [19]'You were sorry when
you heard that I will wipe out this country.
{228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} You
tore your clothes in despair and I heard
you cry. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}
[20]So I will not destroy this place while you
are still living.'" {99 Death-Facing Prayer,
Ps. 88:3} So they took Huldah's message
to the king.

Lord, I want revival in my life. I will seek Your presence in Your Word. I will read it to know You. I will memorize it to lodge Your

presence in my life. I will follow its teachings to live for You. Lord, live Your life in me as I hide Your Word in my life. Amen.

2 Kings 23

King Josiah Enforces God's Laws

[1]King Josiah called together the older leaders of Judah and Jerusalem. [2]He and they went to the temple with the people of Judah and Jerusalem, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} and the priests and prophets. Everyone was there, from the least to the greatest. Josiah read to the people the words of the law of Moses that had been found in the temple. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} [3]Standing by a temple column be asked the people to promise {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} to obey the LORD by keeping His commandments, regulations, and laws. The people promised to do everything written in the book. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[4]Then Josiah told Hilkiah the high priest and other priests and gatekeepers to remove from the temple every utensil used in worshiping Baal, Asherah, and the stars. He had all these things burned in the Kidron Valley, and he had the ashes carried off to Bethel. [5]He also got rid of the pagan priests who burned incense at the hilltop shrines in Judah. These priests also burned incense to Baal, and the sun, moon, and stars. [6]He also removed the Asherah pole that was in the temple and had it burned in the Kidron Valley. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} Then he ground the ashes into dust and threw the dust over the public cemetery. [7]He also tore down the houses where the male prostitutes lived next to the temple, and where the women sewed sacred robes for the Asherah idol.

[8]Priests in many towns of Judah had offered sacrifices and burned incense at hilltop shrines, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} from Geba north of Jerusalem to Beersheba in the south. He also destroyed the shrines left of the entrance to the Joshua Gate. [9]The priests who had served at these pagan shrines were not allowed to serve in the temple, but they could eat bread without yeast with the other priests.

[10]Josaih demolished the altar of Topheth in the Ben-Hinnon Valley, so no one could use it to sacrifice a child by fire to the god Molech. [11]Some kings of Judah had dedicated to the sun some horses and kept them near the temple entrance. Josiah removed them and burned the chariots which also had been dedicated to the sun. These horses were kept near the house of Nathan-Melech, a royal officer. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[12]Josiah also tore down and smashed the altars some kings had built on the palace roof and the altars Manasseh had built in the temple courtyards. Josiah threw the broken pieces into the Kidron Valley. [13]Solomon had built pagan shrines east of Jerusalem to honor Ashtoreth, the goddess of the Sidonians, and Chemosh, the God of the Moabites, and Molech, the God of the Ammonites. Josiah destroyed

these shrines. 14He also tore down the sacred stones and the pole used in worshiping Asherah, and he scattered human bones over the places where they had been. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 15Jeroboam son of Nebat had built a pagan hilltop shrine at Bethel. Josiah tore this down, smashed the stones to dust, and burned the Asherah pole. 16Seeing graves on the hillside in Bethel, Josiah had the bones dug up and he burned them on the altar at Bethel so the altar could no longer be used. This all happened just as the LORD had predicted. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 17When Josiah asked about a particular grave, the people there told him it was the grave of a man who came years ago from Judah and they said that the very things you have done to the altar would be carried out. 18Josiah said, "Leave that grave alone. Don't dig up its bones." So the people of Bethel didn't burn his bones nor those of an old prophet from Samaria.

19Josiah then sent men to towns in Samaria to destroy buildings near hilltop shrines. These had been built by various kings of Israel, and this had made the LORD very angry. 20Josiah killed the priests at these shrines in the towns of Samaria, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and he burned human bones on the altars so the altars could no longer be used. Then he went back to Jerusalem.

21Josiah told the people to celebrate the Passover to honor the LORD, just as written in the law of Moses. 22This festival had not been celebrated for hundreds of years. 23But finally it was, in the 18th year of Josiah's reign. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 24Josiah also got rid of medicine, psychics, household idols, and every form of idolatry. He did this as instructed in the scroll Hilkiah the priest had found in the temple. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 25No other king before or after Josiah obeyed the LORD and His law so completely. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7}

26However, the LORD was still very angry with Judah because of Manasseh's many sins. 27As the Lord had said, "I will reject Judah just as I rejected Israel. And I will reject Jerusalem and this temple which was built to honor Me." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 28Everything else Josiah did in his reign is written in the book of the kings of Judah.

29While Josiah was king, King Neco of Egypt went north to the Euphrates River to help the king of Assyria. Josiah and his troops went against Neco and in Megiddo Josiah was killed. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 30Josiah's servants took his body in a chariot back to Jerusalem and buried him in his own tomb. Then the people found Josiah's son Jehoahaz, poured oil on his head, and made him king of Judah. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}

31Jehoahaz was 23 years old, and he reigned in Jerusalem only three months. His mother was Hamutal daughter of Jeremiah, and she was from Libnah. 32He sinned against the LORD just as many of his ancestors had done. 33Pharoah Neco of Egypt arrested Jehoahaz and put him in prison in Riblah near Hamath. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} He

demanded that Judah pay Egypt 4 tons of silver and about 75 pounds of gold. [34]Neco then made Eliakim son of Josiah king, and he changed Eliakim's name to Jehoiakim. He took Jehoahaz off to Egypt, where he died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [35]Jehoiakim forced the people to pay high taxes so he could pay what Neco demanded.

[36]Jehoiakim was 25 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 11 years. His mother was Zebidah daughter of Pedaiah, and she was from Rumah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [37]He sinned against the LORD just as his ancestors had done.

Lord, I pray for the leaders of my generation. Revive them so they will lead the church in revival. Lord, revive me so I can revive the people I lead. May my life be an example to them and may my words touch their hearts. Lord, make me a spiritual leader of those I influence. Lord, if I don't stand for You, I will become the slave of the ungodly. I will stand. Amen.

2 Kings 24

Jehoiakim Rules over Judah

[1]When Jehoiakim was king, Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon invaded Judah. Jehoiakim surrendered and paid him taxes for three years and then rebelled. [2]Then troops from Babylon, Syria, Moab, and Ammon attacked Judah, intending to destroy it, just as the LORD had said through His prophets. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [3]This was because the Lord had planned it. He intended to wipe out Judah because of Manasseh's many sins. [4]Manasseh had shed a lot of innocent blood in Jerusalem, and the LORD would not forgive that.

[5]The other events in Jehoiakim's reign are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. [6]When he died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} his son Jehoiachin became the next king. [7]Nebuchadnezzar defeated Neco of Egypt and controlled the vast region from the brook of Egypt to the Euphrates River.

[8]Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he became king, and reigned in Jerusalem only three months. His mother was Nehushta daughter of Elnathan from Jerusalem. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [9]He sinned against the LORD just as many of his ancestors had done. [10]When Jehoiachin was king, Nebuchadnezzar sent troops ahead to attack Jerusalem, [11]and he arrived later. [12]Jehoiachin, his mother, his servants, and his officials surrendered to him. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} This was in Nebuchadnezzar's eighth year as king of Babylon. [13]Then, just as the Lord had said would happen, Nebuchadnezzar took all the treasures from the temple and the royal palace, including the gold objects Solomon had made for the temple. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [14]He took 10,000 prisoners, including officers, soldiers, craftsmen, and skilled workers. He left in Judah only the very poorest people.

15Nebuchadnezzar also took Jehoiachin as a captive to Babylon, with his wives, officials, mother, and leaders. 16He also took 7,000 soldiers and 1,000 skilled workers and craftsmen. 17Nebuchadnezzar then made Mattaniah as the next king, and he changed his name to Zedekiah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

18Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king and he reigned in Jerusalem 11 years. His mother was Humutal, the daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. Zedekiah and Jehoahaz were brothers. 19Zedekiah sinned against the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. 20So the Lord in His anger {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} turned His back {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} on Judah and let them be taken into captivity. Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon.

2 Kings 25

The Fall of Jerusalem

1In the ninth year of Zedekiah's reign, on January 15, 588 B.C., Nebuchadnezzar's army surrounded the city of Jerusalem and built ramps up to the city walls. 2The siege continued for a year and a half. 3Then in Zedekiah's 11th year (586 B.C.), the food was entirely gone. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 4On July 18 of that year the Babylonians broke through the city wall. The soldiers in Jerusalem ran at night through the gate near the royal garden. 5They ran toward the Jordan Valley, but the Babylonians caught the king and his men had run off near Jericho. 6The Babylonian soldiers brought Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, where he was pronounced guilty. 7Zedekiah's sons were killed as he watched, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and then the soldiers gouged out his eyes, bound him with bronze chains, and led him away to Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

8On August 4 of that year (586 B.C.), the 19th year of Nebuchadnezzar's reign, Nebuchadnezzar, captain of the guard, arrived in Jerusalem. 9He burned down the temple, the royal palace, all the houses in Jerusalem, and every important building. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10Then he ordered the soldiers to tear down the city walls. 11Nebuchadnezzar took as captives the people who were still in the city, along with any who had become loyal to Nebuchadnezzar. 12Only the very poorest people were left in the city to care for the vineyards and the fields. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

13The Babylonians broke up the bronze columns, the bronze water carts, and the bronze water tank in the temple and took the bronze to Babylon. 14They also took the pots, shovels, wick snuffers, dishes, and all the other bronze utensils used in the temple. 15Nebuzaradan also took the fire pans and bowls made of gold and silver.

16The bronze from the columns, the water carts, and the huge water tank was too much to be weighed. 17Each column was 27 ½ feet high. The bronze on top of one column was 4 ½ feet high and was decorated with bronze pomegranates all around it.

[18]Nebuzaradan took as prisoners Seraiah the chief priest, Zephaniah his assistant priest, and three gatekeepers. [19]Then he arrested an army commander, the king's five personal advisors, an army secretary in charge of recruitment, and 60 other residents in Jerusalem. [20]Nebuzaradan took them to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah, [21]where they were all put to death. So the people of Judah were taken captive from their land. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[22]Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah son of Ahikam and grandson of Shaphan as governor of the people left in Judah. [23]When Judah's army officers heard that Gedaliah was governor, they joined him in Mizpah. These included Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan son of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth from Netophah, and Jaazaniah from Maazah. [24]Gedaliah assured them that the Babylonians did not intend to harm them. He said, "If you settle in Babylon and serve the king, all will go well with you." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [25]But in September of that year Ishmael son of Nethaniah and grandson of Elishama went to Mizpah with 10 men and assassinated Gedaliah and everyone with him, both Judeans and Babylonians. [26]Then the people in Mizpah were afraid of what the Babylonians might do, and so they went to Egypt. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[27]After Jehoiachin was a captive in Babylon for 37 years, Evil-Merodach became king of Babylon. He released Jehoiachin from prison in April of that year (561 B.C.). [28]He was kind to Jehoiachin and treated him better than anyone else in prison in Babylon. [29]He gave Jehoiachin new clothes so he could put aside his prison clothes, and let him eat with him the rest of his life. [30]Evil-Merodach also gave Jehoiachin a regular allowance to buy whatever he needed the rest of his life.

Lord, I know You punish hypocrisy, so I will seriously seek Your presence in my life. I will serve You wholeheartedly, not because of what the world thinks, but because I love You. Remind me constantly that my faith is all about my relationship with You. Amen.

1 Chronicles

Ch 1: Adam to Abraham 553
Ch 2: Descendants of Jacob 554
Ch 3: Descendants of David 556
Ch 4: Descendants of Judah 557
Ch 5: Descendants of Reuben 558
Ch 6: Descendants of Levi 560
Ch 7: Descendants of Issachar 562
Ch 8: Descendants of Benjamin 563
Ch 9: The Return from Captivity to Jerusalem 564
Ch 10: The Death of Saul and His Sons 566
Ch 11: David Is King of All Israel 566
Ch 12: David's Army Expands 568
Ch 13: The Ark Is Moved from Kiriath-Jearim ... 570
Ch 14: David Prospers as King 570
Ch 15: The Ark of God Is Moved to Jerusalem ... 571
Ch 16: The Ark Is Moved to Jerusalem 572
Ch 17: God's Promise to David 574
Ch 18: David's Victories in battle 575
Ch 19: David Conquers Ammon and Syria 576
Ch 20: David Defeats Rabbah 577
Ch 21: David Takes a Census 577
Ch 22: David Prepared to Build the Temple 578

Ch 23: The Levites and their Duties 579
Ch 24: The Priests Are Organized 581
Ch 25: The Musicians and Their Duties 582
Ch 26: The Gatekeepers and Their Duties 582
Ch 27: The Monthly Schedule for the Military 583
Ch 28: David Tells of Plans for the Temple 585
Ch 29: Offerings for the House of God 586

1 CHRONICLES

Key Words: *All Israel* (45 times)

Key Verse: "Then all Israel gathered themselves to David unto Hebron, saying, Behold, we are thy bone and thy flesh" (1 Chronicles 11:1).

Theme: The chronicler wanted to see "all Israel" united because they were God's people, and they all came from Abraham. He traces the genealogy from Adam to Saul (chaps. 1-11). Then he traces David's life, but was kind to David in not mentioning his sins. The book ends with David's death.

The Bible is all about how God dealt with His people. We should read about them to avoid their mistakes and follow their exploits. Then we should commit ourselves in prayer to always be faithful to God, and to always strive against sin. *Lord, I want to learn from Your servants. Help me to be strong against sin and be kind to the needy. Amen.*

1 Chronicles 1

Adam to Abraham

1 The sons of Adam were Seth, Enosh, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
2 Kenan, Mahalalel, Jared, 3 Enoch, Methuselah, Lamech, 4 and Noah. The
sons of Noah were Shem, Ham, and Japheth.
5 The sons of Japheth were Gomer, Magog, Madai, Javan, Tubal, Meshech, and Tiras. 6 The
sons of Gomer were Ashkenaz, Riphath, and Togarmah.
7 The sons of Javan were Elishah, Tarshish the Kittim, and the Rodanim.
8 The sons of Ham were Cush, Mizraim, Put, and Canaan. 9 The sons of Cush were Seba,
Havilah, Sabtah, Raamah, and Sabteca. The sons of Raamah were Sheba and Dedan.
10 Cush was the ancestor of Nimrod, a heroic warrior.
11 Mizraim was the ancestor of the Ludites, Anamites, Lehabites, Naphtuhites, 12 Path-
rusites, Casluhites (from whom the Philistines came) and the Caphtorites. 13 Canaan's
oldest son was Sidon, the ancestor of the Sidonians. Canaan was also the ancestor of
the Hittites, 14 Jebusites, Amorites, Girgashites, 15 Hivites, Arkites, Sinites, 16 Arvadites,
Zemarites, and Hamathites.

17The sons of Shem were Elam, Asshur, Arphaxad, Lud, and Aram. The sons of Aram were Uz, Hul, Gether, and Meshech. 18Arphaxad was the father of Shelah, and Shelah was the father of Eber. 19Eber had two sons. The first was named Peleg (meaning "Division"), because in his lifetime the people of the world were divided into different language groups. His brother's name was Joktan. 20Joktan was the father of Almodad, Sheleph, Hazarmaveth, Jerah, 21Hadoram, Uzal, Diklah, 22Ebal, Abimael, Sheba, 23Ophir, Havilah, and Jobab. 24So this is the family line descended from Shem: Arphaxad, Shelah, 25Eber, Peleg, Reu, 26Serug, Nahor, Terah, 27and Abram, whose name God changed to Abraham.

28The sons of Abraham were Isaac and Ishmael. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 29The sons of Ishmael were Nebaioth, Kedar, Adbeel, Mibsam, 30Mishma, Dumah, Massa, Hadad, Tema, 31Jetur, Naphish, and Kedemah.

32The sons of Keturah, Abraham's concubine, were Zimran, Jokshan, Medan, Midian, Ishbak, and Shuah. The sons of Jokshan were Sheba and Dedan. 33The sons of Midian were Ephah, Epher, Hanoch, Abida, and Eldaah. 34Abraham was the father of Isaac. The sons of Isaac were Esau and Jacob, whose name God changed to Israel.

35The sons of Esau were Eliphaz, Reuel, Jeush, Jalam, and Korah. 36The sons of Eliphaz were Teman, Omar, Zephi, Gatam, Kenaz, Timna, and Amalek. 37The sons of Reuel were Nahath, Zerah, Shammah, and Mizzah. 38The sons of Seir were Lotan, Shobal, Zibeon, Anah, Dishon, Ezer, and Dishan. 39The sons of Lotan were Hori and Homam. Lotan's sister was named Timna. 40The sons of Shobal were Alvan, Manahath, Ebal, Shephi, and Onam. The sons of Zibeon were Aiah and Anah. 41The son of Anah was Dishon. The sons of Dishon were Hamran, Eshban, Ithran, and Keran. 42The sons of Ezer were Bilhan, Zaavan, and Jaakan. The sons of Dishon were Uz and Aran. 43These are the kings who ruled in Edom before there were kings in Israel: Bela son of Beor, who ruled from his city of Dinhabah.

44When Bela died, Jobab son of Zerah from Bozrah became king. 45When Jobab died, Husham from the land of the Temanites became king. 46When Husham died, Hadad son of Bedad became king and ruled from the city of Avith. He had destroyed the Midianite army in the land of Moab. 47When Hadad died, Samlah from the city of Masrekah became king. 48When Samlah died, Shaul from the city of Rehoboth-on-the-River became king. 49When Shaul died, Baal-Hanan son of Acbor became king. 50When Baal-Hanan died, Hadad became king and ruled from the city of Pai. His wife was Mehetabel, the daughter of Matred and granddaughter of Me-Zahab.

51Then Hadad died. The clan leaders of Edom were Timna, Aliah, Jetheth, 52Oholibamah, Elah, Pinon, 53Kenaz, Teman, Mibzar, 54Magdiel, and Iram.

1 Chronicles 2

Descendants of Jacob

1The sons of Israel were Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Issachar, Zebulun, {249

Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}
2 Dan, Joseph, Benjamin, Naphtali, Gad,
and Asher.
3 Judah had three sons through Bathshua,
a Canaanite woman. Their names were
Er, Onan, and Shelah. But the LORD
saw that the oldest son, Er, was a wicked
man, so He killed him. 4 Later Judah had
twin sons from Tamar, his widowed
daughter-in-law. Their names were Perez
and Zerah. 5 The sons of Perez were Hez-
ron and Hamul. 6 The sons of Zerah were
Zimri, Ethan, Heman, Calcol, and Darda.
7 Achan son of Carmi, one of Zerah's
descendants, brought disaster on Israel by
taking items that had been set apart for
the LORD. 8 The son of Ethan was Aza-
riah. 9 The sons of Hezron were Jerahmeel,
Ram, and Caleb. 10 Ram was the father of
Amminadab. Amminadab was the father
of Nahshon, a leader of Judah. 11 Nahshon
was the father of Salman. Salman was the
father of Boaz. 12 Boaz was the father of
Obed. Obed was the father of Jesse. 13 Jes-
se's sons were Eliab, Abinadab, Shimea,
14 Nethanel, Raddai, 15 Ozem, and David.
16 Their sisters were named Zeruiah and
Abigail. Zeruiah had three sons named
Abishai, Joab, and Asahel. 17 Abigail mar-
ried a man named Jether, an Ishmaelite,
and they had a son named Amasa. 18 Hez-
ron's son Caleb had two wives named Azu-
bah and Jerioth. Azubah's sons were Jesher,
Shobab, and Ardon. 19 After Azubah died,
Caleb married Ephrath, and they had a son
named Hur. 20 Hur was the father of Uri,
and Uri was the father of Bezalel. 21 When
Hezron was 60 years old, he married Gile-
ad's sister, the daughter of Makir. They had
a son named Segub. 22 Segub was the father
of Jair, who ruled over 23 towns in the
land of Gilead. 23 (But Geshur and Syria
captured Havvoth Jair and Kenath and its
60 surrounding villages.) All these were
descendants of Makir, the father of Gil-
ead. 24 Soon after Hezron died in the town
of Caleb, Ephrathah, his wife Abijah gave
birth to a son named Ashhur (the father
of Tekoa). 25 The sons of Jerahmeel, the
oldest son of Hezron, were Ram, Bunah,
Oren, Ozem, and Ahijah. 26 Jerahmeel had
a second wife named Atarah. She was the
mother of Onam. 27 The sons of Ram, the
oldest son of Jerahmeel, were Maaz, Jamin,
and Eker. 28 The sons of Onam were Sham-
mai and Jada. The sons of Shammai were
Nadab and Abishur. 29 The sons of Abi-
shur and his wife Abihail were Ahban and
Molid. 30 The sons of Nadab were Seled
and Appaim. Seled died without children,
31 but Appaim had a son named Ishi. The
son of Ishi was Sheshan. Sheshan had a
son named Ahlai. 32 Shammai's brother,
Jada, had two sons named Jether and Jon-
athan. Jether died without children, 33 but
Jonathan had two sons named Peleth and
Zaza. 34 Sheshan had no sons, though he
had daughters. He also had an Egyptian
servant named Jarha. 35 Sheshan gave one
of his daughters to be the wife of Jarha,
and they had a son named Attai.
36 Attai was the father of Nathan. Nathan
was the father of Zabad. 37 Zabad was the
father of Ephlal. Ephlal was the father of
Obed. 38 Obed was the father of Jehu. Jehu
was the father of Azariah. 39 Azariah was
the father of Helez. Helez was the father of
Eleasah. 40 Eleasah was the father of Sismai.

Sismai was the father of Shallum. [41]Shallum was the father of Jekamiah. Jekamiah was the father of Elishama. [42]The oldest son of Caleb, the brother of Jerahmeel, was Mesha, the father of Ziph. Caleb's second son was Mareshah, the father of Hebron. [43]The sons of Hebron were Korah, Tappuah, Rekem, and Shema. [44]Shema was the father of Raham, and the father of Jorkeam. Rekem was the father of Shammai. [45]The son of Shammai was Maon. Maon was the father of Beth-Zur. [46]Caleb's concubine Ephah gave birth to Haran, Moza, and Gazez. Haran was the father of Gazez. [47]The sons of Jahdai were Regem, Jotham, Geshan, Pelet, Ephah, and Shaaph. [48]Another of Caleb's concubines, Maacah, gave birth to Sheber and Tirhanah. [49]She also gave birth to Shaaph (the father of Madmannah) and Sheva (the father of Macbenah and Gibea). Caleb also had a daughter named Acsah. [50]The sons of Hur, the oldest son of Caleb's wife Ephrathah, were Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim, [51]Salma the father of Bethlehem, and Hareph the father of Beth-Gader. [52]The sons of Shobal the father of Kiriath-Jearim were Haroeh, half the Manahathites, [53]and the families of Kiriath-Jearim—the Ithrites, Puthites, Shumathites, and Mishraites, from whom came the people of Zorah and Eshtaol. [54]The sons of Salma were the people of Bethlehem, the Netophathites, Atroth-Beth-Joab, the other half of the Manahathites, the Zorites, [55]and the families of scribes living at Jabez—the Tirathites, Shimeathites, and Sucathites. All these were Kenites who descended from Hammath, the father of the family of Recab.

1 Chronicles 3

Descendants of David

[1]These were the sons who were born to David in Hebron: The oldest was Amnon, whose mother was Ahinoam from Jezreel. The second was Daniel, whose mother was Abigail from Carmel. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom.10:1} [2]The third was Absalom, whose mother was Maacah, the daughter of Talmai, king of Geshur. The fourth was Adonijah, whose mother was Haggith. [3]The fifth was Shephatiah, whose mother was Abital. The sixth was Ithream, whose mother was Eglah. [4]These six sons were born to David in Hebron, where he reigned 7½ years. Then David moved the capital to Jerusalem where he reigned another 33 years. [5]The sons born to David in Jerusalem included Shimea, Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon. Bathsheba, the daughter of Ammiel, was the mother of these sons. [6]David also had nine other sons: Ibhar, Eliishama, Eliphelet, [7]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, [8]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet. [9]These were the sons of David, not including the sons of his concubines. David also had a daughter named Tamar. [10]The descendants of Solomon were Rehoboam, Abijah, Asa, Jehoshaphat, [11]Joram, Ahaziah, Joash, [12]Amaziah, Azariah, Jotham, [13]Ahaz, Hezekiah, Manasseh, [14]Amon, and Josiah. [15]The sons of Josiah were Johanan, Jehoiakim, Zedekiah, and Shallum. [16]Jehoiakim was succeeded by his

son Jehoiachin, who was succeeded by his uncle Zedekiah. [17]The sons of Jehoiachin (also called Jeconiah), who was taken prisoner by the Babylonians, were Shealtiel, [18]Malkiram, Pedaiah, Shenazzar, Jekamiah, Hoshama, and Nedabiah. [19]The sons of Pedaiah were Zerubbabel and Shimei. The sons of Zerubbabel were Meshullam and Hananiah. He also had a daughter named Shelomith. [20]His five other sons were Hashubah, Ohel, Berekiah, Hasadiah, and Jushab-Hesed. [21]The sons of Hananiah were Pelatiah and Jeshaiah. Jeshaiah's son was Rephaiah. Rephaiah's son was Arnan. Arnan's son was Obadiah. Obadiah's son was Shecaniah. [22]Shecaniah's descendants were Shemaiah and his sons, Hattush, Igal, Bariah, Neariah, and Shaphat. [23]The sons of Neariah were Elioenai, Hizkiah, and Azrikam.

[24]The seven sons of Elioenai were Hodaviah, Eliashib, Pelaiah, Akkub, Johanan, Delaiah, and Anani.

1 Chronicles 4

Descendants of Judah

[1]Some of the descendants of Judah were Perez, Hezron, Carmi, Hur, and Shobal. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [2]Shobal's son Reaiah was the father of Jahath. Jahath was the father of Ahumai and Lahad. These were the families of the Zorathites. [3]The sons of Etam were Jezreel, Ishma, Idbash, Hazzelelponi (his daughter), [4]Penuel (the father of Gedor), and Ezer (the father of Hushah). These were the descendants of Hur (the firstborn of Ephrathah), the ancestor of Bethlehem. [5]Ashhur the father of Tekoa had two wives, named Helah and Naarah. [6]Naarah gave birth to Ahuzzam, Hepher, Temeni, and Haahashtari. [7]Helah gave birth to Zereth, Izhar, Ethnan, [8]and Koz, who became the ancestor of Anub, Zobebah, and all the families of Aharhel son of Harum. [9]Jabez was more distinguished than any of his brothers. His mother named him Jabez (meaning "Pain") because his birth had been so painful. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [10]He was the one who prayed to the God of Israel, "Oh, that you would bless me {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and extend my lands! Please be with me in all that I do, and keep me from all trouble and pain!" And God answered his prayer. [11]Kelub the brother of Shuhah was the father of Mehir. Mehir was the father of Eshton. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom.10:1} [12]Eshton was the father of Beth-Rapha, Paseah, and Tehinnah. Tehinnah was the father of Ir-Nahash.

[13]The sons of Kenaz were Othniel and Seraiah. Othniel's sons were Hathath and Meonothai. [14]Meonothai was the father of Ophrah. Seraiah was the father of Joab, the founder of the Crafts Valley, so-called because many craftsmen lived there. [15]The sons of Caleb son of Jephunneh were Iru, Elah, and Naam. The son of Elah was Kenaz. [16]The sons of Jehallelel were Ziph, Ziphah, Tiria, and Asarel. [17]The sons of Ezrah were Jether, Mered, Epher, and Jalon. Mered married an Egyptian woman, who became the mother of Miriam, Shammai, and Ishbah. Ishbah was the father of Eshtemoa. [18]Ishbah also married a woman

of Judah, who became the mother of Jered the father of Gedor, Heber the father of Soco, and Jekuthiel the father of Zanoah. Mered's Egyptian wife was named Bithiah, and she was an Egyptian princess. [19]Hodiah's wife was the sister of Naham. One of her sons was the father of Keilah the Garmite, and another was the father of Eshtemoa the Maacathite. [20]The sons of Shimon were Amnon, Rinnah, Ben-Hanan, and Tilon. The descendants of Ishi were Zoheth and Ben-Zoheth. [21]Shelah was one of Judah's sons. The descendants of Shelah were Er, the father of Lecah, Laadah, the father of Mareshah, the families of linen workers at Beth-Ashbea; [22]Jokim; the men of Cozeba, Joash and Saraph, who ruled over Moab and Jashubi-Lehem. [23]They were pottery makers in Netaim and Gederah. They all worked for the king.

[24]The sons of Simeon were {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} Jemuel, Jamin, Jarib, Zohar, and Shaul. [25]The descendants of Shaul were Shallum, Mibsam, and Mishma.

[26]The descendants of Mishma were Hammuel, Zaccur, and Shimei. [27]Shimei had 16 sons and 6 daughters, but none of his brothers had large families. So Simeon's tribe never grew as large as the tribe of Judah. [28]Before David was king, the people of the Simeon tribe included Moladah, Hazar-Shual, [29]Bilhah, Ezem, Tolad, [30]Bethuel, Hormah, Ziklag, [31]Beth-Marcaboth, Hazar-Susim, Beth-Biri, and Shaaraim. [32]Their descendants also lived in Etam, Ain, Rimmon, Token, and Ashan, [33]and nearby villages as far away as Baal. [34]Other descendants of Simeon included Meshobab, Jamlech, Joshah son of Amaziah, [35]Joel, Jehu son of Joshibiah, son of Seraiah, son of Asiel, [36]Elioenai, Jaakobah, Jeshohaiah, Asaiah, Adiel, Jesimiel, Benaiah, [37]and Ziza son of Shiphi, son of Allon, son of Jedaiah, son of Shimri, son of Shemaiah. [38]These were the names of some of the leaders of Simeon's wealthy clans, [39]who traveled to the region of Gedor, in the east part of the valley to get pastureland for their flocks. [40]They found good pastures there, and the land enjoyed peace. Some of Ham's descendants had been living in that region. [41]But when Hezekiah was king of Judah, Simeon invaded it and completely destroyed the homes of the descendants of Ham and of the Meunites. They killed everyone who lived there and took the land for themselves, because they wanted its pastureland for their flocks. [42]Later 500 men from the Simeon tribe went to Mount Seir (Edom), led by Pelatiah, Neariah, Rephaiah, and Uzziel, the sons of Ishi. [43]They killed the last of the Amalekites who had survived, and they have lived there ever since. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

1 Chronicles 5

Descendants of Reuben

[1]Reuben was the oldest son of Israel. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} But since he dishonored his father by sleeping with one of his father's concubines, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} his rights as the firstborn were given to the sons of his brother

Joseph. That is why Reuben is not listed as the firstborn son. 2Judah became the most powerful tribe {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and provided a ruler for the nation, but the birthright belonged to Joseph. 3The sons of Reuben were Hanoch, Pallu, Hezron, and Carmi. 4The descendants of Joel were Shemaiah, Gog, Shimei, 5Micah, Reaiah, Baal, 6and Beerah, a leader of the Reubenites. Later King Tiglath-Pileser of Assyria took Beerah away as prisoner. 7Beerah's relatives are listed by their clans: Jeiel, the leader, Zechariah, 8and Bela son of Azaz, son of Shema, son of Joel. They lived in the area from Aroer to Nebo and Baal-Meon. 9And since they had so many livestock in the land of Gilead, they spread toward the desert just west of the Euphrates River. 10When Saul was king, the Reubenites defeated the Hagrites and then settled on the eastern edge of Gilead.

11The tribe of Gad lived in the Bashan region north of the Reuben tribe. Their territory extended past to the town of Salecah. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 12Their leaders were Joel, Shapham, Janai, and Shaphat. 13Their relatives, the leaders of seven other clans, were Michael, Meshullam, Sheba, Jorai, Jacan, Zia, and Eber. 14These were all descendants of Abihail son of Huri, son of Jaroah, son of Gilead, son of Michael, son of Jeshishai, son of Jahdo, son of Buz. 15Ahi son of Abdiel, and grandson of Guni, was the leader of their clans. 16The people of the Gad tribe lived in the land of Gilead, in Bashan and its villages, and in the Sharon Plain. 17Their family records were written when Jotham was king of Judah and Jeroboam was king of Israel. 18The tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh had 44,760 soldiers skilled in combat and armed with shields, swords, and bows. 19They fought against the Hagrites, the Jeturites, the Naphishites, and the Nodabites. 20In battle they prayed for the Lord to help them, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} and He did. So the Hagrites and all their allies were defeated. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 21The Israelites took from the Hagrites 50,000 camels, 250,000 sheep, 2,000 donkeys, and 100,000 captives. 22Many of the Hagrites were killed in the battle because God was fighting against them. So the Israelites lived in their land until they were taken as captives.

23East Manasseh, a large tribe, settled {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} from Bashan to Baal-Hermon, Senir, and Mount Hermon. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 24The leaders of their clans were Epher, Ishi, Eliel, Azriel, Jeremiah, Hodaviah, and Jahdiel. These men were known as great warriors and leaders. 25But they were unfaithful to the God of their ancestors by worshiping the gods of the nations that God had destroyed. 26So God sent King Pul of Assyria (also known as Tiglath-Pileser) to attack these tribes and take many of the people as captives. The Assyrians forced them {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} to live in Halah, Habor, Hara, and the area near the Gozan River, where they remain to this day.

1 Chronicles 6

Descendants of Levi

[1]The sons of Levi {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} were Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. [2]The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. [3]The sons and daughter of Amram were Aaron, Moses, and Miriam. The sons of Aaron were Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. [4]Eleazar was the father of Phinehas. Phinehas was the father of Abishua. [5]Abishua was the father of Bukki. Bukki was the father of Uzzi. [6]Uzzi was the father of Zerahiah. Zerahiah was the father of Meraioth. [7]Meraioth was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. [8]Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Ahimaaz. [9]Ahimaaz was the father of Azariah. Azariah was the father of Johanan. [10]Johanan was the father of Azariah who was the high priest when Solomon built the temple in Jerusalem. [11]Azariah was the father of Amariah. Amariah was the father of Ahitub. [12]Ahitub was the father of Zadok. Zadok was the father of Shallum. [13]Shallum was the father of Hilkiah. Hilkiah was the father of Azariah. [14]Azariah was the father of Seraiah. Seraiah was the father of Jehozadak, [15]who was taken into captivity by Nebuchadnezzar.

[16]The sons of Levi were Gershom, Kohath, and Merari. [17]The sons of Gershom were Ladan and Shimei. [18]The sons of Kohath were Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. [19]The sons of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. The following were the Levite clans, listed according to their ancestral descent: [20]The descendants of Gershom were Ladan, Jahath, Zimmah, [21]Joah, Iddo, Zerah, and Jeatherai. [22]The descendants of Kohath included Amminadab, Korah, Assir, [23]Elkanah, Ebiasaph, Assir, [24]Tahath, Uriel, Uzziah, and Shaul. [25]The descendants of Elkanah included Amasai, Ahimoth, [26]Elkanah, Zophai, Nahath, [27]Eliab, Jeroham, Elkanah, and Samuel. [28]The sons of Samuel were Joel and Abijah. [29]The descendants of Merari included Mahli, Ladan, Shimei, Uzzah, [30]Shimea, Haggiah, and Asaiah.

[31]After David moved the sacred chest to Jerusalem, he appointed the following men to lead the music at the tabernacle. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [32]Later they ministered with music at the temple Solomon built. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} They followed all the regulations handed down to them. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [33]These are the men who served, along with their sons: Heman the musician was from the clan of Kohath. His genealogy was traced back through Joel, Samuel, [34]Elkanah, Jeroham, Eliel, Toah, [35]Zuph, Elkanah, Mahath, Amasai, [36]Elkanah, Joel, Azariah, Zephaniah, [37]Tahath, Assir, Abiasaph, Korah, [38]Izhar, Kohath, Levi, and Jacob (Israel). [39]Heman's first assistant was Asaph from the clan of Gershom. Asaph's ancestors included Berekiah, Shimea, [40]Michael, Baaseiah, Malkijah, [41]Ethni, Zerah, Adaiah, [42]Ethan, Zimmah, Shimei, [43]Jahath, Gershom, and Levi. [44]Heman's second assistant was Ethan from the clan of Merari. Ethan's ancestral line included Kishi, Abdi, Malluch, [45]Hashabiah, Amaziah, Hilkiah, [46]Amzi,

Bani, Shemer, [47]Mahli, Mushi, Merari, and Levi. [48]Their relatives, also Levites, performed various duties in the tabernacle. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}
[49]Only Aaron and his descendants served as priests. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} They presented the offerings on the altar of burnt offering and the altar of incense, {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} and they performed all the other duties related to the most holy place. They provided substitutionary payments for sin {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} by following all the commands Moses had given them. [50]The descendants of Aaron were Eleazar, Phinehas, Abishua, [51]Bukki, Uzzi, Zerahiah, [52]Meraioth, Amariah, Ahitub, [53]Zadok, and Ahimaaz.
[54]This is a record of the towns and territory assigned by casting lots to the descendants of Aaron, who were from the clan of Kohath. [55]This included Hebron and its surrounding pasturelands in Judah, [56]but the fields and outlying areas belonging to the city were given to Caleb son of Jephunneh. [57]So the descendants of Aaron were given the following towns, each with its surrounding pasturelands in Judah: Hebron, a refuge town, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Libnah, Jattir, Eshtemoa, [58]Hilen, Debir, [59]Ashan and Beth-Shemesh. [60]And from the territory of Benjamin they were given Geba, Alemeth, and Anathoth, each with its pasturelands. So 13 towns were given to the descendants of Aaron. [61]The remaining descendants of Kohath received 10 towns from East Manasseh. [62]The descendants of Gershom received 13 towns in the territories of Issachar, Asher, Naphtali, and in the Bashan area of East Manasseh. [63]The descendants of Merari received 12 towns from the territories of Reuben, Gad, and Zebulun. [64]So the people of Israel assigned all these towns and pasturelands to the Levites. [65]All the towns were chosen by casting lots including towns in the tribes of Judah, Simeon, and Benjamin. [66]The descendants of Kohath received from the tribe of Ephraim these towns, each with its surrounding pasturelands: [67]Shechem (a refuge town in the hill country of Ephraim), Gezer, [68]Jokmeam, Beth-Horon, [69]Aijalon, and Gath-Rimmon. [70]The remaining descendants of Kohath were assigned these towns from the territory of East Manasseh, Aner and Bileam, each with its pasturelands. [71]The descendants of Gershom received from the territory of East Manasseh the towns of Golan in Bashan with its pasturelands and Ashtaroth with its pasturelands. [72]The Gershomites were given four towns in Issachar, Kedesh, Daberath, [73]Ramoth, and Anem, with their pasturelands. [74]From the territory of Asher they received Mashal, Abdon, [75]Hukok, and Rehob, with their pasturelands. [76]And the Gershomites received three towns in Naphtali: Kedesh in Galilee, Hammon, and Kiriathaim, each with its pasturelands. [77]The remaining descendants of Merari received from the tribe of Zebulun the towns of Rimmon and Tabor, each with its pasturelands. [78]From the territory of Reuben, east of the Jordan River opposite Jericho, the Merari descendants received Bezer in the desert, Jahzah, [79]Kedemoth, and Mephaath, with their pasturelands. [80]And from the

territory of Gad, they received Ramoth in Gilead, Mahanaim, [81]Heshbon, and Jazer, with their pasturelands.

1 Chronicles 7

Descendants of Issachar

[1]The four sons of Issachar were Tola, Puah, Jashub, and Shimron. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [2]The sons of Tola were Uzzi, Rephaiah, Jeriel, Jahmai, Ibsam, and Shemuel. Each of them was the leader of an ancestral clan. At the time of King David, the number of men available for military service from these families was 22,600. [3]The son of Uzzi was Izrahiah. The sons of Izrahiah were Michael, Obadiah, Joel, and Isshiah. These five became the leaders of clans. [4]All of them had many wives and many sons, so the total number of men available for military service among their descendants was 36,000. [5]The total number of mighty warriors from all the clans of the tribe of Issachar was 87,000. All of them were listed in their genealogical records.

[6]Three of Benjamin's sons were Bela, Beker, and Jediael. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [7]The five sons of Bela were Ezbon, Uzzi, Uzziel, Jerimoth, and Iri. These five warriors were the leaders of clans. The number was 22,034. [8]The sons of Beker were Zemirah, Joash, Eliezer, Elioenai, Omri, Jeremoth, Abijah, Anathoth, and Alemeth. [9]The number of soldiers in their clan was 20,200, in addition to their clan leaders. [10]Jediael was the father of Bilhan and the grandfather of Jeush, Benjamin, Ehud, Kenaanah, Zethan, Tarshish, and Ahishahar. [11]They were leaders in their clan, which included 17,200 men available for military service. [12]The sons of Ir were Shuppim and Huppim, and Hushim was the son of Aher.

[13]The sons of Naphtali were Jahziel, Guni, Jezer, and Shallum. They were descendants of Jacob's concubine Bilhah. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

[14]The sons of Manasseh, born to his Syrian concubine, were Asriel and Makir, father of Gilead. [15]Makir found a wife for Huppim and one for Shuppim. Makir's sister was named Maacah. One of Manasseh's descendants was Zelophehad, who had daughters but no sons. [16]Makir and his wife, Maacah, had two sons, Peresh and Sheresh. The sons of Peresh were Ulam and Rakem. [17]The son of Ulam was Bedan. All these were descendants of Gilead, Makir and grandson of Manasseh. [18]Makir's sister Hammoleketh was the mother of Ishhod, Abiezer, and Mahlah. [19]The sons of Shemida were Ahian, Shechem, Likhi, and Aniam.

[20]The sons of Ephraim {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} were Shuthelah, Bered, Tahath, Eleadah, Tahath, [21]Zabad, and Shuthelah. Ezer, and Elead, two other sons of Ephraim, were killed trying to steal livestock from local farmers near Gath. [22]Their father, Ephraim, mourned for them a long time and his relatives came to comfort him. [23]Later Ephraim's wife gave birth to a son, and Ephraim named him Beriah (meaning "Misery") because of the tragedy his family had suffered. [24]Ephraim had a daughter

named Sheerah. She built the towns of Lower Upper Beth-Horon, and Uzzen-Sheerah. 25Ephraim's line of descent was Rephah, Resheph, Telah, Tahan, 26Ladan, Ammihud, Elishama, 27Nun, and Joshua. 28The descendants of Ephraim lived in the territory that included Bethel and its surrounding towns to the south, Naaran to the east, Gezer and its villages to the west, and Shechem and its villages to the north as far as Ayyah and nearby villages. 29Along the border of West Manasseh were the towns of Beth-Shean, West Taanach, Megiddo, Dor, and their surrounding villages. The descendants of Joseph, son of Jacob, lived in these towns. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

30The sons of Asher {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} were Imnah, Ishvah, Ishvi, and Beriah. They had a sister named Serah. 31The sons of Beriah were Heber and Malkiel, the father of Birzaith. 32Heber was the father of Japhlet, Shomer, and Hotham, and a daughter Shua. 33The sons of Japhlet were Pasach, Bimhal, and Ashvath. 34The sons of Shomer were Ahi, Rohgah, Hubbah, and Aram. 35The sons of his brother Hotham were Zophah, Imna, Shelesh, and Amal. 36The sons of Zophah were Suah, Harnepher, Shual, Beri, Imrah, 37Bezer, Hod, Shamma, Shilshah, Ithran, and Beera. 38The sons of Jether were Jephunneh, Pispah, and Ara. 39The sons of Ulla were Arah, Hanniel, and Rizia. 40Each of these descendants of Asher was the head of a clan. They were all skilled warriors and prominent leaders. The tribe of Asher had 26,000 soldiers.

1 Chronicles 8

Descendants of Benjamin

1The sons of Benjamin were {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} Bela, Ashbel, Aharah, 2Nohah, and Rapha. 3The sons of Bela were Addar, Gera, Abihud, 4Abishua, Naaman, Ahoah, 5Gera, Shephuphan, and Huram. 6The sons of Ehud were leaders of the clans living at Geba, but later they had to move to Manahath. 7Ehud's sons were Naaman, Ahijah, and Gera. Gera, the father of Uzza and Ahihud, led them when they moved. 8After Shaharaim divorced his wives Hushim and Baara, he had children in the land of Moab. 9He and Hodesh, his new wife, were parents of Jobab, Zibia, Mesha, Malcam, 10Jeuz, Sakia, and Mirmah. These sons all became the leaders of clans. 11Shaharaim's wife Hushim had already given birth to Abitub and Elpaal. 12The sons of Elpaal were Eber, Misham, Shemed (who built Ono and Lod and their villages), 13Beriah, and Shema. They were the leaders of the clans living in Aijalon, and they forced out the inhabitants of Gath. 14The son of Beriah were Ahio, Shashak, Jeremoth, 15Zebadiah, Arad, Eder, 16Michael, Ishpah, and Joha. 17The sons of Elpaal were Zebadiah, Meshullam, Hizki, Heber, 18Ishmerai, Izliah, and Jobab. 19Shimei's sons were Jakim, Zicri, Zabdi, 20Elienai, Zillethai, Eliel, 21Adaiah, Beraiah, and Shimrath. 22Shashak was the father of Ishpan, Eber, Eliel, 23Abdon, Zicri, Hanan, 24Hananiah, Elam, Anthothijah, 25Iphdeiah, and Penuel. 26Jeroham's sons were Shamsherai, Shehariah, Athaliah,

[27]Jaareshiah, Elijah, and Zicri. [28]These were family leaders in their clans, and they were listed in their tribal genealogy. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} They all lived in Jerusalem. [29]Jeiel settled the town of Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah, [30]and his sons were Abdon. Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, [31]Gedor, Ahio, Zeker, [32]and Mikloth, father of Shimeah. All these families lived near each other in Jerusalem. [33]Ner was the father of Kish and the grandfather of Saul. Saul's sons were Jonathan, Malkishua, Abinadab, and Esh-Baal. [34]Jonathan was the father of Meribbaal. Meribbaal was the father of Micah. [35]Micah was the father of Pithon, Melech, Tarea, and Ahaz. [36]Ahaz was the father of Jehoaddah, who was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. [37]Moza was the father of Binea. Binea was the father of Rephah. Rephah was the father of Eleasah. Eleasah was the father of Azel. [38]Azel had six sons: Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan. [39]Azel's brother Eshek had three sons: Ulam, Jeush, and Eliphelet. [40]The sons of Ulam were all skilled warriors and expert archers. They had 150 sons and grandsons.

1 Chronicles 9

The Return from Captivity to Jerusalem

[1]Everyone in Israel was listed in the family records included in the book of the kings of Israel. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} The people of Judah were taken as captives to Babylon because they were unfaithful to the LORD. [2]The first to return to their towns were priests, Levites, temple assistants, and others. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} [3]People from the tribes of Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and West Manasseh settled in Jerusalem. [4]One family that returned was that of Uthai son of Ammihud, son of Omri, son of Imri, son of Bani, a descendant of Perez, son of Judah. [5]Others returned from the Shilonite clan, including Asaiah and his sons. [6]Jeuel and his relatives were from the clan of Zerah. In all, 690 families from the tribe of Judah returned. [7]From the tribe of Benjamin came Sallu son of Meshullam, son of Hodaviah, son of Hassenuah; [8]Ibneiah son of Jeroham; Elah son of Uzzi, son of Micri; and Meshullam son of Shephatiah, son of Reuel, son of Ibnijah. [9]These men were all leaders of clans. In all, 956 families from the tribe of Benjamin returned. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[10]Among the priests who returned were Jedaiah, Jehoiarib, Jakin, [11]Azariah, a temple official and son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub. [12]Other returning priests were Adaiah son of Jeroham, son of Pashhur, son of Malkijah, and Maasai son of Adiel, son of Jahzerah, son of Meshullam, son of Meshillemith, son of Immer. [13]In all, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 1,760 priests returned. They were capable heads of clans and they served in the temple.

[14]The Levites who returned were Shemaiah, son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, a descendant of Merari;

[15]Bakbakkar; Heresh; Galal; Mattaniah, son of Mica, son of Zicri, son of Asaph; [16]Obadiah, son of Shemaiah, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun; and Berekiah, son of Asa, son of Elkanah, who lived in the area of Netophah. [17]The gatekeepers who returned were Shallum, Akkub, Talmon, Ahiman, and their relatives. Shallum was the chief gatekeeper. [18]Before this, they had guarded the King's Gate on the east side. These men served as gatekeepers for the camps of the Levites. [19]Shallum was the son of Kore, a descendant of Ebiasaph, from the clan of Korah. He and his relatives, the Korahites, guarded the entrance to the temple just as their ancestors had guarded the tabernacle entrance. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [20]Phinehas, son of Eleazar, had been in charge of the gatekeepers in earlier times, and the LORD had been with him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [21]And later Zechariah, son of Meshelemiah guarded the tabernacle. [22]In all, there were 212 gatekeepers in those days, and they were listed by their family records in their villages. David and the prophet Samuel had appointed their ancestors because they were reliable men. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [23]These gatekeepers and their descendants guarded the temple entrance. [24]The gatekeepers were stationed on all four sides of the temple. [25]Occasionally their relatives in the villages came regularly to share their duties for a week at a time. [26]The four chief gatekeepers were Levites, responsible for the treasuries in the temple rooms. [27]They guarded the temple {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} day and night, and they opened the gates every morning. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} [28]Some of the gatekeepers were assigned to care for the various utensils used in worship, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} and they counted them before and after each time they were used. [29]Others were responsible for the temple furnishings, various items in the temple, and supplies such as flour, wine, olive oil, incense, and spices. [30]But only the priests mixed the spices and incense. [31]Mattithiah, a Levite {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and the oldest son of Shallum the Korahite, baked bread used in the offerings. [32]And some Levites of the clan of Kohath prepared the bread to be set on the table each Sabbath day. [33]The musicians, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} all prominent Levites, lived at the temple. They were on duty day and night. [34]All these men lived in Jerusalem. They were the heads of Levite families and were listed as prominent leaders in their family records.

[35]Jeiel, the father of Gibeon, lived in the town of Gibeon. His wife's name was Maacah, [36]and his sons were Abdon, Zur, Kish, Baal, Ner, Nadab, [37]Gedor, Ahio, Zechariah, and Mikloth. [38]Mikloth was the father of Shimeam. All these families lived near each other in Jerusalem. [39]Ner was the father of Kish and the grandfather of Saul. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} Saul was the father of Jonathan, Malkishua, Abinadab, and Eshbaal. [40]Jonathan was the father of Meribbaal and the grandfather of Micah [41]and the great-grandfather of Pithon, Melech, Tahrea, and Ahaz. [42]Ahaz was the father

of Jarah. Jarah was the father of Alemeth, Azmaveth, and Zimri. Zimri was the father of Moza. [43]Moza was the father of Binea. Binea's son was Rephaiah. Rephaiah's son was Eleasah. Eleasah's son was Azel, [44]who had six sons: Azrikam, Bokeru, Ishmael, Sheariah, Obadiah, and Hanan.

1 Chronicles 10

The Death of Saul and His Sons

[1]The Philistines attacked Israel at Mount Gilboa and killed many of them. And others ran. [2]The Philistines killed three of Saul's sons, Jonathan, Abinadab, and Malkishua. [3]Philistine archers caught up with Saul and wounded him severely. [4]Saul said to his armor bearer, "Take your sword and kill me. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} I don't want these pagan Philistines to make fun of me." But his armor bearer was afraid and would not do it. So Saul took his own sword and fell on it. [5]When his armor bearer realized that Saul was dead, he fell on his own sword and died. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} [6]So Saul and his three sons died there together. [7]When all the Israelites in the Jezreel Valley learned that their army had run and that Saul and his sons were dead, they ran away too. So the Philistines moved into those towns.

[8]The next day the Philistines went back to the battlefield to get the weapons and equipment of the dead men. When they saw the bodies of Saul and his sons on Mount Gilboa, [9]they took his armor and cut off his head. Then they spread the good news of Saul's death before their idols and to the people throughout Philistia. [10]They placed his armor in the temple of their gods, and they hung his head in the temple of their god Dagon.

[11]But when the people of Jabesh-Gilead heard what the Philistines had done to Saul, [12]some men {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} got the bodies of Saul and his sons and brought them back to Jabesh. Then they buried them under the oak tree at Jabesh, and fasted for seven days.

[13]So Saul died because he was unfaithful to the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} He failed to obey the LORD'S command, and he even consulted a medium [14]instead of asking the LORD for guidance. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} So the LORD killed him and turned the kingdom over to David, son of Jesse.

1 Chronicles 11

David Is King of All Israel

[1]Then all Israel went to David at Hebron and told him, "We are your relatives. [2]For a long time, even while Saul was our king, you were the one who really led Israel in our military campaigns. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} And the LORD promised you that you will be our leader like a shepherd." [3]So at Hebron, David made an agreement with the elders of Israel. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} They poured oil on him to show he was now their king, just as the prophet Samuel had said. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}

4Then David and all Israel went to attack
Jerusalem (which used to be called Jebus).
5The people of Jebus said to David, "You'll
never get in here!" But David captured
the fortress of Zion, now called the City
of David. {182 Geographical-Praying,
Matt. 6:6} 6David had said to his troops,
"Whoever leads the attack against the
Jebusites will become the commander of
my armies." {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1
Thess. 5:24} And Joab, the son of David's
sister Zeruiah, led the attack so he became
the commander of David's armies. 7David
made the fortress his home, and that is why
it is called the City of David. 8He extended
the city from the supporting terraces in the
Millo to the surrounding area, while Joab
rebuilt the rest of Jerusalem. 9And David
became more and more powerful, because
the LORD of the Heavens was with him.
{463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
10Together with all Israel, David's leaders
determined to make him their king, just as
the LORD had promised.
11The first was Jashobeam the Hacmonite,
who was commander of the three—the
three greatest warriors among David's
men. He once killed 300 men with his
spear. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor.
2:14} 12Next in rank among the three
was Eleazar son of Dodo, a descendant of
Ahoah. 13He was with David in the battle
against the Philistines at Pas-Dammim.
The battle took place in a barley field, and
the Israelite army fled. 14But Eleazar and
David stood in the field and defeated the
Philistines. So the LORD gave them a
great victory. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor.
2:14}
15Once when David was at the rock near
Adullam Cave, the Philistine army was
camped in the Rephaim Valley. The three
(who were among the thirty—an elite
group among David's fighting men) went
down to meet him there. 16David was
staying in the fortress at the time, and
some Philistines had occupied the town
of Bethlehem. 17David said to his men,
{485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} "How I
wish I had some of that good water from
the well by the gate in Bethlehem." 18So
the three broke through the Philistine
lines, got some water from the well by the
gate in Bethlehem, and brought it back to
David. But he refused to drink it. Instead
he poured it out before the LORD. {541
Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 19"God forbid
that I should drink this," he said. "This
water is as precious as the blood of these
men who risked their lives to bring it to
me." So David did not drink it.
20Abishai, brother of Joab, who was also
David's nephew, was the leader of the
thirty. In one battle he killed 300 men
with his spear. He was not one of David's
three, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} but
he was as famous as they were. 21But he
was the most famous of the thirty and was
their commander. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:14} 22Benaiah son of Jehoiada, was
a brave soldier from Kabzeel. He did some
amazing things, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev.
12:7} including killing two of Moab's best
soldiers. Another time he chased a lion
down into a pit, and despite the snow
and slippery ground, he caught the lion
and killed it. 23Another time he killed an
Egyptian warrior who was 7 ½ feet tall

and whose spear was as thick as a weaver's beam. Benaiah grabbed the spear from the Egyptian and killed him with it. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 24These are some of the deeds that made Benaiah as famous as the three, though he was not one of them. 25Yet he was more famous than the other members of the thirty. And David made him captain of his bodyguard.
26These were also included among David's mighty men: Asahel, Joab's brother; Elhanan son of Dodo from Bethlehem; 27Shammoth from Haror; Helez from Pelon; 28Ira son of Ikkesh from Tekoa; Abiezer from Anathoth; 29Sibbecai from Hushah; Ilai from Ahoah; 30Maharai from Netophah; Heled son of Baanah from Netophah; 31Ithai son of Ribai from Gibeah in Benjamin; Benaiah from Pirathon; 32Hurai from near Nahale-Gaash; Abiel from Arbah; 33Azmaveth from Bahurim; Eliahba from Shaalbon; 34the sons of Hashem from Gizon; Jonathan son of Shagee from Harar; 35Ahiam son of Sacar from Harar; Eliphal son of Ur; 36Hepher from Mekerah; Ahijah from Pelon; 37Hezro from Carmel; Naarai son of Ezbai; 38Joel, the brother of Nathan; Mibhar son of Hagri; 39Zelek from Ammon; Naharai from Beeroth (Joab's armor bearer); 40Ira from Jattir; Gareb from Jattir; 41Uriah the Hittite; Zabad son of Ahlai; 42Adina son of Shiza, the Reubenite leader who had 30 men with him; 43Hanan son of Maacah; Joshaphat from Mithna; 44Uzzia from Ashtaroth; Shama and Jeiel, the sons of Hotham, from Aroer; 45Jediael son of Shimri; Joha, his brother, from Tiz;
46Eliel from Mahavah; Jeribai and Joshaviah, the sons of Elnaam; Ithmah from Moab; 47Eliel and Obed; Jaasiel from Mezobah.

1 Chronicles 12

David's Army Expands

1While David was hiding from Saul in Ziklag, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} the following 23 men joined David there and fought with him. 2They were experts in using bows and arrows and they could sling a stone with either hand. They were all relatives of Saul from the tribe of Benjamin. 3Their leader was Ahiezer son of Shemaah from Gibeah, and his brother Joash was second-in-command. These were the other warriors: Jeziel and Pelet, sons of Azmaveth; Beracah and Jehu from Anathoth; 4Ishmaiah from Gibeon, a famous warrior and leader among the thirty; Jeremiah, Jahaziel, Johanan, and Jozabad from Gederah; 5Eluzai, Jerimoth, Bealiah, Shemariah, and Shephatiah from Haruph; 6Elkanah, Isshiah, Azarel, Joezer, and Jashobeam, who were Korahites; 7Joelah and Zebadiah, sons of Jeroham from Gedor. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 8Some brave soldiers from the tribe of Gad also joined David while he was at the fortress in the desert. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} They were good with both shield and spear, as fierce as lions and as swift as gazelles on the mountains. 9Ezer was their leader, and Obadiah was second in command. The others were Eliab, 10Mishmannah, Jeremiah, 11Attai, Eliel,

12 Johanan, Elzabad, 13 Jeremiah, and Macbannai. 14 All these warriors from Gad were army commanders. The weakest among them could take on 100 regular troops, and the strongest could take on 1,000. 15 They crossed the Jordan River during its seasonal flooding at the beginning of the year and forced out all the people living in the valleys on each side of the river. 16 Others from Benjamin and Judah joined David at his fortress. 17 David went out to meet them and said, "If you have come to help me, you are welcome. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} But if you try to turn me over to my enemies, the God of our ancestors will punish you." 18 Then the Spirit came on Amasai, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} who later became a leader among the thirty, and he said, "We are yours, David! We are on your side, son of Jesse. Peace and prosperity be with you, and success to all who help you, for your God is the one who helps you." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} So David let them join him, and he made them officers over his troops. 19 Some men from West Manasseh left the Israelite army and joined David when he went with the Philistines to fight against Saul. But as it turned out, the Philistine leaders refused to let David and his men go with them. They sent them back to Ziklag because they said, "If David turns against us, he will kill us." 20 These are the men from Manasseh who joined David as he was returning to Ziklag: Adnah, Jozabad, Jediael, Michael, Jozabad, Elihu, and Zillethai. Each commanded 1,000 troops, and as brave men 21 they helped David defeat raiding bands. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 22 Every day more men joined David until he had a great army.

23 These are the many thousands of armed warriors who joined David at Hebron. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} They were all eager to see David become king instead of Saul, just as the LORD had promised. These soldiers included 24 6,800 from Judah, armed with shields and spears; 25 7,100 from Simeon; 26 4,600 troops from Levi, 27 including Jehoiada, leader of the family of Aaron, who had 3,700 under his command, 28 and Zadok, a young warrior with 22 of his relatives who were all officers; 29 3,000 from Benjamin, Saul's tribe; 30 20,800 from Ephraim, all famous in his tribe; 31 18,000 from West Manasseh, chosen to help make David king; 32 200 leaders and their relatives from Issachar, men who knew the times and the best course of action Israel should take; 33 50,000 from Zebulun who were skilled, armed for battle, and loyal to David. 34 1,000 officers and 37,000 warriors from Naphtali, all armed with shields and spears; 35 28,600 warriors from Dan; 36 40,000 from Asher; 37 and 120,000 from Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh, armed with all kinds of weapons. 38 All these men {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} came to Hebron to make David king of Israel. Everyone in Israel wanted David to be their king 39 They feasted and drank with David for three days, enjoying food prepared by their relatives for their arrival. 40 And people from as far away as Issachar, Zebulun, and Naphtali brought food on donkeys, camels, mules, and oxen. Vast supplies of flour, fig cakes, clusters of

raisins, wine, olive oil, cattle, and sheep were brought to the celebration. Everyone in Israel was very glad. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

Lord, those who love You attract followers who love them. I will love You with all my heart; put people around me so we can follow You together. Amen.

1 Chronicles 13

The Ark Is Moved from Kiriath-Jearim

[1]David talked with his officials, and army commanders [2]and then said to all Israel, "If you approve and if it is the will of the LORD our God, let's invite all the Israelites throughout the land, including the priests and Levites in their towns and pasturelands, to come join us here. [3]It is time to bring back the sacred chest, for it was ignored when Saul was king." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [4]The people agreed to this, for they could see it was the right thing to do. [5]So David asked all the people of Israel, {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} from one end of the country to the other, to join in bringing the sacred chest from Kiriath-Jearim.

[6]Then they all went to Kinath (also called Baalah of Judah) to bring back the sacred chest. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [7]They placed it on a new ox cart, guided by Uzzah and Ahio. [8]David and the Israelites sang praises to the LORD with great enthusiasm, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and they played music on lyres, harps, tambourines, cymbals, and trumpets. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16}

[9]When they arrived at Kidon's threshing floor, the oxen stumbled, and Uzzah steadied the chest. [10]The LORD was so angry that Uzzah touched the sacred chest that He killed him right there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]David too was angry, and he named the place Perez-Uzzah (meaning "Outbreak against Uzzah"). [12]Afraid of what the LORD might do to him, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} David asked himself, "Am I really the one to bring the sacred chest to the City of David?" [13]So he decided to take the chest to Obed-Edom, in Gath. [14]The chest was there for three months, and the Lord blessed Obed-Edom and his family. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

1 Chronicles 14

David Prospers as King

[1]King Hiram of Tyre sent masons and carpenters and cedar logs to build a palace for David. [2]David knew that God had made him a powerful king for the benefit of his people. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

[3]David moved to Jerusalem, where he married more wives, [4]and had these sons there: Shammua, Shobab, Nathan, Solomon, [5]Ibhar, Elishua, Elpelet, [6]Nogah, Nepheg, Japhia, [7]Elishama, Eliada, and Eliphelet.

[8]Hearing that David was king of Israel, the Philistines went to capture him. David

heard they were coming, so he and his men went to meet them. [9]The Philistines were attacking villages in the Rephaim Valley. [10]So David asked the LORD if he should attack the Philistines, and if the LORD would help him. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} The LORD said, "Yes, go attack them, and I will give you the victory." {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} [11]So he attacked and defeated the Philistines at Baal-Perazim, and he said, "God has helped me defeat my enemy much like water breaking through a dam." That's why the place was called Baal-Perazim (meaning "The Lord Broke Through"). [12]The people then burned the idols the Philistines left there. [13]Again the Philistines raided the Rephaim Valley, [14]and David asked the Lord what he should do. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} God replied, "Circle around behind the mulberry trees and attack them there. [15]In the treetops you will hear what sounds like soldiers marching. That will mean I have moved against the Philistines, and so you should attack them." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [16]So David did what the LORD said to do, and he chased the Philistines all the way from Gibeon to Gezer. [17]So David became very famous, and people everywhere feared him. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Lord, there's one thing I want from You. I want to be in Your house to see Your beauty, I want to delight in Your presence. When You said to me, "Seek My face." I answered, "Your face will I seek." Lord, I will wait courageously for You because I know You will deliver me; I know You will come to me. Amen (from Ps. 27).

1 Chronicles 15

The Ark of God Is Moved to Jerusalem

[1]David built several buildings for himself in the City of David, and then he built a tent for the sacred chest. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} [2]He said, "Only Levites are to carry the chest because God has chosen them as the ones to carry it and serve Him forever." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [3]David invited all Israel to come to Jerusalem to celebrate bringing the sacred chest to the tent that was set up for it. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [4]The following are the priests and Levites who were there for the occasion: [5]120 from the Kohath clan, with Uriel as their leader; [6]220 from the Merari clan, with Asaiah as their leader; [7]130 from the Gershom clan, with Joel as their leader; [8]200 descendants of Elizaphan, with Shemaiah as their leader; [9]80 descendants of Hebron, with Eliel as their leader; and [10]112 descendants of Uzziel, with Amminadab as their leader. [11]Then David said to the priests Zadok and Abiathar and the six Levite leaders, Uriel, Asaiah, Joel, Shemaiah, Eliel, and Amminadab, [12]"as leaders of the Levite families, you must be ceremonially clean {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} so you can bring the sacred chest to the tent that

I have set up for it. [13]Because you Levites didn't bring the chest the first time, the LORD was angry. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} We didn't ask the LORD how to carry it." [14]So the priests and Levites made themselves ceremonially clean to get ready to take the sacred chest to Jerusalem. [15]The Levites carried the chest with poles that rested on their shoulders, as God had told them to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [16]David also had the Levites select some of their group to sing and play lyres, harps, and cymbals. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [17]The music directors were Heman son of Joel, Asaph son of Berekiah, and Ethan son of Kushaiah, all from the Merari clan. [18]Their assistants were Zechariah, Jaaziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattithiah, Eliphelehu, Mikneiah, and two gatekeepers: Obed-Edom and Jeiel. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [19]Heman, Asaph, and Ethan were to sound the bronze cymbals. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} [20]And Zechariah, Aziel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Unni, Eliab, Maaseiah, and Benaiah were to play lyres according to the alamoth tune. [21]And Mattithiah, Eliphelelu, Mikneiah, Obed-Edom, Jeiel, and Azaziah were to play the harps according to the Sheminith tune. [22]The song leader was Kenaniah, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} a skilled musician. [23]Berekiah and Elkanah were chosen to guard the sacred chest. [24]And the priests Shebaniah, Joshaphat, Nethanel, Amasai, Zechariah, Benaiah, and Eliezer were to blow trumpets as they marched in front of the sacred chest. Obed-Edom and Jehiah were also chosen to guard the chest.

[25]David, the elders of Israel, and army commanders were very happy when they went to the home of Obed-Edom to bring the sacred chest to Jerusalem. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [26]God helped the Levites to carry the chest, and so they sacrificed seven bulls and seven lambs. [27]David, the Levites carrying the chest, the singers, and Kenaiah the song leader were all dressed in linen robes, and David was also wearing a priestly vest. [28]So the sacred chest was brought to Jerusalem as the people shouted and as the Levites played horns, trumpets, cymbals, harps, and lyres. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [29]As the chest arrived in Jerusalem, Michal, David's wife who was Saul's daughter, saw David dancing in honor of the Lord, and she was disgusted with him.

1 Chronicles 16

The Ark Is Moved to Jerusalem

[1]They put the chest in the tent David had made for it, {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} and they offered burnt offerings and peace offerings. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, I will come to David's tabernacle to worship You, for that's where Your presence dwelt. Amen.

[2]Then David blessed the people, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [3]and he gave each Israelite a loaf of bread, a date

cake, and a raisin cake. [4]David selected the following Levites to lead the people in worshiping at the sacred chest {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} in praising and thanking the God of Israel: {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [5]Asaph, the leader of the group, sounded the cymbals. His assistants were Zechariah, Jeiel, Shemiramoth, Jehiel, Mattithiah, Eliab, Benaiah, Obed-Edom, and Jeiel. They played harps and lyres. [6]The priests Benaiah and Jahaziel played trumpets regularly in front of the sacred chest. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16}

[7]David told Asaph and his Levites to sing this song of thanks to the LORD: {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

[8]"Praise the LORD and pray to Him. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} Tell everyone what He has done. [9]Sing praises to Him. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} Tell everyone about His miracles. [10]Glory in His holy name, and rejoice in worshiping Him. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [11]Seek the LORD and His strength, and seek Him always.

[12]Remember the wonderful miracles He did {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} and His decisions, [13]O Israelites and descendants of Jacob. [14]"The LORD is our God and His justice is seen throughout the land. [15]Remember His agreement {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} and His promises to a thousand generations. [16-17]He made an eternal promise to Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob [18]when He said, 'I will give you Canaan as yours forever.' {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

[19]"At the time there were only a few of us, strangers in Canaan. [20]We wandered all from one nation to another, and God did not let them mistreat us. [21]He warned their kings [22]not to touch us, the people He had chosen, and His prophets.

[23]"The whole earth should sing to the LORD {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} and say each day that He saves. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [24]Tell every nation about His wonderful and marvelous deeds. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [25]He is great, and is worthy of all praise. He is to be revered above all gods. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [26]The gods of other nations are only man-made idols, but the LORD made the heavens. [27]Honor and majesty are around Him, and power and beauty fill His temple.

[28]"Nations of the world recognize His glory and strength. [29]Give Him the praise He deserves. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} And worship Him with your offerings. [30]Everyone on the earth should tremble before Him. The world is firm and can't be shaken. [31]Let everyone in the heavens and on the earth be glad. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} Let all nations know that the LORD reigns. [32]Let everything in the oceans shout praise to the LORD, and let the fields and their crops rejoice. [33]Let all the trees in the forest praise the LORD. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} He is coming to judge everyone.

[34]"Thank the LORD for being so good. Thank Him that His love endures forever. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

35Say to the LORD, 'Save us, O God of our salvation. Rescue us from the nations so we can thank Your holy name and praise You with joy.' 36May the LORD, the God of Israel, be blessed forever!" And all the people shouted "Amen" and praised the LORD. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

37David selected Asaph and the Levites in his clan to serve each day in front of the sacred chest, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} doing whatever needed to be done each day. 38In this group were Obed-Edom, Hosah, and 68 other Levites as gatekeepers. 39Also David left Zadok the priests and his fellow priests on the hill of Gibeon, 40to sacrifice burnt offerings {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} each morning and evening on an altar there. 41David also appointed Heman, Jeduthun, and others to praise the LORD for His loyal love. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 42Heman and Jeduthun played trumpets and cymbals and other musical instruments in praise to the LORD. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} Jeduthun's sons were guards at Gibeon. 43Then everyone went home, and David went home to bless his family.

1 Chronicles 17

God's Promise to David

1After David had moved into his palace, he told the prophet Nathan that he was concerned that he was living in a beautiful cedar palace, but the sacred chest was still in a tent. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2Nathan said, "So whatever you'd like, the LORD is with you."

3-4That night God said to Nathan to tell David, "David, you are My servant. But you are not the one to build Me a temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 5From the time I rescued Israel from Egypt, I have lived in a tent, moving from one location to another. 6I never complained to Israel's leaders, shepherds of My people, that they didn't build Me a temple of cedar. 7This is what the LORD of the Heavens says: 'When you were a shepherd, I chose you to be ruler over Israel. 8I have been with you, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and I have helped you defeat your enemies. I have made you a very famous person. 9I have provided a homeland for My people, where they can live in peace. Wicked nations won't trouble them as they did in the past and have done since I appointed leaders over the people. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 10I will conquer all your enemies.

"'And I will build a house for you. But this house will be a dynasty of kings. 11When you die, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} I will place one of your sons on your throne and he will be a strong ruler. 12He will build Me a temple, and I will continue his rule from generation to generation. 13I will be like a father to him, and he will be like a son to Me. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} I will never take away My unfailing love as I did from Saul. 14I will be sure your sons and his descendants will rule My people forever.'" {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 15Nathan told David all that God had said.

16Then David prayed, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} "Who am I and my family that You have done so much for me? 17And with everything else You have done, You now promise to make my descendants kings as if I were an important person. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 18How You have honored me. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 19This was Your choice to promise me these things. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 20No one is like You. In fact there is no other God, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} as we well know. 21And no other nation is like Israel, the nation You rescued from slavery in Egypt to be Your own. You became well known because of the great miracles {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} by which You forced out other nations. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 22You have chosen us to be Your own forever, and You are their God.

23"Now, please do as You promised about me and my descendants. 24Then You will be famous forever, and people will know that You, LORD of the Heavens, are our God. 25I'm praying to You because You said You would make my descendants kings. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 26You are the LORD God, and You have given me this wonderful promise. 27Now bless my descendants. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} You have blessed my family, and I know You will continue to bless them."

1 Chronicles 18

David's Victories in Battle

1Later David defeated the Philistines, capturing Gath and nearby villages. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

2He also defeated the Moabites and required them to pay him taxes. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

3Also Hadadezer king of Zobah was trying to control the area near the Euphrates River. But David fought him in a battle at Hamath, 4and David captured 1,000 chariots, 7,000 chariot drivers, and 20,000 soldiers. He also cut the leg muscles of all but 100 of the chariot horses. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

5Syrian troops from Damascus went to help Hadadezer, but David killed 22,000 of them. 6David stationed some soldiers in Damascus, and the Syrians paid him taxes. The LORD gave David victory in all his battles. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

7Hadadezer's officers had gold shields, but David brought them to Jerusalem. 8He also took a lot of bronze from Hadadezer's towns of Tibhath and Cun, and later Solomon melted the bronze and used it to make the huge water tank and columns, and various bronze articles for the temple.

9Tou king of Hamath heard that David defeated Hadadezer. 10So he sent his son Joram to commend David for his victory. Joram gave David many gifts made of gold, silver, and bronze. 11David gave all these gifts to the LORD, {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} along with the silver and gold he had taken from Edom, Moab, Ammon, Philistia, and Amalek.

12Abishai, David's nephew, killed 18,000 Edomites in the Salt Valley.
13David stationed some troops in Edom, and David was their ruler. The LORD gave David victory in all his battles. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 14David ruled over all Israel and was fair to everyone. 15His nephew Joab was his army commander; Jehoshaphat son of Ahilud was government recorder; 16Zadok son of Ahitub and Abimelech son of Abiathar were priests; Shavsha was court secretary; 17and Benaiah son of Jehoiada was over David's bodyguard of Kerethites and Pelethites. David's sons were his chief assistants.

1 Chronicles 19

David Conquers Ammon and Syria

1Later Nahash king of Ammon died, and his son Hanun became king. 2David decided to be kind to the new king Hanun because Nahash had been kind to David. So David sent some men to express {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} his sympathy to Hanun. 3When David's men arrived, the Ammonite leaders said to Hanun, "Surely you don't think David's men are here to express sympathy. They have come to spy on us so David can defeat us." 4So Hanun arrested David's men, shaved off their beards and cut off their clothes just below the waist and sent them off.
5These men were very embarrassed, and so when David heard what happened, he sent messengers to tell them to stay at Jericho till their beards grew back. 6The Ammonites realized they had made David very mad, so Hanun sent 38 tons of silver to hire chariots and chariot drivers from Mesopotamia and the Syrian kingdoms of Maacah and Zokah. 7He hired 32,000 chariots and chariot drivers and the king of Maacah with his troops. These all camped at Medebah, and the Ammonite soldiers joined them. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 8When David heard about this, he sent Joab with his army to meet them in battle. 9The Ammonite soldiers positioned themselves near the city gate, and the others were in the open fields. 10Seeing that he would need to fight on two fronts, he selected his best soldiers to fight the Syrians in the fields. 11He put his other troops under Abishai his brother to fight the Ammonites. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 12Joab told him, "If the Syrians are too much for me, then come and help me. Or if the Ammonites are too much for you, I'll help you. 13Be brave and fight hard. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} May the Lord do what He feels is best." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 14Joab and his army attacked the Syrians, and they ran away. 15When the Ammonites saw this, they too left the battlefield and went into the city. Then Joab went back to Jerusalem. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
16After the Syrians saw all this, they sent for additional Syrian troops from near the Euphrates River, who were under the Syrian commander Shophach. 17Hearing of this, David got Israel's entire army to cross the Jordan River and advance against the Syrians. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} David fought the Syrians, 18and

they ran from the Israelites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} David's men killed 7,000 of their chariot drivers and 40,000 soldiers including Shophach, their army commander. [19]When the kings under Hadadezer saw that Israel had defeated their armies, they made peace with David. The Syrians never helped the Ammonites again.

1 Chronicles 20

David Defeats Rabbah

[1]In the spring Joab, not David, led David's soldiers to battle the Ammonites. He destroyed their city of Rabbah, leaving it in ruins. [2]David took the gold crown of their king, which weighed 75 pounds and had several gems in it, and placed it on his head. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} He took away a lot of valuable things from the city, [3]and he forced the people of Rabbah to work for him with saws, picks, and axes. David did the same thing to people in other Ammonite cities. Then David and his army went back to Jerusalem.

[4]Later Israel fought the Philistines at Gezer. Sibbecai from Hushah killed Sippai, a descendant of the giant Rephaites, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and the Philistines were defeated. [5]In another battle Elhanan son of Jair killed Lahmi, Goliath's brother. Lahmi's spear was as thick as a weaver's beam. [6]In a battle at Gath a tall man had six fingers on each hand and six toes on each foot. He too was a descendant of the Rephaites who were giants. [7]When he made fun of Israel, Jonathan, son of Shimea and David's nephew, killed him. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [8]These three descendants of the giant Rapha in Gath were killed by David's soldiers.

1 Chronicles 21

David Takes a Census

[1]Satan encouraged David to take a census of Israel. [2]So David told Joab and his commanders to count everyone in Israel from Beersheba in the south to Dan in the north, and to report the number to him. [3]But Joab said, "Why? Even if you had 100 times the present number of soldiers, you would still be their ruler. Why cause Israel to sin?" {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[4]But David insisted Joab take the census. So Joab did, [5]and they reported the number to David. He said, "In Israel there were 1,100,000 men of military age, and in Judah the number was 470,000." [6]Joab didn't like this idea of counting the soldiers, so he didn't count anyone in the Levi or Benjamin tribes.

[7]God was not happy that David did this, so He punished Israel. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [8]Then David said to God, "I see now that I have sinned. This was foolish of me to take this count. Please forgive me." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[9]The LORD told the prophet Gad [10]to tell David, "I'll let you choose one of three ways in which I will punish Israel." {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18}

[11]So Gad went to David and said, "God is letting you choose one of three ways for

punishment. 12You may have three years of famine. Or you may be defeated by your enemies for three months. Or I will send a terrible disease on the nation. Take your choice and I will tell the LORD." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
13David said to Gad, "This is a tough decision. The LORD is king, so I prefer to have Him punish me rather than someone else. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 14So the LORD sent a terrible disease throughout Israel, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and 70,000 people died. 15God sent an angel to destroy Jerusalem, but when the LORD saw the people's suffering, he told the angel to stop. This was at the threshing floor that belonged to Ornan, the Jebusite. 16David saw the angel there holding a sword in his hand over Jerusalem. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Then he and his men, all clothed in coarse clothing in grief, fell down. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 17David said to God, "I admit I am the one who had the soldiers counted. It's my fault. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} These people, innocent like sheep, have done nothing wrong. So punish me and my family, not these people." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 18The angel then told Gad to tell David to build an altar on Ornan's threshing floor, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 19and David did. 20While Ornan was threshing wheat, he and his four sons saw the angel and ran and hid. 21When David arrived there, Ornan bowed to the ground before David. 22David said, "Please sell me your threshing floor so I can build an altar to the LORD {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} so that the disease on our people will be stopped." 23Ornan said, "It's yours. Do as you wish with it. You can take my oxen for your burnt offering {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and use the threshing sledges for wood, and take my wheat for your grain offering." 24But David said, "No. I'll pay you what it's worth. I can't just take what is yours and offer a burnt offering that costs me nothing." {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
25David paid Ornan about 15 pounds of gold for the site. 26He built an altar {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} there and sacrificed burnt offerings and peace offerings. David prayed, and the LORD sent fire to burn up the offerings. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 27Then the LORD told the angel to put away his sword. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 28When David saw that God answered his prayer, he offered more sacrifices on the altar. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 29The tabernacle and the altar that Moses had made in the desert were at Gibeon. 30David didn't want to go there to sacrifice to the LORD {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} because he was afraid of the angel's sword.

1 Chronicles 22

David Prepared to Build the Temple

1Then David said, "The temple of the LORD must be built right here at this threshing floor. And the altar of burnt offering will be here too." {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 2So David ordered

all resident foreigners in Israel to go to Jerusalem. He assigned some to cut stones for the temple. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [3]He got a lot of iron for nails and hooks, and more bronze than could even be weighed. [4]He also had many cedar logs brought from Sidon and Tyre. [5]David said, "The temple must be great in every way so everyone will know about it. But since my son Solomon is young and inexperienced, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} I will get everything ready for it to be built."

[6]David then told Solomon to build a temple to the LORD, the God of Israel. [7]He said to Solomon, "I wanted to build a temple. [8]But the LORD told me I couldn't because I had killed a lot of people in many battles. [9]But the LORD said, {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} "You will have a son who will have peace throughout his reign. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} His name Solomon (meaning 'Peaceful') will remind you of this peace. [10]He will be like a son to Me, and I will be like his father. One of his descendants will always be on the throne.

[11]"May the LORD be with you and give you success in building the temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [12]And may He give you wisdom and understanding to obey the law as you lead Israel. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [13]If you obey the regulations and laws the LORD gave Moses, you will succeed. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} So be strong and courageous. Don't be afraid or discouraged. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

[14]"I have provided for the temple about 3,750 tons of gold and about 37,500 tons of silver, and so much bronze and iron that it can't even be weighed. I also have lots of wood and stone, although you may want to get even more. [15]I have assigned many men {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} to be stonecutters, masons, carpenters, and many men skilled in working [16]gold, silver, bronze, and iron. Now as you begin the work, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} I pray that the LORD will be with you."

[17]David ordered all the leaders of Israel to help Solomon. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [18]He said to them, "The LORD is with you and has given you peace. He has helped me defeat the people who lived here, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and now this land belongs to the LORD and His people. [19]Obey the Lord with all your heart. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Build the temple of the LORD God so you can bring the sacred chest and items into the temple to honor Him." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, I will focus on You in worship, not on the place, nor the method, nor the music. Amen.

1 Chronicles 23

The Levites and their Duties

[1]When David was an old man, he made his son Solomon king over Israel. [2]He called together all the leaders of Israel and priests and Levites for a ceremony to crown

Solomon king. [3]The Levites who were 30 years of age or older totaled 38,000. [4]Then David said that 24,000 of them would oversee the temple construction, 6,000 would be officials and judges, [5]4,000 would be gatekeepers, and 4,000 would be musicians to praise the LORD. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} [6]Then David divided the Levites into three groups according to the descendants of Levi's three sons, Gershom, Kohath, and Merai.

[7]Gershom had two sons Ladan and Shimei. [8]Three of Ladan's descendants were Jehiel, Zetham, and Joel. [9]Three of Shimei's descendants were Shelemoth, Haziel, and Haran. [10-11]Four other sons of Shimei were Jahath, Ziza, Jeush, and Beriah. Jeush and Beriah didn't have many children, so their descendants were counted as one family.

[12]Kohath had four sons, Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel. [13]The sons of Amram were Aaron and Moses. Aaron and his descendants were chosen to be in charge of the sacred things, to offer sacrifices to the LORD, {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} and to bless people in His name. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [14]Moses, the man of God, had [15]two sons, Gershom and Eliezer, and their descendants were considered Levites. [16]The descendants of Gershom included Shebuel, the family leader. [17]Eliezer had only one son, Rehabiah, the family leader. Rehabiah had numerous descendants. [18]The descendants of Izhar included Shelomith, Kohath's second son, the family leader. [19]The descendants of Hebron included Jeriah Kohath's three sons, Amariah, Jahaziel, and Jekameam. [20]The descendants of Uzziel were Micah Kohath's youngest son, and Isshiah.

[21]The descendants of Merari were Mahli and Mushi. The sons of Mahli were Eleazar and Kish. [22]Eleazar died with no sons, only daughters. His daughters married their cousins, the sons of Kish. [23]The three sons of Mushi were Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth.

[24]These were the descendants of Levi by clans, the leaders of their family groups, registered by name. Each had to be 20 years old or older to qualify for service in the temple. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [25]David had said, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has given us peace, and He will live in Jerusalem. [26]Now the Levites won't need to carry the tabernacle and its furnishings. [27]All Levites, 20 years of age and older, [28]are to help Aaron's descendants in serving in the temple. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} They are to keep the courtyards and temple rooms clean, and to be sure everything used in worship is pure. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [29]They are to be in charge of the bread loaves for the table, the flour for the grain offerings, the wafers without yeast, cakes cooked in olive oil, and other ingredients for baking. [30]Also every morning and evening they are to thank and praise the LORD. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} [31]They are to do the same when they offer burnt offerings on Sabbaths and New Moon festivals and other scheduled festivals." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} There were always as many Levites present as were needed for the work in the temple. [32]The Levites, supervised by the priests, took care of the temple and carried

out their duties faithfully. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

Lord, I want to serve You in the right place, and in the right way. Amen.

1 Chronicles 24

The Priests Are Organized

1 Aaron's descendants, the priests, were divided into groups for service. Aaron had four sons, Nadab, Abihu, Eleazar, and Ithamar. 2 But Nadab and Abihu died before their father, and they had no sons. So that left Eleazar and Ithamar to be priests. 3 With the help of Zadok, who was a descendant of Eleazar, and of Ahimelech, who was a descendant of Ithamar, David divided Aaron's descendants into groups.
4 Eleazar's descendants were divided into16 groups and Ithamar's into 8, for there were more family leaders among the descendants of Eleazar. 5 Tasks were assigned to the various groups by means of casting lots to be sure the work was divided fairly, for there were many qualified officials serving God in the temple. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 6 Shemaiah son of Nethanel, a Levite, was secretary and wrote down the names and assignments in the presence of the king, the officials, Zadok the priest, Ahimelech son of Abiathar, and the family leaders of the priests and Levites. The descendants of Eleazar and Ithamar took turns casting lots. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 7 The lots fell on these priests, in the following order: Jehoiarib, Jedaiah, 8 Harim, Seorim, 9 Malkijah, Mijamin, 10 Hakkoz, Abijah, 11 Jeshua, Shecaniah, 12 Eliashib, Jakim, 13 Huppah, Jeshebeab, 14 Bilgah, Immer, 15 Hezir, Happizzez, 16 Pethahiah, Jehezkel, 17 Jakin, Gamul, 18 Delaiah, and Maaziah. 19 These men were assigned their duties at the temple, just as God had commanded Aaron. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
20 Here are the other descendants of Levi: Amram was the ancestor of Shubael and Jehdeiah. 21 Rehabiah, was the ancestor of Isshiah, the oldest son in his family. 22 Izhar was the father of Shelomith and the grandfather of Jahath. 23 Hebron had four sons: Jeriah, Amariah, Jahaziel, and Jekameam. 24 Uzziel was the father of Micah and the grandfather of Shamir. 25 Isshiah, Micah's brother, was the father of Zechariah. 26 Merari was the father of Mahli, Mushi, and Jaaziah. 27 Jaaziah had three sons: Shoham, Zaccur, and Ibri. 28-29 Mahli was the father of Eleazar, and Kish. Eleazar had no sons, but Kish was the father of Jerahmeel. 30 Mushihad three sons: Mahli, Eder, and Jerimoth. These were the descendants of Levi, according to their clans. 31 Each one was assigned their duties without regard to age or rank. This was done as David, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Zaduk, Ahimelech, and family leaders of the priests and Levites looked on.

Lord, I will serve You today according to the task You have given me for this day. Bless me, use me, and reward me according to Your grace. Amen.

1 Chronicles 25

The Musicians and Their Duties

[1]David and his army commanders chose descendants of Asaph, Heman, and Jeduthun to proclaim God's messages while playing harps, lyres, and cymbals. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} These are the musicians: [2]From the sons of Asaph, were Zaccur, Joseph, Nethaniah, and Asarelah. They worked under the direction of their father, Asaph, who proclaimed God's messages. [3]Jeduthun had six sons: Gedaliah, Zeri, Jeshaiah, Shimei, Hashabiah, and Mattithiah. They worked under the direction of their father, Jeduthun, who proclaimed God's messages to the accompaniment of the harp, offering thanks and praise to the LORD. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [4]Heman's sons were Bukkiah, Mattaniah, Uzziel, Shubael, Jerimoth, Hananiah, Hanani, Eliathah, Giddalti, Romamti-Ezer, Joshbekashah, Mallothi, Hothir, and Mahazioth. [5]All these were the sons of Heman, one of the king's prophets, for God had honored him with 14 sons and 3 daughters. [6]All these men were under the direction of their fathers as they made music at the temple, playing cymbals, lyres, and harps. Asaph, Jeduthun, and Heman reported directly to the king. [7]They and their relatives—288 of them—were all skillful musicians. [8]Everyone was assigned his duties without regard to age or rank. [9]The 288 musicians were divided into 24 groups of 12 each: they were chosen in the following order: Joseph, Gedaliah, [10]Zaccur, [11]Zeri, [12]Nethaniah, [13]Bukkiah, [14]Asarelah, [15]Jeshaiah, [16]Mattaniah, [17]Shimei, [18]Azarel, [19]Hashabiah, [20]Shubael, [21]Mattithiah, [22]Jerimoth, [23]Hananiah, [24]Joshbekashah, [25]Hanani, [26]Mallothi, [27]Eliathah, [28]Hothir, [29]Giddalti, [30]Mahazioth, and [31]Romamti-Ezer.

Lord, even when I don't sing perfectly like professionals, may my singing glorify You and advance Your work. Amen.

1 Chronicles 26

The Gatekeepers and Their Duties

[1]The gatekeepers were also divided into groups according to clans. Meshelemiah son of Kore was from the Korah clan and a descendant of Asaph. [2]His sons were Zechariah, Jediael, Zebadiah, Jathniel, [3]Elam, Jehohanan, and Eliehoenai.

[4]God had blessed Obed-Edom with eight sons, all of whom were gatekeepers: Shemaiah, Jehozabad, Joah, Sacar, Nethanel, [5]Ammiel, Issachar, and Peullethai. [6-7]Obed-Edom's oldest son Shemaiah had four sons, Othni, Rephael, Obed, and Elzabad. They were capable men who were highly respected. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [8]All 62 descendants of Obed-Edom were capable and strong men. [9]Meshelemiah's 18 sons and relatives were capable leaders.

[10-11]Hosah was from the Merari clan, and his sons were Shimri, Hilkiah, Tebaliah, and Zechariah. Hosah made Shimri the family leader, though he wasn't the firstborn son. Thirteen of Hosah's relatives were gatekeepers.

12These gatekeepers were divided into groups by their family leaders, and they were assigned duties at the temple. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 13By casting lots they determined at which gate these men would serve. 14Meshelemiah was in charge of the East Gate, Zechariah his son was to guard the North Gate, 15Obed-Edom guarded the South Gate, and his sons guarded the storerooms. 16Shuppim and Hosah were to guard the West Gate and the Shalleketh Gate on the upper road. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 17Six Levites each day were to guard the East Gate, four to the North Gate, four to the South Gate, and two to each of the storerooms. 18Four were stationed along the road leading to the courtyard on the west, and two guards were in the courtyard itself. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 19These were the duties assigned to the descendants of Korah and Merari.

20Ahijah and other Levites were to be in charge of guarding the temple treasury {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} and gifts given to the LORD. 21Ladan was a descendant of Gershom and the father of Jehiel. He and his sons Zetham and Joel also guarded the treasury. 22-23Other leaders who descended from Amram, Izhar, Hebron, and Uzziel were these. 24From the clan of Amram the chief official in charge of the temple treasury was Shebuel; he was a descendant of Gershom. 25Descendants of Eliezer, Gershom's brother, included Rehabiah, Jeshaiah, Joram, Zicri, and Shelemoth.

26Shelemoth and his relatives were in charge of all the gifts David and his family leaders and army officers dedicated to the LORD. 27These included items soldiers took from towns they captured. 28Shelemoth and his relatives also took care of items dedicated to the LORD by the prophet Samuel, Saul son of Kish, Abner Saul's uncle, and Joab David's nephew.

29Kenaniah was from the clan of Izhar, and his sons were government officials and judges. They did not work at the temple. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 30Hashabiah was from the clan of Hebron. He and his 1,700 relatives, all capable men, were in charge of Israelite affairs west of the Jordan River. They were responsible for religious and political matters.

31Jerijah was also from the clan of Hebron. In the 40th year of David's reign he found a list of all capable men from the Hebron clan at Jazer in Gilead. 32These relatives of Jerijah included 2,700 men. King David sent them east of the Jordan River to be in charge of all religious and political matters in the tribes of Reuben, Gad, and East Manasseh. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Lord, I will guard Your money, both when it's in my possession, and after I give it to You. Amen.

1 Chronicles 27

The Monthly Schedule for the Military

1Family leaders, army commanders, and other officers supervised the following

men who served as soldiers in David's army. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} Each division served for a month and included 24,000 men.

[2-3]In the first month the commander was Jashobeam son of Zabdiel, a descendant of Perez. Commanders in the other months were these: [4]second month, Dodai a descendant of Ahoah, assisted by Mikloth; [5]third month, Benaiah son of Jehoiada the priest, [6]who commanded David's elite Thirty Warriors, and was assisted by his son Ammizabad; [7]fourth month, Asahel, Joab's brother, who was followed by his son Zebadiah; [8]fifth month, Shamhuth of the Izrah clan; [9]sixth month, Ira son of Ikhesh from Tekoa; [10]seventh month, Helez from Pelon Ephraim; [11]eighth month, Sibbecai from Hushah of the Zerah clan; [12]ninth month, Abiezer from Anathoth in Benjamin; [13]tenth month, Maharai from Netophah of the Zerah clan; [14]eleventh month, Benaiah from Pirathonin Ephraim; [15]and twelfth month, Heldai from Netophah and a descendant of Othniel.

[16]The leaders of each tribe were these: Eliezer son of Zicri was over Reuben; Shephatiah son of Maacah was over Simeon; [17]Hashabiah son of Kemuel was over the Levites; Zadok was over the descendants of Aaron; [18]Elihu, David's brother, was over Judah; Omri son of Michael was over Issachar; [19]Ishmaiah son of Obadiah was over Zebulun; Jerimoth son of Azriel was over Naphtali; [20]Hoshea son of Azaziah was over Ephraim; Joel son of Pedaiah was over West Manasseh; [21]Iddo son of Zechariah was over East Manasseh; Jaasiel son of Abner was over Benjamin; [22]and Azarel son of Jehoram was over Dan.

[23]David did not list anyone 20 years of age or younger because the LORD had promised that Israel would have as many people as stars in the sky. [24]Joab, David's nephew, began to count the people but he did not finish because God was not pleased that a census was being taken. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} So the number was not written in the royal records.

[25]David selected a number of men to oversee his property. Azmareth son of Adiel was in charge of the palace storage rooms. Jonathan son of Uzziah was in charge of the storage rooms in towns, villages, and watchtowers. [26]Ezri son of Kelub was in charge of the workers who farmed David's land. [27]Shimei from Ramah was in charge of the vineyards. Zabdi from Shepham was in charge of the wine vats. [28]Baal-Hanan from Geder was in charge of the olive trees and sycamore trees in the western foothills. Joash was in charge of the supplies of olive oil. [29]Shitrai from Sharon was in charge of the cattle on the Sharon Plain; and Shaphat son of Adlai was in charge of the cattle in the valleys. [30]Obil the Ishmaelite was in charge of the king's camels, Jehdeiah from Merenoth was in charge of the king's donkeys, [31]and Jaziz the Hagrite was in charge of the king's sheep. These 12 officials were in charge of David's property.

[32]David's uncle Jonathan was a wise advisor {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} and a scribe. Jehiel son of Hacmoni taught David's sons. [33]Ahithophel was the royal advisor, and Hushai the Arkite was a close friend of David. [34]After Ahithophel,

Jehoida son of Benaiah was the king's advisor, followed by Abiathar. Joab was commander of Israel's army.

Lord, You protected Israel many different ways, just as You protect me in many different ways. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} *Thank You for a hedge of protection (Job 1:1). Amen.*

1 Chronicles 28

David Tells of Plans for the Temple

[1]David called all leaders to meet with him in Jerusalem. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} These included tribal leaders, army commanders, men in charge of his property, palace officials, and other leaders and warriors. [2]He said to them, "My people, I wanted to build a temple where the sacred chest will be located. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} I made plans to build it, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [3]but God said, 'You are not the one to build a temple in My honor, because you have killed many people in warfare.' [4]Yet God chose me to be king over Israel. He chose Judah, and from Judah he chose my father's family, and from my brothers He chose me to be king. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [5]The LORD has given me many sons, and from them He chose Solomon to be the next king after me. [6]The LORD said, 'I have chosen your son Solomon to build My temple. He will be like a son to Me and I will be like a father to him. [7]If he continues to obey Me as he now does, I will make his kingdom last forever.' {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [8]So now with God as our witness, promise me that you will obey the LORD's commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} If you do, this land will always be yours and that of your descendants.

[9]"My son Solomon, worship and obey the God of your ancestors with all your heart and do so willingly. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} Remember that the LORD knows our hearts and our motives. If you turn to Him, you will find Him. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} But if you reject Him, He will reject you. [10]Since He has chosen you to build a temple for worshiping Him, be confident and do the work." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

[11]Then David gave Solomon his plans for the temple and everything around it and in it, including the storage rooms, upstairs rooms, downstairs rooms, and the most holy place where the sacred chest and its lid, the place of substitutionary payment for sin, would be kept. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [12]David also gave Solomon the plans the LORD gave him for the courtyards, outside rooms, and rooms for storing valuable items and gifts. [13]David gave Solomon instructions about the work of the priests and Levites, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and about the articles to be used in the temple.

[14-15]David also told Solomon how much gold and silver were to be used in making various objects [16]including how much gold and silver to use for each table for the bread without yeast, how much silver for the tables made of silver, [17]and how much

gold for the meat forks, sprinkling bowls and cups, [18]and the altar of incense. David also gave Solomon the plans for the gold winged creatures which were to be on the lid of the sacred chest. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[19]David said, "The LORD showed me how the temple is to be built, and so I put this in writing. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [20]So be confident and don't get discouraged. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} The LORD will help you finish the temple {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and He will be with you. [21]The priests and Levites are ready to do their work, and many skilled workers are ready to build. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} The people and their leaders are willing to do as you tell them."

1 Chronicles 29

Offerings for the House of God

[1]Then David said to everyone there, "God chose my son Solomon to build the temple, but he is young and inexperienced. This is a big task because this building is for God, not any of us. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [2]I have gathered a lot of materials for building the temple, {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} including gold, silver, bronze, iron, wood, onyx, turquoise, various gems, and stone and marble. [3]I am also giving all of my own personal treasures of gold and silver for the temple, [4]including 110 tons of gold from Ophir, 260 tons of refined silver to decorate the temple walls, [5]and to make gold and silver objects. Who else will follow my example and give gifts for building the temple?" {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

[6]The family leaders, tribal leaders, army commanders, and men in charge of David's property all voluntarily gave gifts for the temple. [7]They gave over 190 tons of gold, about 375 tons of silver, 675 tons of bronze, and about 3,750 tons of iron. [8]People also donated precious stones, which were kept in the temple treasury guarded by Jahiel from the Levite clan of Gershom. [9]David and all the people were so glad that so much was given and so willingly. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

[10]David praised the LORD as everyone listened. "LORD, the God our ancestor Jacob worshiped, we praise You forever. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [11]You are great and powerful, and Your glory and majesty are everywhere in heaven and on the earth. You are Ruler over everything in heaven and on earth. [12]Riches and honor come from You, the Ruler of everything. You are powerful and strong, and You honor and strengthen everyone. [13]We give You our thanks, and we praise You. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

[14]"Why are we happy that we could give anything for Your temple? Everything belongs to You already, so we just gave back to You what already belongs to You. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [15]We are only visitors and foreigners here for a while, as were our ancestors. Our days on earth suddenly disappear like a shadow. [16]LORD our God, we realize that

everything we have given for Your temple has come from You. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 17You know what everyone is like inwardly and You are pleased when people are honest. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} I gave willingly, and I've seen how Your people have given to You with joy and willingly. 18LORD, the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, help Your people always to have this desire to give and keep them loyal to You. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 19Give my son Solomon the desire to obey Your laws and commands {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and to build the temple I have provided for."

20Then David said to the crowd, "Praise the LORD your God." So everyone praised the LORD, the God of their ancestors. The people bowed down {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} to honor the LORD and the king. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} 21The next day the people sacrificed 1,000 bulls, 1,000 rams, 1,000 male lambs, and drink offerings to the LORD, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} along with many other sacrifices. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 22The people ate and drank there in the LORD's presence with great joy. Then they made Solomon king {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} by pouring olive oil on his head. They also poured oil on Zadok, making him their high priest. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} 23So Solomon became king in place of his father David. He had success in everything he did, and all Israel obeyed him. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 24All the royal officials, army commanders, and David's sons were loyal to David. 25The LORD honored Solomon, and he had greater wealth and honor than David.

26David, son of Jesse, ruled over all Israel 40 years. 27He ruled for 7 ½ years in Hebron and 33 years in Jerusalem. 28He died at a good old age, having enjoyed long life, wealth, and honor. Then his son Solomon succeeded him as king. 29All the events of David's reign are recorded in the records of Samuel, Nathan, and Gad, 30including his great accomplishments and everything that happened to him in Israel and surrounding nations.

2 Chronicles

Ch 1: Prayer for Wisdom 591
Ch 2: Plans to Build the Temple 592
Ch 3: Construction Begins 593
Ch 4: The Temple Is Completed 594
Ch 5: Bringing the Ark into the Temple 595
Ch 6: Solomon Speaks to the People 596
Ch 7: The Temple Is Dedicated 598
Ch 8: Solomon's Other Accomplishments 599
Ch 9: The Queen of Sheba and Solomon 600
Ch 10: Revolt against Rehoboam 601
Ch 11: Shemaiah's Prophecy 602
Ch 12: Egypt Invades Judah 603
Ch 13: Abijah Is King 604
Ch 14: Asa Is King 605
Ch 15: The Reforms of Asa 606
Ch 16: The Treaty between Judah and Syria 607
Ch 17: Jehoshaphat Is King 608
Ch 18: Micaiah's Prophecy 609
Ch 19: Jehoshaphat's Reforms 611
Ch 20: Defeat of Ammon, Moah, and Mount Seir 611
Ch 21: Jehoram Is King 613
Ch 22: Ahaziah Is King 614

Ch 23: Joash Is King 615
Ch 24: Joash Repairs the temple 616
Ch 25: Amaziah Is King 618
Ch 26: Uzziah Is King 619
Ch 27: Jotham Is King 621
Ch 28: Ahaz Is King 621
Ch 29: Hezekiah Is King 623
Ch 30: Celebrating the Passover 624
Ch 31: Revival 626
Ch 32: Assyria Invades Judah 628
Ch 33: Manasseh Is King 629
Ch 34: Josiah Is King 631
Ch 35: The Passover Is Restored 633
Ch 36: Jehoajaz Is King 634

2 CHRONICLES

Key Words: *Temple*, also see *Sanctuary* and the *House of the LORD* (2 Chronicles 2:1).

Key Verse: "When Solomon had finished praying, fire came down from heaven and consumed the burnt offering and the sacrifices; and the glory of the LORD filled the temple" (7:1)

Theme: The word "temple" occurs more in this book than any other Old Testament book, but the temple is also described as "the house of the Lord" and "sanctuary." The chronicler saw the temple as essential for the unity of the people and the strength of the kingdom. While God used human kings to rally His people to spirituality, it was God's house where the people expressed their faith and reflected their repentance and/or worship. Therefore 2 Chronicles emphasizes the southern kingdom of Judah, and refers to the northern kingdom of Israel only when they interacted with the south. Also 1 and 2 Chronicles emphasize the priesthood more than the office of king.

The southern kingdom allowed apostasy to grow by worshiping idols. And apostasy goes hand in hand with immorality. Then God judged them and allowed Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem and the temple and take the people of God into captivity. *Lord, I will stay true to biblical doctrine; keep me from sin. I will not drift from You. Amen.*

2 Chronicles 1

Prayer for Wisdom

1 Solomon, David's son, was in full control of his kingdom because
the LORD his God was with him {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} and made him a powerful king. 2One day Solomon asked all the Israelites,
including army commanders, officials, and family leaders, 3to meet with him at the hill
at Gibeon where the tabernacle was located. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} This was
the tabernacle Moses had made in the desert. 4David had already moved the sacred chest
from Kiriath-Jearim to the tent he had set up for it in Jerusalem. {540 Worshiping God
in the Backyard, Ps. 134} 5But the bronze altar of burnt offering made by Bezalel son of
Uri and grandson of Hur was still at Gibeon in front of the tabernacle. Solomon and the

people gathered in front of the altar, [6]and Solomon sacrificed 1,000 burnt offerings there. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
[7]In a dream that night God told Solomon he could ask whatever he wanted and God would give it to him. Solomon answered, {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
[8]"You have been so kind to my father David, and now you have made me king in his place. [9]LORD God, You have made me king over these people. And there are so many of them they are like dust particles on the earth. So please keep Your promise to David [10]and make me wise so I can rule this great nation of Yours." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[11]God replied, "You could have asked Me to make you rich or famous or for you to defeat your enemies or for you to have a long life. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} But instead you asked for wisdom to rule My people. [12]So I will certainly make you wise. But I will also make you richer and more famous than any other king before or after you." [13]Then Solomon left Gibeon and went back to Jerusalem and reigned over Israel.
[14]Solomon had a military force of 1,400 chariots and 12,000 horses. He kept the horses in various cities, including Jerusalem. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [15]Silver and gold was as common as rocks. And expensive cedar was as common as wood from ordinary sycamore trees in the foot-hills. [16]Solomon bought horses from Egypt and Cilicia. [17]His merchants paid about 15 pounds of silver for an Egyptian chariot and about four pounds of silver for a horse. He sold many of the horses to the Hittite and Syrian kings.

2 Chronicles 2

Plans to Build the Temple

[1]Solomon decided to build a temple for the LORD and a palace for himself. [2]So he enlisted 70,000 men to carry building supplies, 80,000 men to cut stone in the hill country, and 3,600 men to work as foremen. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[3]He wrote this message to Hiram king of Tyre: "Years ago you sent cedar logs to my father David when he was building his palace. Could you now send me some cedar logs? [4]I am planning to build a temple where my people can worship the LORD my God. Incense and sweet spices will be burned there, sacred bread will be set out there daily, and sacrifices will be made every morning and evening and on every Sabbath, the first day of each month, and in our several religious festivals throughout the year. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} God wants us to do this continuously. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[5]"This will be a great temple because our God is greater than all other gods. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [6]Of course no one can build a temple great enough for Him, because even the highest heavens are too small for Him. Who then am I to build a temple for Him, except as a place to burn sacrifices to Him?
[7]"So please send me a worker who can work with gold, silver, bronze, and iron, who is skilled in working with purple, red,

and blue cloth, and who can work with my skilled craftsmen here in Judah and Jerusalem, men my father already chose. [8]Also send me cedar, pine, and sandalwood logs. I know your men are experts at cutting down timber. I'll send some men to work with yours, [9]because a lot of lumber will be needed for the large temple I will build. [10]I will pay your workers 25,000 bushels of wheat, 125,000 bushels of barley, 115,000 gallons of wine, and 115,000 gallons of olive oil." {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[11]Hiram sent this reply to Solomon: "Obviously the LORD loves His people because He has made you their king. [12]I praise the LORD, the God of Israel, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} who made the heavens and the earth. He has given David a wise and intelligent son who has knowledge to build a temple for the LORD and a palace for himself. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [13]As you requested, I will send you an expert craftsman named Huram-Abi. [14]His mother is an Israelite from the tribe of Dan, and his father is from Tyre. He is skilled in working with gold, silver, bronze, iron, stone, and wood, and he is an expert in weaving with purple, blue, and red cloth and linen. He is also an engraver and can work with your craftsmen and those your father David chose. [15]Go ahead and send the wheat, barley, olive oil, and wine that you mentioned. [16]We will cut down trees in Lebanon and float the logs down the Mediterranean coast to Joppa. Then you can take them from there to Jerusalem."

[17]Solomon counted all the foreign residents in Israel, just as David had done, and the total was 153,600. [18]He assigned 70,000 of them to carry building supplies, 50,000 to cut stone from the hill country, and 3,600 to be foremen.

Lord, I know the place where You are worshiped should reflect Your holiness and almighty power. May my body—the temple of the Holy Spirit—bring praise to You. Amen.

2 Chronicles 3

Construction Begins

[1]Solomon began building the temple in Jerusalem on Mount Moriah, where the LORD had appeared to David at Araunah's threshing floor. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [2]The work began in the fourth year of Solomon's reign (966 B.C.) on the second day of the second month.

[3]The foundation of the temple was 90 feet long and 30 feet wide. [4]The porch across the front of the temple was 30 feet wide and 30 feet high. The inner walls of the porch and the ceiling were covered with gold. [5]The inside walls of the temple's main room were paneled with pine and then covered with gold. Then they were decorated with palm trees and chain designs. [6]All the temple walls were decorated with beautiful jewels and gold from Parvaim. [7]Gold covered all the walls, ceilings, beams, doors, and doorframes, and designs of winged creatures were carved on the walls.

[8]The most holy place was 30 feet wide, the same as the width of the temple, and it was 30 feet deep, and its walls were covered with 23 tons of gold. [9]Each gold nail weighed about 20 ounces. The walls of the storage rooms were also covered with gold. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[10]Solomon made two figures of winged creatures for the most holy place, and he covered them with gold. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [11]The wingspan of the creatures was 30 feet. Each one had two wings, each 7 ½ feet long. One wing touched the temple wall, and the other wing touched the wing of the other creature. [12]The second figure was like the first, with one wing touching the wall and the other wing touching the first creature. [13]They formed the entrance to the most holy place. [14]Across this entrance Solomon hung a curtain of fine linen and blue, purple, and red yarn, embroidered with figures of winged creatures.
[15]At the entrance to the temple were two columns, each 52 ½ feet tall and each with a cap 7 ½ feet high. [16]The columns were decorated with chain-like designs and 100 decorative pomegranates were attached to the chains. [17]One of these columns was south of the temple entrance and was named Jakin (meaning "He Established") and the other column was north of the temple entrance and was named Boaz (meaning "In Him Is Strength").

Lord, help me organize my life so I can do more for You, and do it better. I will give attention to details; help me see Your hand in the minutia of life. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Teach me to prepare to work, long before I begin the task of work. I yield my gifts to You. Use me when and where I can do the most good for You and bring the most glory to You. Amen.

2 Chronicles 4

The Temple Is Completed

[1]Solomon made a bronze altar 30 feet long, 30 feet wide, and 15 feet high. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [2]Then he made a large water tank, 15 feet from rim to rim, which he called the "Sea." It was 7 ½ feet deep and 45 feet around. [3]Just below the tank's rim were two rows of carved bulls, 10 bulls to every 18 inches. They were all made from the same piece of bronze as the tank. [4]The tank was set on the backs of two rows of bulls carved from bronze. The bulls all faced outward, three in each of the four directions. [5]The sides of the tank were about three inches thick, and its rim was shaped like a cup and flared out like a flower petal. The tank could hold up to 17,000 gallons of water.
[6]Solomon also made 10 small bowls and put five of them on each side of the water tank. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} They were to be used for washing the items used in the burnt offerings. The tank itself was to be used only by the priests to wash their hands. [7]Solomon also had 10 gold lampstands, made according to the plans. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} He placed these inside the temple,

five on each side of the main room. [8]He also made 10 tables and placed five along the temple's south wall and five along the north wall. He also made 100 small gold sprinkling bowls.

[9]He built a courtyard for the priests and a large outer courtyard. He covered the doors to these courtyards with bronze. [10]He placed the large water tank near the southeast corner of the temple. [11]Huram made shovels, sprinkling bowls, and pans for the hot ashes. Huram completed the following items for the temple: [12]two columns, two bowl-shaped caps for the tops of the columns, [13]two rows of 200 pomegranates each on the chains on the tops of the columns, [14]small water bowls, [15]the water tank and 12 oxen under it, [16]pans for hot ashes, shovels, and meat hooks. Huram-Abi made all these out of bronze, just as Solomon had asked. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [17]Solomon had all these cast in clay molds in the Jordan Valley between Succoth and Zarethan. [18]So much bronze was used that no one ever knew the weight of it all.

[19]So Solomon had these items made for the temple: the gold altar, the tables for the bread without yeast, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [20]the gold lamps and lampstands, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [21]the floral decorations, lamps, and tongs (all of solid gold), [22]lamp snuffers, small sprinkling bowls, dishes, fire pans (all of pure gold), and the gold doors for the entrance to the most holy place and for the temple's main room.

2 Chronicles 5

Bringing the Ark into the Temple

[1]Work on the temple was finally finished. Solomon placed in the temple's storage rooms everything his father David had dedicated to the LORD, including silver and gold and various utensils. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [2]Solomon asked all the tribal and family leaders to meet in Jerusalem for the ceremony of bringing the sacred chest from the City of David to the new temple. [3]This was while everyone was in Jerusalem for the Festival of Shelters in the fall. [4]The Levites took the chest, [5]and brought it along with the tabernacle and its utensils to the temple. [6]King Solomon and the Israelites sacrificed countless numbers of sheep and oxen. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [7]Then the priests carried the sacred chest into the most holy place of the temple and placed it under the winged creatures. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [8]The wings towered the chest and its carrying poles. [9]The poles were so long they could be seen from just outside the most holy place but not from anywhere else. The poles stayed there from then on. [10]The only thing in the sacred chest were the flat stones Moses placed there at Mount Horeb (Sinai), where the Lord made an agreement with the Israelites. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[11]The priests then left the holy place and made sure they were ceremonially clean. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [12]The Levite musicians, including Asaph, Heman, Jeduthun, and their sons and

relatives, were dressed in linen robes and stood to the east of the altar of burnt offering, and were playing cymbals, harps, and lyres. They were joined by 120 priests playing trumpets. 13Together they praised the LORD by playing instruments and singing, {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} "The LORD is good. His steadfast love lasts forever." Then a cloud filled the temple. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 14The bright cloud kept the priests from their work. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

2 Chronicles 6

Solomon Speaks to the People

1Then Solomon prayed, "O LORD, You said You would live in a dark cloud. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2But I have built a great temple for You where You can live forever." {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

3Solomon turned toward the Israelites standing there and he blessed them with these words: {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 4"Praise the LORD, the God of Israel, who has kept the promise He made to my father David. He told my father, {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 5'When I brought My people out of Egypt, I had not chosen a city where a temple would be built nor had I chosen someone to be king of My people. 6But now I have chosen Jerusalem as that city, and David as that king.' {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 7My father David wanted to build a temple to honor the LORD, {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} 8but the LORD said, 'I appreciate your wanting to build a temple for Me. 9But one of your sons, not you, will build it.' {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} 10Now the LORD has kept His promise in making me king and helping me build this great temple to honor Him, the God of Israel. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} 11And I have placed the sacred chest in the temple, and in the chest is a copy of the agreement the LORD made with our ancestors."

12Solomon was standing on a platform in front of the Israelites. 13The bronze platform was 7 ½ feet square and 4 ½ feet high. It was in the center of the outer courtyard near the altar. He knelt down, {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} lifted his hands to heaven, 14and prayed, "O LORD, the God of Israel, there is no god like You in all of heaven and earth. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} You keep Your promises and You show Your unfailing love to everyone who obeys You and eagerly does what You want. 15And You kept Your promise to David Your servant. 16You also promised him that his descendants will reign over Israel if they obey You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 17So now O LORD, God of Israel, please keep this promise You made to Your servant David. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

18"But will You really live in the temple I built? Even the heavens can't contain You. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

19 Please hear this prayer I, Your servant, am
making to You. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt.
7:7} 20 Please watch over this temple day
and night, this place where You have cho-
sen to be worshiped. And may You always
hear and answer My prayers. 21 Hear the
requests of me Your servant and Your peo-
ple Israel {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
and answer from heaven and forgive us.
{173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
22 "Suppose someone accuses a person of a
crime and the accused stands in front of
the altar and says, 'I am innocent.' {225
Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 23 Hear from
heaven and decide which person is right.
Punish the guilty person, and let the inno-
cent one go free. {268 Judgmental-Praying,
Acts 5:4, 9} 24 Suppose your people Israel
sin against You, and an enemy defeats
them, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8} 25 then hear from heaven {23 Ask-
ing-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} and forgive them
{173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and
bring them back to the land You gave our
ancestors.
26 "Suppose Your people sin and You
withhold rain. Then when they pray {57
Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} and turn
from their sin, 27 hear from heaven and for-
give them, Your servants. {182 Geographi-
cal-Praying, Matt. 6:6} Teach them what is
right, and send rain on the land You gave
them. 28 If a famine {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} or plagues or crop disease or
attacks by locusts or grasshoppers come
or if enemies attack our towns, or if some
other disaster occurs, 29 if Your people
pray to You, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer,
Eph. 4:22} raising their hands toward the
temple, 30 then hear from heaven, {216
Heavy-Prayer, Matt. 11:28:30} forgive
them, and do whatever they deserve since
You know what is in every person's heart.
31 Then they will reverence You and obey
You as long as they live. {406 Reverent
Praying, Ps. 111:10}
32 "Foreigners from distant lands will hear
about You and Your power and will come
to pray at this temple. When they do, {182
Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 33 hear
from heaven and answer their prayers.
That way everyone will know of You and
will reverence You, just as Your own people
Israel do, and they will know that I built
this temple in Your honor. {192 God-Rec-
ognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
34 "Sometimes Your people will fight their
enemies. If they pray toward Jerusalem
{182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
and the temple that honors You, 35 then
hear from heaven {528 Warfare-Prayer,
Rev. 12:7} and answer their prayers and
give them victory. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps.
108:12, 13} 36 When they sin against You—
and who hasn't—You may get angry with
them and let their enemies defeat them
and take them away as captives. 37 Then
if they turn to You and admit they have
sinned, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8} 38 and they turn wholeheartedly
toward You and pray toward this land You
gave their ancestors and toward the tem-
ple I built to honor You, 39 then hear their
prayers from heaven and help them and
forgive them. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:10}
40 "Hear us when we pray to You in this
place. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph.

3:20-21} 41And come enter this resting place of Yours {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} where I have placed the sacred chest. May Your priests, O LORD God, enjoy Your salvation and be glad because You are so good. 42Don't reject Your anointed king, and remember Your steadfast love for Your servant David." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

2 Chronicles 7

The Temple Is Dedicated

1The minute Solomon finished praying, fire came from heaven and burned up the burnt offerings and sacrifices, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} and the LORD's glory filled the temple. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, come in fire to burn up my sin; make me holy. Also send Your Spirit to fill the temple of my body; make me spiritual. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} Amen.

2The priests could not go into the temple because of the LORD's glory. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 3When the people saw the fire and the glory, they fell with their faces to the ground {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and worshiped the LORD. They prayed, "God is so good. His steadfast love lasts forever." {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 4The king and the people offered sacrifices to the LORD. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 5Solomon sacrificed 22,000 oxen and 120,000 sheep, and he and the people dedicated the temple to the LORD. 6The priests were in their assigned places, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and the Levites sang, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} "His steadfast love lasts forever," and played musical instruments David had made. Opposite the Levites the priests blew trumpets as the Israelites were standing.

7Solomon dedicated the courtyard {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} in front of the temple so they could offer burnt offerings and fat from the animals for the fellowship offerings there. That's because the bronze altar was not big enough for all his burnt offerings, grain offerings, and fat from other offerings. 8For a week Solomon and the people observed the Festival of Shelters, and people came from as far away as the brook of Egypt in the south to Lebo Hamath in the north. 9On the eighth day they had a ceremony that concluded the seven-day dedication of the altar and the Festival of Shelters. 10Then at the end of the celebration everyone went home, happy because the LORD had been so good to David, Solomon, and His people Israel. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 11Solomon had now completed the building of the temple and the royal palace, as he had planned. 12Then one night the LORD appeared to Solomon {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and said, "I have heard your prayer, and I have chosen this temple as the place where you are to offer sacrifices to Me. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 13Sometimes I might hold back rain {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} or send locusts to eat your crops or

cause My people to suffer some terrible diseases. 14Then if My people will humble themselves {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and pray and turn back to Me and away from their sinful ways, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I will hear in heaven and forgive them {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and make their land fertile again. 15I will hear every prayer made here {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} 16in the temple I have chosen and dedicated so that I will be honored here. I will always watch over this place. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

17"If you, Solomon, obey Me as your father David did, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and observe all My laws and commands, 18I will keep My promise to David {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} that a descendant of his will always rule over Israel. 19But if you do not observe My decrees and commands and if you worship other gods, 20then I will pull you out of this land {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and destroy this temple which was dedicated to honor Me, and people will joke about it. 21True, the temple is great now, but people who walk by it will be horrified and will ask, 'Why did the LORD do such a terrible thing to this land and His temple?' 22And the answer will be, 'All these disasters came because His people rejected the LORD, the God of their ancestors, who rescued them from Egypt, and they worshiped other gods'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

2 Chronicles 8

Solomon's Other Accomplishments

1Twenty years after Solomon had become king and he had completed building the temple and his royal palace, 2he rebuilt the towns King Hiram of Tyre had given him, and he had Israelites move into those towns. 3And at that time he conquered the town of Hamath Zobah. 4He also rebuilt Tadmor in the desert {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} and some towns in Hamath, which he used as supply centers. 5He added walls and barred gates to the towns of Upper Beth-Horon and Lower Beth-Horon. 6He did the same thing for Baalath and other supply centers and built cities where his chariots and horses could be kept. He built whatever he wanted in Jerusalem, Lebanon, and throughout his kingdom.

7Some foreigners still living in the land were Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites. 8They were descendants of those who had not been completely forced out of the land. So Solomon used them as his labor force. 9But he did not use his own people as laborers; they served as soldiers, army commanders, and chariot drivers. 10He appointed 250 men as officers to oversee his various building projects. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

11Solomon moved his wife, Pharaoh's daughter, from the City of David to the new palace he had built for her. He did not want her to live in David's palace in the City of David {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} because the sacred chest had been there.

12Solomon offered burnt offerings to the
LORD on the altar of burnt offerings
in front of the temple. 13The number of
sacrifices followed Moses' instructions
{412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} for
the daily sacrifices and sacrifices on the
Sabbaths, the first day of each month,
and the Passover Festival, the Harvest
Festival, and the Festival of Shelters.
14Solomon assigned the priests and
the Levites their duties, following the
instructions given by his father David.
He also assigned some of the Levites to
lead music and to help the priests in their
duties. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16}
And he assigned gatekeepers to guard
the gates, following God's commands to
David. 15The priests and Levites followed
Solomon's instructions on these matters
exactly, including the storerooms. {327
Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 16So Solomon
finished everything he planned to do in
building the temple, from the laying of
the foundation to its completion. {411
Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}
17Later Solomon went to the seaport
towns of Edom. 18Hiram of Tyre had sent
Solomon some ships and experienced
sailors. They went with Solomon's sailors
to Ophir and brought back to Solomon
about 17 tons of gold.

2 Chronicles 9

The Queen of Sheba and Solomon

1When the Queen of Sheba heard how
famous Solomon was, she went to Jeru-
salem {479 Testing Response of Prayer,
James 1:12} to challenge him with some
difficult questions. She arrived with a large
number of attendants and a great caravan
of camels loaded with lots of spices, gold,
and jewels. She talked with Solomon
about many subjects. 2Solomon answered
all her questions, no matter how difficult
they were. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer,
James 3:13} 3She was amazed at how wise
he was, and also at his palace, 4all his deli-
cious food, his officials, his servants in
their uniforms, the people who served
his wine, and the burnt offerings he made
at the temple of the LORD. {470 Sur-
prise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10}
5She said to Solomon, "Everything I heard
in my country about what you have done
and your wisdom is certainly true. 6I had a
difficult time believing it until I saw it with
my own eyes. And I hadn't heard even
half of it. Your wisdom is far greater than
what I was told. {534 Wisdom-Directed
Prayer, James 3:13} 7What a privilege for
your officials to be here every day, {536
Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} listening
to your wise counsel. 8I praise the LORD,
your God, {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb.
11:5} who delights in you and has made
you king because of His love for Israel and
His desire to see this kingdom last forever.
He has made you king to rule with justice
and honesty."
9The Queen of Sheba gave Solomon 4 ½
tons of gold, large amounts of spices, and
lots of precious stones. This was the largest
gift of spices he ever received. {184 Gifts
with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}
10King Hiram's and Solomon's sailors
brought gold from Ophir and they also

brought large amounts of sandalwood and precious jewels. [11]Solomon used the sandalwood to make harps and lyres for his musicians. No one in Judah had ever seen such beautiful instruments. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [12]Solomon gave the Queen of Sheba everything she asked for, even more than she gave him. Then she and her officials returned to her country.

[13]Every year Solomon received 25 tons of gold, [14]besides what he received from merchants, traders, and the gold and silver given to him by the kings of Arabia and other leaders. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [15]Solomon made 200 gold shields, using about 7 ½ pounds of gold for each shield. [16]He also made 300 smaller shields, using about four pounds of gold for each shield. He put those 500 shields in his palace in the Lebanon Forest Hall.

[17]His huge throne was made of ivory and covered with gold. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [18]It had six steps, a gold footstool, and armrests on each side with the statue of a lion on each side. [19]Also Solomon made two lion statues on each step, 12 in all. Nothing in all the world compared with his throne. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[20]All of Solomon's drinking cups and dishes in his Lebanon Forest Hall were made of gold. They were not made of silver because silver was not considered very valuable in his day. [21]His many trading ships were manned by Huram's sailors, and every three years they brought back gold, silver, ivory, apes, and peacocks. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [22]King Solomon was richer and wiser than any other king. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [23]Kings from every nation came to meet with him and hear the wisdom God had given him. [24]Every year people who came to visit him brought him silver, gold, clothes, weapons, spices, horses, and mules. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [25]He had 4,000 stalls for his chariots and 12,000 horses that he kept in various cities and some in Jerusalem near him. [26]He ruled over all the area from the Euphrates River in the north to the land of Philistia in the south and as far as the border of Egypt. [27]Silver was as common in Jerusalem as rocks, and valuable cedar was as common as the wood of sycamore-fig trees in the foothills. [28]He bought horses from Egypt and many other countries. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[29]Everything Solomon did in his reign is written in the records of the prophet Nathan, the prophet Ahijah from Shiloh, and the prophet Iddo, who also wrote about Jeroboam son of Nebat. [30]Solomon ruled from Jerusalem for 40 years. [31]After he died, he was buried in the City of David, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his son Rehoboam became king. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

2 Chronicles 10

Revolt against Rehoboam

[1]Rehoboam went to Shechem where he was to be crowned king. [2]Jeroboam heard about this in Egypt, where he had gone to

hide from Solomon. So he returned from Egypt. 3He and many Israelites went to Rehoboam and said, 4"Your father was a hard taskmaster. {216 Heavy-Prayer, Matt. 11:28:30} We will serve you only if you lighten our workload."

5Rehoboam told them to come back in three days and he would give them an answer. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} 6He asked the elders who served his father Solomon what they thought. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 7They said, "If you do as they suggest and make their workload easier, they will serve you well." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

8But refusing their idea, Rehoboam asked for advice from the young men he knew when he was growing up. 9"What do you think I should say to these people who want me to lighten their workload?" 10His young advisers said, "Tell them 'Compared to the load I will place on you, my father's load was light. It will be like saying my little finger is bigger than his waist. 11He made you work hard, but I will make you work harder. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} He used whips on you, but I will use whips with sharp metal tips that will feel like scorpion stings.'"

12Three days later Jeroboam and all the people went to see Rehoboam in Shechem. 13He told the people he would follow the advice of the young men. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 14And he said, "My father used whips on you, but I will use whips with sharp metal tips that will feel like scorpion stings." 15He refused to do what the people wanted. Actually this was of the LORD because it carried out what God had said to Jeroboam through the prophet Ahijah.

16When the Israelites saw that Rehoboam refused to lighten their workload, they said, "We don't need to follow David and his family. Let's all go home, and Rehoboam can rule his own people." So the Israelites went home, 17but the people in Judah {123 Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Mark 10:38} accepted him as their king.

18When Rehoboam sent Hadoram, who was in charge of the labor force, to talk with the people, they stoned him to death. Then Rehoboam jumped in his chariot and hurried home to Jerusalem. 19And Israel has continued to oppose David's family in Judah.

2 Chronicles 11

Shemaiah's Prophecy

1When Rehoboam got back to Jerusalem, he called together his army of 180,000 soldiers and planned to force the 10 tribes of Israel to accept him as their king. 2But the LORD told the prophet Shemaiah 3to warn Rehoboam not to go to war against Israel because they were all his relatives, 4and to tell him to tell the soldiers to go home, {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} because this was planned by the LORD. So the soldiers all went home.

5Rehoboam built up towns for defense in Judah, including 6Bethlehem, Etam, Tekoa, 7Beth-Zur, Soco, Adullam, 8Gath, Mareshah, Ziph, 9Adoraim, Lachish, Azekah, 10Zorah, Aijalon, and Hebron. After

fortifying these cities, 11he assigned an army commander to each town, and gave them plenty of food, olive oil, and wine, 12and also spears and swords. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

13The priests and Levites living among the northern tribes supported Rehoboam. 14The Levites even left their pasturelands and property and went to Judah because Jeroboam did not want them as priests. 15He appointed his own priests to worship goat and calf idols at hilltop shrines. 16If an Israelite wanted to worship the LORD, the God of Israel, he went with the Levites to Jerusalem and {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} offered sacrifices there. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 17This strengthened the kingdom of Judah and helped support Rehoboam for the next three years as they had followed David and Solomon.

18Rehoboam married his cousin Mahalath, the daughter of David's son Jerimoth {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and Abihail, daughter of Eliab, and granddaughter of Jesse. 19Mahalath had three sons, Jeush, Shemariah, and Zaham. 20Later Rehoboam married another cousin, Maacah, Absalom's daughter. Maacah had four sons: Abijah, Attai, Ziza, and Shelomith. 21Rehoboam loved Maacah more than any of his other 18 wives or 60 concubines. He had 28 sons and 60 daughters. 22His favorite son was Abijah, son of Maacah, whom he chose to be the next king. 23Rehoboam wisely {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} put his sons in charge of the fortified cities in Judah and Benjamin. He gave whatever supplies they needed, and he found wives for each of them.

2 Chronicles 12

Egypt Invades Judah

1Just when Rehoboam's position as king was strong, he and everyone in Judah stopped obeying the LORD. 2As a result, King Shishak of Egypt attacked Jerusalem. This was in Rehoboam's fifth year as king. 3Shishak came from Egypt with 1,200 chariots and 60,000 horsemen, and a vast number of foot soldiers from Libya, Sukkoth, and Ethiopia. 4After capturing a number of fortified cities in Judah, he went on to attack Jerusalem. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 5The prophet Shemaiah went to Rehoboam and the leaders of Judah who had gone to Jerusalem to escape Shishak. Shemaiah told them, "The LORD has said that since you have left the LORD, He is leaving you to Shishak." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6The king and the leaders admitted that the LORD was right in doing this.

7The LORD saw that the people were sorry for what they had done. So He said to Shemaiah, "Since the people are sorry for their sin, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I will give them some relief. I won't let Shishak destroy them. 8But they will have to pay him annual taxes. In this way they will learn that it is better to serve Me than to serve a foreign king."{431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

9So Shishak attacked Jerusalem and took away all the treasures in the temple and the

palace, including the gold shields Solomon had made. 10Rehoboam then made bronze shields to replace the gold shields, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} and he ordered the guards of the city gate to keep them safe. 11When Rehoboam went to the temple, the guards carried the shields and then took them back to the guardroom. 12Because Rehoboam turned back to the LORD, He was no longer angry with him, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and He did not let Jerusalem be destroyed. And Judah enjoyed the LORD's blessings again.

13Rehoboam was 41 years old when he became king, and he ruled 17 years in Jerusalem, the city the LORD had chosen as the place to honor His name. His mother's name was Naamah, an Ammonite. 14Though he was a good king in some ways, in other ways he was evil because he did not obey the LORD completely. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3}

15The rest of the events in Rehoboam's reign are written in the records of the prophet Shemaiah and the seer Iddo. Rehoboam and Jeroboam were at war continually. 16When Rehoboam died, he was buried in the City of David, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his son Abijah became king.

2 Chronicles 13

Abijah Is King

1Abijah became king of Judah in Jeroboam's 18th year. 2He reigned in Jerusalem three years, and his mother was Micaiah, a daughter of Uriel of Gibeah. Abijah and Jeroboam were constantly at war. 3In one of their battles, Abijah had 400,000 soldiers, and Jeroboam had twice as many, with 800,000 men. 4In Ephraim Abijah stood on Mount Zemaraim and said, "Jeroboam and all Israel, listen. 5Don't you realize that the LORD, the God of Israel, made a covenant of salt, that is, an unbreakable promise, to David that his descendants will be on his throne forever? {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 6Yet Jeroboam, an official under Solomon, rebelled and became a traitor to Solomon. 7Then a number of rascals joined him and opposed Rehoboam when he was young and inexperienced.

8"Now you think you can stand against the LORD's kingdom, which is led by a descendant of David. True, you have a huge army, but your gods are only the gold calves that Jeroboam made for you to worship. 9You have forced out the LORD's priests and Levites and appointed your own priests. You say that whoever wants to can become a priest by offering a bull and seven rams. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20}

10"But the LORD is our God, and we have not turned from Him. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} Only Aaron's descendants can be priests, and the Levites help them. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 11They offer sacrifices and burn incense twice every day, they place fresh bread each day on the Table of the Bread without Yeast, and they light the gold lampstand. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} We follow the Lord's commands, but you

don't. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 12Obviously then God is our Leader. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} His priests will blow their trumpets and will sound the battle cry. So Israel, don't fight against the LORD, because you will not succeed." {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17}

13While Abijah was talking. Jeroboam sent some troops to attack Judah from behind. 14When Judah realized they were being attacked from the front and the rear, they prayed to the LORD for help. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} The priests blew their trumpets, 15and the soldiers of Judah shouted a battle cry. And God defeated Jeroboam and the Israelite army and they ran from Abijah and the soldiers of Judah. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 16God handed the Israelites over to Judah. 17Of Jeroboam's 800,000 soldiers, 500,000 were killed. 18Judah defeated Israel because they trusted in the LORD, the God of their ancestors. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 19Abijah chased Jeroboam's troops and captured the Israelite towns of Bethel, Jeshanah, and Ephron and surrounding villages.

20Jeroboam never regained his power during Abijah's reign. The LORD caused his death and he died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 21But Abijah grew more powerful. He married 14 wives and had 22 sons and 16 daughters. 22The rest of the events in his reign are recorded in the records of the prophet Iddo.

Lord, I will obey the Bible; I will fight spiritual warfare by biblical means, and I will trust Your power to give me victory. Amen.

2 Chronicles 14

Asa Is King

1When Abijah died, he was buried in the City of David, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his son Asa became the next king of Judah, and there was peace for 10 years. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 2Asa pleased the LORD his God because 3he destroyed the pagan altars and shrines, smashed the stone images of idols and cut down the poles used in worshiping Asherah. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 4He told everyone in Judah to worship the LORD and to obey His commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 5He also removed the hilltop shrines and incense altars in every town in Judah. So God blessed his kingdom with peace, 6and he fortified many cities in Judah. No one opposed Judah in war because of God's blessing of peace in the land. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

7Asa said to his people, "Let's build towns and fortify them with walls, towers, gates, and bars to lock the gates. We can be grateful that the land still belongs to us, and the LORD has given us peace, and that is because we have obeyed Him." The people did as Asa suggested in building and fortifying the towns. {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8}

[8]Asa had a large army of 300,000 men from Judah armed with large shields and spears, and 280,000 men from Benjamin, armed with small shields and bows. All these men were brave fighters. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
[9]Zerah an Ethiopian attacked Judah with an army of a million men and 300 chariots. [10]Asa took his soldiers to meet Zerah's army in Zephathah Valley near Mareshah. [11]Asa prayed, "LORD, no one but You can help us, {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} who are powerless, against this mighty army. Help us because we trust in You, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and we will fight this vast army to honor You. O LORD, You are our God, and so we trust that You will not let mere humans defeat You." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[12]The LORD defeated the Ethiopians. Many of them fled, [13]but Asa and his army chased them as far as Gerar. Countless Ethiopians died, and those alive could not fight back. They were crushed by the LORD. And the soldiers of Judah carried off lots of loot. [14]When they were at Gerar, they attacked all the towns in that area and the people there were terrified. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} The soldiers of Judah took lots of loot from those towns too. [15]They also attacked nearby herdsmen and took a lot of their sheep, goats, and camels, and then returned to Jerusalem.

2 Chronicles 15

The Reforms of Asa

[1]Later the Spirit of God came on Azariah son of Oded, [2]and he went to Asa and said, "Listen, Asa, and everyone in Judah and Benjamin. The LORD will be with you as long as you obey Him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} When you look for Him, you will find Him. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} But if you desert Him, He will desert you. [3]For a long time your ancestors did not worship Him and did not have a priest to teach them the law. [4]But in their trouble they turned back to the LORD, the God of Israel, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and He responded to their concerns. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
[5]In those terrible days of confusion it wasn't safe to travel anywhere. [6]Nations were destroying each other, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} and cities were fighting each other, because God was causing trouble and distress. [7]But you need to be strong and courageous so that God will bless you." {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1}
[8]Encouraged by Azariah's words, Asa removed all the terrible pagan idols from everywhere in Judah and Benjamin and from the towns he had captured in the hill country of Ephraim. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} And he repaired the altar of the LORD that was in front of the temple porch. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [9]Then he called together all the people of Judah and Benjamin, and people from the tribes of Ephraim,

West Manasseh, and Simeon who had settled among them when they saw that the LORD was with Asa. 10They met in Jerusalem in the spring of Asa's 15th year as king. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 11That day they sacrificed to the LORD 700 oxen and 7,000 sheep and goats from what they brought from Gerar. 12They promised to worship the LORD, the God of their ancestors, wholeheartedly. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 13And they agreed that anyone who did not worship the LORD, the God of Israel, would be put to death, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} whether young or old, man or woman. 14They agreed to be loyal to the LORD, and they celebrated by blowing trumpets and horns. 15Everyone was happy about this promise they made to the LORD wholeheartedly. They eagerly sought God, {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and He responded by giving them rest from all their enemies.

16Asa even got rid of his grandmother Maacah as queen mother because she had made a disgusting Asherah pole. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} Asa cut down the pole, broke it into pieces, and burned it in the Kidron Valley. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 17Asa was faithful to the LORD throughout his life, even though he didn't destroy all the hilltop shrines. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 18He placed in the temple all the silver and gold objects he and his father had dedicated to the LORD. 19Judah had peace until Asa's 35th year of his reign.

Lord, I will search for You with all my heart. I will search for You everywhere. I will go back to search for You at the place I lost You. I will keep searching, and I will not give up. Amen.

2 Chronicles 16

The Treaty between Judah and Syria

1In Asa's 36th year as king of Judah, King Baasha of Israel invaded Judah and he fortified Ramah so people couldn't leave or enter Judah. 2Asa then sent silver and gold from the temple treasury and the palace treasury to King Ben-Hadad, king of Syria, who was in Damascus at the time. Asa sent him this message: 3"Let's make a treaty just as your father and my father did. This silver and gold is a gift for you. Please break your treaty with King Baasha of Israel so that he will leave my country." 4Ben-Hadad agreed and sent soldiers to attack Israel. They captured the Israelite towns of Ijon, Dan, Abel-Beth-Maacah, and storage cities in Naphtali. 5When Baasha heard of this, he left Ramah. 6Then Asa ordered the men of Judah to carry away the stones and wood that Baasha used to build up Ramah. Asa used these materials to build up Geba and Mizpah. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

7The prophet Hanani went to Asa and told him, "You put your trust in the king of Syria instead of in the LORD; now you won't be able to destroy his army. 8Remember the vast army of the Ethiopians and Libyans with all their many chariots and

charioteers. You relied on the LORD, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and He helped you defeat them. 9The LORD knows what's going on, and He gives strength to those who obey Him completely. But because of your foolish action, you will be at war from now on. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 10Asa was so angry with Hanani for saying this that he put him in prison. And then Asa began to be cruel to some of his own people.

11The rest of the events in Asa's reign are recorded in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 12In the 39th year of his reign, Asa got a bad foot disease, but he refused to ask the LORD {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} for help and he relied only on doctors. 13Asa died in the 41st year of his reign. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 14He was buried in the tomb he had earlier carved out for himself in the City of David. The tomb was filled with sweet smelling spices and oils. The people built a huge bonfire in his honor.

Lord, I will search my heart for unbelief and disobedience. I will repent of every rebellious thing I find in my life. Then You Lord—Your eyes are perfect—search me thoroughly. Show me any resistance I have to Your will and I will remove it. Amen.

2 Chronicles 17

Jehoshaphat Is King

1Asa's son, Jehoshaphat, became king. He immediately got troops together in case Israel would attack. 2He put troops in every fortified city in Judah, as well as in towns in Ephraim that his father Asa had conquered. 3The LORD was with Jehoshaphat because he followed the example of his father's early years and did not worship images of Baal. 4He obeyed Asa's God and followed His commands and not the sinful practices of Israel. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 5So the LORD helped Jehoshaphat gain firm control of Judah. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Many people in Judah brought him gifts, so he became very wealthy, and everyone thought highly of him. 6Devoted to the LORD, he removed the hilltop shrines and destroyed the Asherah poles. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

7In his third year Jehoshaphat chose five officials and sent them to teach the law in every town in Judah. They were Ben-Hail, Obadiah, Zechariah, Nethanel, and Micaiah. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 8He sent nine Levites to go with them. They were Shemaiah, Nethaniah, Zebadiah, Asahel, Shemiramoth, Jehonathan, Adonijah, Tobijah, and Tob-Adonijah. Also two priests, Elishama and Jehoram, were sent. 9Traveling from town to town, they taught the people from the book of the law of the LORD, which they carried with them. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7}

10The nations around Judah were afraid of Judah, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} so no nation fought against Jehoshaphat. 11Some Philistines brought him silver and gold as tribute money and the Arabs brought him 7,700 rams

and 7,700 male goats. 12As Jehoshaphat became more powerful, he built fortresses and storage cities, 13where he kept numerous supplies. He also stationed some experienced soldiers in Jerusalem. 14These soldiers were grouped according to family clans. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} Adnah was the commander of 200,000 troops, organized in units of 1,000 each. 15Next was Jehohanan, commander of 280,000 troops. 16Under Amasiah son of Zicri were 200,000 troops. 17Eliada, a brave soldier, commanded 200,000 troops from Benjamin, equipped with bows and shields. 18Next was Jehozabad who was commander of 180,000 troops. 19These were the troops in Jerusalem besides those Jehoshaphat placed in fortified cities throughout Judah.

Lord, forgive me for trusting in religious symbols, or church services, or music, or anything that takes Your place. Forgive me. Cleanse me by the blood of Christ. I look to You, Lord, for direction. Amen.

2 Chronicles 18

Micaiah's Prophecy

1Jehoshaphat had great wealth and was highly respected. He made an alliance with Ahab king of Israel by having his son marry the daughter of Ahab, 2who prepared a big feast to honor him and his officials by butchering many sheep and oxen. Then Ahab suggested that Jehoshaphat go with him to attack Ramoth-Gilead. 3He asked, "Will you join me in fighting against Ramoth-Gilead?" Jehoshaphat replied, "Of course. We are all Israelites, so my troops can join yours in battle. 4But first let's see what the LORD says about this idea." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

5So Ahab brought together 400 prophets and asked them if he and Jehoshaphat should attack Ramoth-Gilead. They all said, "Sure. Go ahead and God will give you a great victory." {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} 6But Jehoshaphat asked, "Isn't there a prophet of the LORD here so we can ask him?" {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 7Ahab said, "Yes, there is one prophet of the LORD. But I hate him because he always has bad news for me. He is Micaiah son of Imlah." Jehoshaphat said, "Wait a minute. There's no need to talk like that. Let's see what he says." 8So Ahab told an official to go get Micaiah son of Imlah right away.

9Ahab and Jehoshaphat were dressed in their royal robes and were seated on their thrones at the threshing floor near the gate of Samaria, listening to Ahab's prophets prophesying. 10One of them, Zedekiah, son of Kenaanah, made some horns out of iron and said, "Ahab, the LORD says that you will kill the Syrians like a bull with horns like these." 11All the other prophets agreed that Ahab should go attack the Syrians at Ramoth-Gilead and the LORD would give him a great victory.

12The messenger who went to get Micaiah said to him, "All Ahab's prophets are promising him victory. So I suggest you agree with them." 13Micaiah replied,

"I'll say only what the LORD tells me to say." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 14When he arrived in Samaria, Ahab asked him if they should go fight the Syrians at Ramoth-Gilead. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Micaiah replied facetiously, "Sure. Go ahead. You'll have a great victory."

15Ahab said, "I've told you over and over to tell me only the truth. So is that what the LORD really said?" 16Micaiah responded, "In a vision I saw all Israelites wandering on the hills like sheep without a shepherd. And the LORD said to me, 'Their master has been killed so the troops may as well go home.'" 17Ahab said to Jehoshaphat, "See. I told you he would give me nothing but bad news." 18Then Micaiah continued, "I saw the LORD on his throne {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} with many angels around him. 19And the LORD said, 'Can anyone trick Ahab into going to Ramoth-Gilead so he will be killed there?' Many suggestions were given, 20but finally a spirit said, 'I can do it.' When the LORD asked how, 21the spirit said, 'I will make all his prophets lie to him.' {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} The LORD said, 'Okay. Go ahead and do it.' 22So the LORD has made all your prophets lie to you, telling you the opposite of what will actually happen." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

23Zedekiah, son of Kenaanah, walked up to Micaiah and slapped him in the face, and he said to Micaiah, "What makes you think the Spirit of the LORD left me to speak to you?" {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} 24Micaiah replied, "You'll find out when you have to hide in the back room of a house." 25Immediately Ahab ordered, "Arrest Micaiah and take him back to Amon, the city's governor, and to my son Joash. 26Tell them I said to put him in prison and give him only bread and water until I get back safely from battle." 27Micaiah said, "If you return safely, then the LORD hasn't spoken through me." Then he told everyone there, "Remember what I said."

28So King Ahab and King Jehoshaphat went to Ramoth-Gilead, 29and Ahab said, "As we go into battle, I'll disguise myself {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} so no one will recognize me, but you, Jehoshaphat, wear your royal robes." So Ahab disguised himself and they went into battle. 30The king of Syria told his charioteers, "Attack only the king of Israel." 31Then when the charioteers saw Jehoshaphat in his royal robes, they thought he was Ahab, and they attacked him. Jehoshaphat prayed, and God helped him by turning the attack away. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 32So the LORD caused the Syrian charioteers to stop chasing him.

33A Syrian soldier shot an arrow without even aiming, and the arrow hit Ahab between two pieces of his armor. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Ahab told his chariot driver, "Get me out of here. I've been hit." 34The fighting lasted all day, and Ahab propped himself up in his chariot so he could see the Syrians. Then as the sun was setting, he died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

2 Chronicles 19

Jehoshaphat's Reforms

[1]When King Jehoshaphat got home in Jerusalem, [2]the prophet Jehu son of Hanani went to meet him. He asked the king, "Why did you try to help wicked Ahab and why did you love the people of Israel who hate the LORD? You have caused the LORD to be very angry with you. [3]But a good thing you did was to get rid of the Asherah poles and you are trying to obey the LORD." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}
[4]Jehoshaphat lived in Jerusalem, but he went to visit his people, traveling from Beersheba to the hill country of Ephraim, and encouraging them to trust and obey the LORD. [5]He appointed judges in each of Judah's fortified cities, [6]and he told them "Make your court decisions carefully, keeping in mind that in your decisions you are to please the LORD, not people, and He will be with you in each case. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[7]Remember the LORD in every decision, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} and judge fairly, remembering that He does not tolerate injustice or partiality or the taking of bribes."
[8]Jehoshaphat also appointed some Levites, priests, and clan leaders to settle cases in Jerusalem related to the law and civil matters. [9]He told them, "Always reverence the LORD and serve Him faithfully and wholeheartedly. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [10]When a case is brought to you from fellow citizens in other towns, whether a case of murder or some other violation of God's laws, commands, and regulations, warn the person not to sin against the LORD {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} so that He won't be angry with you. Following these instructions will keep you from sinning.
[11]"In religious cases Amariah the high priest will have the final word, and in civil cases Zebadiah son of Ishmael, of the tribe of Judah, will have the final word. The Levites will assist you {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} in making sure justice is carried out. So be brave, and I pray the LORD will always help you do what is right." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, I want Your presence for every decision I make just as judges had to do in Jehoshaphat's time. Guide me to always make right decisions in the right way. Amen.

2 Chronicles 20

Defeat of Ammon, Moab, and Mount Seir

[1]The Moabites, Ammonites, and some Meunites went to war against Jehoshaphat. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [2]Messengers told him, "A vast army is coming from Edom across from the Dead Sea. They are already at Hazazon-Tamar. (This was another name for En-Gedi.) [3]Alarmed by this news, Jehoshaphat asked the LORD {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} about this, and he told the people to go without food for a while to show their sorrow. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt.

6:16-19} 4The people went to Jerusalem from every town in Judah to ask for the LORD's help. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 5Then Jehoshaphat stood before the people in front of the temple courtyard, 6and prayed this prayer: "You, O LORD, the God of our ancestors, are the God in heaven and You rule over all nations in the world. Because of Your power no one can defeat You. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 7O God, You forced out the inhabitants of this land and gave it to the descendants of Abraham, Your friend. 8Our ancestors lived here and built a temple to honor You. They said that 9if war or plagues or famines hit them, they would stand here at the temple {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and pray for Your help, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and You would hear their prayer and save them.

10"Now the armies of Ammon, Moab, and Edom are attacking us. Those are nations You would not allow our ancestors to invade when they came from Egypt. So our ancestors did not destroy them. 11Now they are coming to take back the land You gave us as an inheritance. 12O God, please judge them, because we can't possibly defeat them ourselves. We don't know what to do, so we are looking to You for help." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

13While every man, woman, and child stood there before the LORD, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 14the Spirit of the LORD came on Jahaziel son of Zechariah, grandson of Benaiah, great-grandson of Jeiel, great-great-grandson of Mattaniah, a Levite and descendant of Asaph. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} 15Jahaziel said, "Jehoshaphat and all of you in Judah, God says, 'Don't be afraid or discouraged because of this vast army. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} The battle is God's, not yours, {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 16Here's what you need to do. Tomorrow these enemy armies will be going over the Ziz Pass and on to the gorge in the Jeruel Desert. 17You won't have to fight this battle. Just take your positions and watch the LORD rescue you {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} from this enemy. Don't be afraid or discouraged. Just go out there tomorrow, and the LORD will go with You."

18Jehoshaphat bowed to the ground and worshiped the LORD, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and all the people of Judah and Jerusalem did the same. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 19Some Levites of the Kohath and Korah clans stood up and praised the LORD with loud voices. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

20Early in the morning they all left for the Tekoa Desert. Jehoshaphat said, "Listen, you people. Trust in the LORD {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} and believe what His prophets have said, and you will succeed." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 21After Jehoshaphat checked with the people, he appointed some men to march ahead of the army and praise the LORD {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} for His holiness and to say, "Give thanks to the LORD, for His steadfast love lasts forever." {230 Hymn-Prayer,

Col. 3:16} [22]As these men began to sing, the LORD caused the soldiers of Ammon, Moab, and Edom to fight against each other. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [23]Not one soldier of the enemy had escaped. The Ammonites and Moabites completely defeated the Edomites, and then they started killing each other.

[24]When the men of Judah arrived at the place that overlooks the desert, they saw only dead bodies there. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [25]So Jehoshaphat and his men carried off a lot of loot, including equipment, clothing, and many valuable articles. In fact it took them three days to collect it all. [26]On the fourth day they assembled in the Beracah Valley {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} (meaning "Valley of Blessing") where they praised the LORD.

[27]Jehoshaphat led all the men of Judah and Jerusalem back to Jerusalem. They were all so happy because the LORD had given them victory over those enemies. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [28]When they reached the city, they went straight to the temple, playing harps, lutes, and trumpets. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [29]All other nations were afraid of the LORD when they heard how He defeated Israel's enemies. [30]Jehoshaphat's kingdom enjoyed peace because the LORD was with him. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[31]When Jehoshaphat became king of Judah, he was 35 years old and he reigned for 25 years. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} His mother was Azubah daughter of Shilhi. [32]He obeyed the LORD as his father Asa had done. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [33]However, he did not get rid of all the hilltop shrines, and many people were still not serving the LORD faithfully.

[34]Other events in Jehoshaphat's reign are recorded in the records of Jehu, son of Hanani, and the book of the Kings of Israel. [35]When Jehoshaphat was king of Judah, he made an alliance with Ahaziah, king of Israel, a wicked king. [36]They agreed to build together a fleet of ships at Ezion-Geber. [37]Hearing of this, the prophet Eliezer son of Dodavahu of Mareshah told Jehoshaphat, "Because you made an alliance with Ahaziah, the LORD will destroy these ships." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} And that's what happened. The ships were destroyed and never sailed.

Lord, I want Your presence for every decision I make just as judges had to do in Jehoshaphat's time. Guide me to always make right decisions in the right way. Amen.

2 Chronicles 21

Jehoram Is King

[1]After Jehoshaphat died, he was buried with his ancestors in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} And Jehoram his son became the next king. [2]Jehoram had six sons, Azariah, Jehiel, Zechariah, Azariahu, Michael, and Shephatiah. [3]Jehoshaphat, their father, gave each of them silver and gold and other valuable items, and he put them in charge of the fortified cities in Judah. Jehoshaphat

gave the kingdom of Judah to Jehoram because he was his firstborn son. 4But when he began his reign, he had all his brothers and some national leaders killed. 5He was 32 years old when he became king, and he reigned for eight years.
6Jehoram, king of Judah, followed the sinful example of the kings of Israel including Ahab's family. And he married a daughter of Ahab. He did evil in the sight of the LORD. 7However, the LORD was not willing to end David's dynasty because of His promise {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} that some of his descendants would always rule in Judah.
8Edom rebelled against Judah and set up their own king. 9So Jehoram went to Edom with his officers and all his chariots. The Edomites surrounded his army and chariot commanders, but somehow Jehoram got away at night. 10Edom has been free from Judah ever since then, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} and even the town of Libnah rebelled against Judah. All this resulted from Jehoram turning from the LORD, the God of his ancestors. 11He also built hilltop shrines in Judah and led the people to worship pagan gods.
12One day the prophet Elijah wrote this to Jehoram: "This is what the LORD, the God of your ancestor David, says: 'You have not followed the good example of your father Jehoshaphat or your grandfather Asa. 13You have been as sinful as the kings of Israel, and you have led the people of Jerusalem and Judah to worship idols just as Ahab did. And you have murdered your own brothers, men who were even better than you. 14So now the LORD will punish you, your family, and the people in your kingdom and destroy everything you own. 15You will have a painful stomach disease that will cause your bowels to come out."
16Then the LORD caused the Philistines and the Arabs who lived near the Mushites to get angry with Jehoram. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 17They attacked Judah and carried off everything valuable in the palace, and his sons and wives. Only his youngest son Amaziah was not taken. 18Then, just as Elijah had said, the LORD struck Jehoram with a severe stomach disease. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 19After two years the disease caused his bowels to come out, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and he died in awful pain. The people did not build a bonfire for him as they did for his ancestors. 20Jehoram was 22 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem eight years. No one was sorry when he died. He was buried in the City of David but not with Judah's other kings. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

2 Chronicles 22

Ahaziah Is King

1Some Arabs had killed all of King Jehoram's sons except the youngest, Amaziah. So Amaziah was made king. 2He was 22 years old when he began to reign, and he reigned one year. His mother was Athaliah, a granddaughter of King Omri of Israel. 3She influenced Amaziah to sin, and he was wicked just like Ahab

and his father. 4After Ahaziah's father Jehoram died, Ahaziah followed the counsel of Ahab's advisers, and this led to his downfall.
5Ahab's advisers suggested he make an alliance with Jehoram, Ahab's son. Together they went to fight against King Hazael of Syria at Ramoth-Gilead, and the Syrians wounded Jehoram. 6So he went to Jezebel to recover. And Amaziah king of Judah went to visit him there. 7Through this visit God brought about Ahaziah's downfall. Amaziah and Jehoram went to meet Jehu, grandson of Nish, and God had already told Jehu to kill Ahab's relatives. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 8While Jehu was killing them, he ran across some of Judah's leaders and Ahaziah's nephews and Jehu killed them all. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9He and his men went to find Amaziah, and they captured him while he was hiding in Samaria. Jehu's men brought Amaziah to Jehu, who put him to death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} They buried Amaziah only because they respected Jehoshaphat, who served the LORD with all his heart. No one was left then in Ahaziah's family to become king of Judah.
10When Athaliah heard that her son Amaziah {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} was dead, she decided to kill every relative of his. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 11But Ahaziah's sister Jehosheba, daughter of King Jehoram and wife of Jehoiada the priest, took Ahaziah's infant son Joash away from the other children who were about to be killed. She hid Joash and his personal servant. That way Athaliah could not murder him. 12He hid in the temple for six years while Athaliah ruled as queen of Judah.

2 Chronicles 23

Joash Is King

1After Joash had hidden in the temple for six years, Jehoiada decided something had to be done. So he got the support of five army officers: Azariah son of Jeroham, Ishmael son of Jehohanan, Azariah son of Obed, Maaseiah son of Adaiah, and Elishaphat son of Zicri. 2They went throughout the towns of Judah and met with Levites and clan leaders. They all went to Jerusalem, 3and at the temple they agreed to help Joash. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
Jehoiada said to them, "Joash will be our next king, because the LORD promised that a descendant of David will always be king. 4So here is what I suggest we do. A third of your priests and Levites are to guard the temple gates on the Sabbath, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 5a third are to guard the palace, and a third are to guard the Foundation Gate. The others will guard the temple courtyards. 6No one is to enter the temple except the priests and Levites on duty {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} because they are the only ones who will have made themselves ceremonially clean. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} The others are to follow the LORD's instructions and stay outside. 7The Levites must protect King Joash, keeping close to him wherever he goes.

And they must have their weapons handy, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} ready to kill any unauthorized person who enters the temple. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
8The Levites and the people of Judah followed Jehoiada's orders. Each commander had his guards with him, including those going off duty, and those coming on duty. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9Jehoiada gave the commanders swords and shields that once belonged to David and were stored in the temple. 10He had the guards with their weapons positioned around the king and in positions on the north and south sides of the temple and by the altar. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 11Jehoiada and his sons brought Joash outside, placed a crown on his head, and gave him a copy of God's law. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} They poured oil on his head, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} and everyone shouted, "Long live the king!"
12When Athaliah who was the daughter of Ahab, heard the noise of the people running and praising the king, she went to the temple to see what was happening. 13She saw the king standing by the column at the temple entrance, surrounded by officers and trumpeters and people rejoicing and blowing trumpets. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} Singers with musical instruments were leading the people in praise. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} Athaliah tore her clothes and shouted, "Treason! You betrayed me." 14Jehoiada told the army commanders, "Take her out of the temple, and kill anyone who tries to rescue her. Don't kill her in the temple." 15So they grabbed her and took her to the horse gate by the palace, and killed her there. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
16Jehoiada asked the king and the people to be faithful to the LORD. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 17The people then went to the Baal temple and tore it down. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} They smashed the pagan altars and idols, and killed Mattan the Baal priest. 18Then Jehoiada put in charge of the temple the Levitical priests, as David had instructed them to do. He also told them to present burnt offerings to the LORD, as Moses wrote, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and to sing as David instructed. 19He also told the gatekeepers at the temple gates to keep out anyone who was ceremonially unclean. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}
20Then the army commanders, nobles, rulers, and the people led the king from the temple through the Upper Gate and into the palace, and Joash sat on the throne. 21So all the people rejoiced {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} because Athaliah was killed, and Jerusalem was peaceful. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

2 Chronicles 24

Joash Repairs the Temple

1When Joash became king, he was seven years old, and he reigned in Jerusalem 40 years. His mother was Zibiah, from Beersheba. 2While Jehoiada the priest was alive, Joash pleased the LORD. 3Jehoiada

chose two wives for Joash, and he had sons and daughters.
4Later Joash decided to repair the temple. 5So he told the priests and Levites to go right away to the towns of Judah and collect annual taxes to repair the temple. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} But the Levites didn't hurry to follow his orders. 6So he asked Jehoiada the high priest, "Why haven't you sent the Levites out to collect the taxes? As you know, years ago Moses required this tax of our people for the upkeep of the temple."
7Some people who followed wicked Queen Athaliah had broken into the temple and stole sacred objects to use in worshiping Baal. 8So now Joash gave instructions for a box to be made and placed outside the temple gate. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 9Then he sent word throughout Judah telling people to bring their temple tax, just as Moses had required their ancestors to do in the desert. 10The people and leaders agreed and brought their money and put it in the box. 11When the box was full, the Levites took it to the king's officials. Then the court secretary and an officer of the chief priest counted the money and took the box back to the temple. This happened every day, and soon a large amount of money was collected. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 12The king and Jehoiada gave the money to the construction foreman, who hired masons and carpenters to repair the temple of the LORD. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} They also hired men who were experts in working with iron and bronze.
13The foremen worked hard, and the workers made good progress. The temple then looked just like its original design. 14When they finished the repairs, they brought the rest of the money to Joash and Jehoiada, who then used the money to make utensils for the temple and dishes and various gold and silver objects. Burnt offerings were sacrificed continually in the temple during Jehoiada's lifetime. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
15Jehoiada had a full life and died at age 130. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 16He was buried with the kings in the City of David because he had done so much good for the people, the LORD, and the temple. 17After Jehoiada's death the leaders of Judah talked with Joash 18and encouraged him to let them worship Asherah poles and pagan idols. God was very angry because of this sin. 19The LORD sent prophets to bring them back to the LORD, but they would not listen.
20Then the Spirit of God came on Zechariah, Jehoiada's son. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} He said to the people, "Why do you destroy the LORD's commands? You can't succeed. You have deserted the LORD, and now He will desert you." 21The leaders planned to kill Zechariah, and even King Joash ordered the people to stone him in the temple courtyard. 22Joash forgot that Zechariah's father had been a good friend. As Zechariah was dying, his last words were, "May the LORD see what you are doing and hold you accountable." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

23In the spring of the following year
the Syrian army marched against Joash,
invaded Judah and Jerusalem, and killed
all the nation's leaders. They sent lots
of loot back to their king in Damascus.
24The Syrians had only a small army, but
the LORD helped them defeat Judah's
much larger army. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} This defeat against Judah and
Joash was because Judah had deserted the
LORD, the God of their ancestors.
25The Syrians left Joash severely wounded.
His own officers decided to kill him
because he had murdered the son of Je-
hoiada the priest. They killed him as he
lay in his bed. {99 Death-Facing Prayer,
Ps. 88:3} He was buried in the City of
David, but not with the other kings. 26The
assassins were Zabad son of an Ammonite
woman named Shimeath, and Jehozabad
son of a Moabite woman named Shomer.
27The story of Joash's sons, and the proph-
ecies about him, and the details of his
restoring the temple are written in the his-
tory of the book of the Kings. When Joash
died, his son Amaziah was the next king.

2 Chronicles 25

Amaziah Is King

1Amaziah was 25 years old when he
became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem
29 years. His mother was Jehoaddin from
Jerusalem. 2He did what was right before
the LORD, but not wholeheartedly. {47
Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
3He killed the two men who had killed his
father. 4But he did not kill their children
because in the law of Moses {327 Obedi-
ent-Prayer, Col. 2:6} God had said that
parents are not to be put to death for their
children's sins, and children are not to be
put to death for their parents' sins.
5Amaziah called together the people of
Judah and appointed commanders of
thousands and of hundreds. {160 Fami-
ly-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} Then he
counted the men 20 years of age and older
and found there were 300,000 men able to
fight with spears and shields. 6He also paid
almost four tons of silver to hire 100,000
soldiers from Israel. 7A man of God said to
him, "O king, don't hire these troops from
Israel. Why? Because the LORD will not
help any of the people from the northern
kingdom. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor.
6:17} 8Even if you fight well, He will let
your enemies defeat you. He has the abil-
ity to help or defeat any army."
9Amaziah said to the man of God, "But
what should I do about the silver I paid to
hire troops from Israel?" The man of God
answered, "The LORD will give you back
a lot more than that." {409 Reward-Prayer,
1 Cor. 3:14} 10So Amaziah sent the troops
from Israel back home. But this made
them angry with Judah, and they went
home furiously mad.
11Then Amaziah led his soldiers to the
Salt Valley and killed 10,000 Edomites.
12His soldiers captured another 10,000,
took them to the top of a high cliff, and
pushed them over the side. They were all
killed on the rocks below. 13Meanwhile the
troops that Amaziah sent home to Israel
raided towns in Judah between Samaria

and Beth-Horon, killed 3,000 people, and carried off lots of loot.
14When Amaziah returned to Jerusalem after defeating the Edomites, he brought with him the idols worshiped by the people of Edom. He set them up as his own gods and bowed to them, and offered sacrifices to them. 15This made the LORD very angry, and He sent a prophet to Amaziah with these words: "Why have you worshiped these gods who couldn't even save their own people from your attack?" {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 16Amaziah interrupted him and said, "Nobody asked you to be my advisor! Don't say another word, or I'll have you killed." So the prophet stopped. But then he said, "I know God will punish you because you sinned in worshiping these idols and now you have ignored my warning."
17Amaziah talked with his advisers and then sent a challenge to Israel's king Jehoash, Jehu's grandson, "Come face me in battle." 18Jehoash replied, "A small thornbush in Lebanon wrote to a big cedar tree, 'Give your daughter to be my son's wife.' But a wild animal crushed the thornbush. 19You are so proud because you defeated Edom. But you should just stay home. Otherwise you and Judah will be destroyed." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
20However, Amaziah wouldn't listen because God was planning to punish him for worshiping the gods of Edom. 21So Jehoash's army attacked Amaziah's army at Beth-Shemesh. 22Israel's army chased Judah's army, and the soldiers ran home.
23Jehoash captured Amaziah at Beth-Shemesh and took him to Jerusalem, and he broke down 600 feet of the city wall from the Ephraim Gate to the Corner Gate. 24He carried off from the temple all the gold and silver utensils that had been under the care of Obed-Edom. He also carried off treasures from the king's palace, took hostages, and went back to Samaria. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
25King Amaziah of Judah lived 15 years after King Jehoash of Israel died. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 26The other events in his reign are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 27When Amaziah started disobeying the LORD, some people planned to kill him. Hearing of this, he fled to Lachish, but some men went after him and killed him there. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 28They brought his corpse back to Jerusalem on a horse and buried him with his ancestors in the City of David.

Lord, I will do my best to keep away from the snares of evil men. Thank You for helping me see people as they really are. Protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

2 Chronicles 26

Uzziah Is King

1The people of Judah then made 16-year-old Uzziah, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} Amaziah's son, as their king. 2He recaptured and rebuilt Elath. 3He ruled in Jerusalem 52 years. His mother

was Jecoliah from Jerusalem. 4He obeyed the LORD as his father Amaziah had done. 5Zechariah was Uzziah's spiritual adviser, and as long as Zechariah was alive, Uzziah sought the LORD and God gave him success. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

6Uzziah fought against the Philistines and broke down the walls of Gath, Jabneh, and Ashdod. He rebuilt towns around Ashdod and other areas of Philistia. 7God helped him defeat not only the Philistines but also the Arabs who lived in Gur Baal and the Meunites. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 8He even required the Ammonites to pay taxes to him. People as far away as Egypt heard about Uzziah because he had become very powerful.

9In Jerusalem he built fortified towers at the Corner Gate, the Valley Gate, and at the corner angle in the wall. 10He also built towers in the desert and dug many cisterns to catch rainwater for his livestock in the foothills and flatlands. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} He loved farming and so he hired people to look after his crops and vineyard in the foothills and fertile valleys.

11Uzziah had a well-trained army, always ready for battle. Jeiel, the army secretary, and his assistant, Maaseiah, kept track of their numbers, and they served under Hananiah, a royal official. 12Clan leaders who commanded those soldiers totaled 2,600. 13And under their command were 307,500 trained soldiers, powerful troops who were to protect the king against his enemies. 14Uzziah gave the soldiers shields, spears, helmets, armor, bows, and stones for slings. 15Some of his skillful men made machines that could shoot arrows and large stones. He set these up at his defense towers and at the corners of Jerusalem's walls. He became very powerful {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and was known in many countries.

16Unfortunately Uzziah became proud of his power, and this led to his downfall. One day he sinned against the LORD by entering the temple to burn incense on the altar of incense. 17Azariah the priest and 80 other priests followed him in 18and said, "Uzziah, this isn't right for you to burn incense to the LORD. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} This is to be done only by the priests who are Aaron's descendants. You should leave the temple. You have sinned and the LORD God will not bless you for this."

19Standing next to the altar ready to burn the incense, Uzziah became very angry. But just then leprosy suddenly appeared on his forehead. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 20When Azariah the high priest and the 80 priests looked at the king, they saw his leprosy and told him to leave the temple immediately. In fact Uzziah was eager to get out because he knew the LORD had caused the leprosy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 21He had leprosy the rest of his life. He was not allowed in the temple, and because of his leprosy he could not live in even his own palace. That is why his son Jotham lived there and ruled in Uzziah's place.

22The other events of Uzziah's reign were recorded by the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz. 23Because of his leprosy, when he

died he could not be buried with the other kings in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Instead he was buried in a nearby cemetery the kings owned. Then his son Jotham became the next king.

2 Chronicles 27

Jotham Is King

[1]Jotham was 25 years old when he became king, and he ruled from Jerusalem for 16 years. His mother was Jerusha, daughter of Zadok. [2]He obeyed the LORD, as his father Uzziah did, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} but he did not enter the temple as Uzziah had done. But the people of Judah continued their sinful ways. [3]Jotham rebuilt the Upper Gate of the temple and did a lot of repairs on the city wall at the Ophel Hill. [4]He built towns in the hills of Judea and made fortresses and defense towers in the wooded areas.

[5]Jotham attacked and defeated the Ammonites. For each of three years the Ammonites paid him 7,500 pounds of silver, 50,000 bushels of wheat, and 50,000 bushels of barley. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [6]Jotham became a powerful king because he was faithful to the LORD. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[7]The other events in Jotham's reign, including his wars and other activities, are recorded in the book of the Kings of Israel and Judah. [8]After he ruled for 16 years in Jerusalem, [9]he died at the age of 41 and was buried in the City of David. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} His son Ahaz became the next king.

2 Chronicles 28

Ahaz Is King

[1]Ahaz was 20 years old when he became king, and he reigned in Jerusalem 16 years. He did not do what pleased the LORD as his ancestor David had done. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [2]He followed the example of the kings of Israel and also made idols for worshiping Baal. [3]He offered sacrifices in the Hinnom Valley, even sacrificing his own sons in the fire. He copied the awful practices of the nations the LORD had forced out of the land. [4]He offered sacrifices and burned incense at the pagan hilltop shrines and under every large tree.

[5]Therefore the LORD allowed the king of Syria to defeat Ahaz and to take many people of Judah as captives to Damascus, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and the Syrian army killed many of Judah's soldiers. [6]Also Israel's king Pekah, son of Remaliah, killed 120,000 of Judah's soldiers in one day, all because Judah had turned from the LORD, the God of their ancestors. [7]Zicri, a soldier from Ephraim, killed Maaseiah, the king's son; Azrikam, the official in charge of the palace; and Elkanah, the king's second-in-command. [8]Israel's soldiers captured 200,000 wives, sons, and daughters in Judah.

[9]The prophet Oded in Samaria met Israel's army as they were on their way back from Judah. He said, "The LORD, the God

of your ancestors, let you defeat Judah because He was angry with them. But you have gone too far, killing many of them without any mercy. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 10If you make slaves of the people of Judah, you will be as guilty as they are against the LORD your God. 11Send back these prisoners; after all, they are your relatives. The LORD is very angry with you."

12Four of Israel's leaders arrived just then. They were Azariah son of Jehohanan, Berekiah son of Meshillemoth, Jehizkiah son of Shallum, and Amasa son of Hadlai. They agreed with Oded and said to the men returning from battle, 13"Don't bring these prisoners here. That will add to our guilt, which is already great, and the LORD is already angry with us." 14So the soldiers let the prisoners go and they handed back all the loot they had taken. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 15The four men took clothes from the loot and gave them to the prisoners who had nothing to wear. They gave them clothes and sandals and something to eat and drink. They also gave them some olive oil to put on their wounds. They put on donkeys the prisoners who were too weak to walk. And they led all the prisoners back to Jericho, the City of Palms, and went back to Samaria. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}

16Later King Ahaz wrote to the king of Assyria, asking for help. 17That's because the Edomites had again attacked Judah and took some people of Judah as captives. 18And the Philistines had attacked towns in the foothills and in the Southern Desert. They conquered and occupied Beth-Shemesh, Aijalon, Gederoth, Soco, Timnah, and Gimzo and their surrounding villages. 19The LORD was punishing Judah in this way because Ahaz had been encouraging the people to sin and he was very unfaithful to the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 20Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, went to see Ahaz, but instead of helping him, he gave him trouble. 21To try to please Tiglath-Pileser Ahaz took some valuable things from the temple, the palace, and his officials' homes and gave them to him, but that did not help.

22With all this trouble Ahaz became even more unfaithful to the LORD. 23He offered sacrifices to the gods of Damascus who had defeated him, for he said to himself, "These gods helped the kings of Syria, so I will sacrifice to them so they will help me." But this led to the downfall of Ahaz and the destruction of Judah.

24Ahaz took the furnishings in the temple and broke them into pieces. He shut the doors of the temple and set up altars at every street corner in Jerusalem. 25In every town in Judah he built hilltop shrines for offering sacrifices to foreign gods. All this made the LORD, the God of his ancestors, very angry. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

26The other events in Ahaz's reign and all his ways are written in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. 27Ahaz died and was buried in the City of David but not in the tombs of the kings. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Then his son Hezekiah became king.

Lord, I will examine my life to see if I'm compromising my walk with You or my worship of You. Open my blind eyes to see if I have compromised anything at all. I will repent and give You first place in every area of life. Amen.

2 Chronicles 29

Hezekiah Is King

1Hezekiah was 25 years old when he became king in Jerusalem, and he reigned 29 years. His mother was Abijah, daughter of Zechariah. 2He pleased the LORD just as David did. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 3In the first month of his reign he opened the temple doors and repaired them. 4He brought in the priests and Levites to the east temple courtyard, 5and he said, "We need to dedicate ourselves and the temple to the LORD and to remove all defiled things from the temple. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} 6Our ancestors were unfaithful to the LORD and sinned against Him and turned from Him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 7They shut the temple doors and snuffed out the lamps. They stopped burning incense and offering sacrifices to the God of Israel. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 8Therefore the LORD is very angry with Judah and Jerusalem. Everyone is shocked and horrified at what He did to punish them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9Our ancestors were killed in battle, and our wives and children were taken as captives. 10Now I will renew our agreement with the LORD, the God of Israel, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} so that He will no longer be angry with us. 11Don't waste any time, because the LORD has chosen you to serve Him and to burn incense." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

12Then the Levites went to work. From the Kohathites were Mahath son of Amasai and Joel son of Azariah; from the Merarites were Kish son of Abdi and Azariah son of Jehallelel; from the Gershonites were Joah son of Zimmah and Eden son of Joah; 13from the descendants of Elizaphan were Shimri and Jeiel; from the descendants of Asaph were Zecharaiah and Mattahiah; 14from the descendants of Heman was Jehiel and Shimei; and from the descendants of Jeduthun were Shemaiah and Uzziel.

15These leaders gathered the other Levites and they all made themselves ceremonially clean and then began to purify the temple as the king had ordered them to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 16The priests took out from the temple everything that was unclean and brought them into the courtyard. The Levites then carried them to the Kidron Valley. 17Starting on the first day of the first month, the priests took a week to purify the courtyards and another week to purify the temple itself. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 18Then on the 16th day they went to Hezekiah and reported, "We have purified the temple {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and the altar of burnt offering and its utensils, and also the Table for the Bread without Yeast

and its articles. 19We have also brought back and purified all the articles King Ahaz took from the temple when he was king. We put them back in front of the altar."
20The next morning King Hezekiah called together the officials of Jerusalem, and together they went to the temple. 21They brought with them seven bulls, seven rams, seven male lambs, and seven male goats as an offering for the sins of the people of Judah {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and to purify the temple. Hezekiah told the priests, descendants of Aaron, to offer these on the altar. 22The priests killed the bulls, the rams, and the lambs and sprinkled their blood on the altar. 23They brought the goats to the king and the people; they laid their hands on them. 24The priests then killed the goats and sprinkled the blood on the altar as a substitutionary payment for sin for Israel, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} just as the king specifically commanded for Israel.
25King Hezekiah then stationed the Levites in the temple with cymbals, harps, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} and lyres, as God had commanded David and the prophets Gad and Nathan. 26The Levites stood ready with David's instruments and the priests took their positions with their trumpets. 27Hezekiah gave the order for the burnt offering to be sacrificed on the altar. As the offering was presented, the people began singing as the trumpets {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} and other instruments of David were being played. 28Everyone bowed in worship as the singers sang and the musicians played. This continued while all the animals were sacrificed.
29Then Hezekiah and everyone there bowed down in worship. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 30Hezekiah and his officials ordered the Levites to praise the LORD with the words David and Asaph, the prophet, had written. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 31Hezekiah said to the crowd, "Now that you have dedicated yourselves to the LORD, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} bring sacrifices and thank offerings to the temple." So the people did that, and some of them willingly brought burnt offerings. 32The number of burnt offerings they brought were 70 bulls, 100 rams, and 200 lambs. 33Other sacrifices that were brought included 600 bulls and 3,000 sheep. 34There were not enough priests to skin all the burnt-offering animals, so the Levites helped them until the work was finished {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and more priests had been made ceremonially clean. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 35Many animals were offered as burnt offerings, together with many drink offerings, and a lot of fat from animals for the many peace offerings. So the temple was again restored and ready for worshiping the LORD. 36Hezekiah and all the people of Judah were glad because God had helped them finish all this quickly. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

2 Chronicles 30

Celebrating the Passover

1Hezekiah invited all Israel and Judah to come to the temple of the LORD in

Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover of the LORD, the God of Israel. 2The king and his officials and everyone in Jerusalem decided to celebrate the Passover in the second month that year instead of the first month. 3That's because not enough priests had made themselves ceremonially clean, {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} and because not everyone had yet assembled in Jerusalem. 4This plan seemed the right thing to do. 5So Hezekiah sent a message to everyone in Israel and Judah, from Beersheba in the south to Dan in the north, inviting everyone to come to Jerusalem to celebrate the Passover. For years the Passover had not been celebrated in large numbers.

6Hezekiah's messengers went everywhere in Israel and Judah with this message from him and his officials: "People of Israel, return to the LORD, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} the God of our ancestors Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob so that He will return to us who have survived the invasion of the Assyrian kings. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} 7Don't be like your ancestors and your relatives in the north who were unfaithful to the LORD, the God of their ancestors, so that others were horrified by what they saw. 8Don't be stubborn, as your ancestors were. Come to the temple, and serve the LORD {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} so that He won't be angry with you. 9If you return to the LORD, the captors of your brothers and children will treat them with mercy and will allow them to return home. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} The LORD your God is gracious and has compassion. So if you turn back to Him, He will not turn from you."

10The messengers went to every town in Ephraim and West Manasseh and as far north as Zebulun, but most of the people laughed at them and made fun of them. 11However, a few men in Asher, West Manasseh, and Zebulun went to Jerusalem. {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} 12Everyone in Judah united to carry out what the king and his officials ordered according to the LORD's word.

13On the appointed spring day of the second month a large crowd of people gathered in Jerusalem to celebrate the Festival of Bread without Yeast. 14They removed all the pagan altars and incense altars in Jerusalem {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and threw them into the Kidron Valley. 15Each family killed its Passover lamb on the 14th day of the second month. Many of the priests and Levites were ashamed because they had not become ceremonially clean. So they purified themselves {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} and then offered burnt offerings in the temple. 16Then the priests and Levites took their places at the temple, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} according to the instructions in the law of Moses.

17Many of the people were ceremonially unclean, so the Levites had to kill their Passover lambs for them. 18Also many of those who came from Ephraim, West Manasseh, Issachar, and Zebulun were ceremonially unclean. But Hezekiah prayed for them, and he allowed them to eat the Passover meal, even though this was contrary to God's laws. {248

Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Hezekiah prayed, "LORD, You are so good and You forgive those [19]who obey You, the God of their ancestors, even though they are not ceremonially clean." [20]The LORD heard Hezekiah's prayer and did not punish the people. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

[21]The Israelites who were present in Jerusalem celebrated the Festival of Bread without Yeast for seven days with great joy. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} Each day the Levites and priests sang praises to the LORD and played their instruments. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} [22]Hezekiah commended the Levites for their musical skills. For an entire week the people offered fellowship offerings, ate the sacred meals, and praised the LORD, the God of their ancestors. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [23]In fact everyone was so excited they agreed to celebrate for another week. [24]Hezekiah gave 1,000 bulls and 7,000 sheep and goats for sacrifices by other people, and his officials gave 1,000 bulls and 10,000 sheep and goats. Many more priests made themselves ceremonially clean. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [25]Everyone in Judah and Israel, the priests and Levites, and foreign residents rejoiced. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [26]This was the biggest and most joyful celebration in Jerusalem since the days of Solomon, King David's son. [27]The priests and Levites blessed the people, {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} and God heard them from heaven, His holy dwelling place. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, when I forget Your commands, pardon me. Lord, when I break Your law because I am untaught and ignorant, pardon me. Be merciful to me for I know I am not perfect. I will go to church on a regular basis, and I will join my sisters and brothers in worshiping You. Amen.

2 Chronicles 31

Revival

[1]After the festival the Israelites who were there from some of the northern tribes went to all the towns in Judah, Benjamin, Ephraim, and West Manasseh, and smashed the sacred columns {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} and Asherah poles {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and tore down the pagan hilltop shrines and altars. Then the Israelites went back to their own towns and homes.

[2]Hezekiah divided the priests and Levites into groups, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} some to offer burnt offerings and fellowship offerings, and some to give thanks to the LORD at the temple gates. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [3]The king gave animals from his own flocks for the morning and evening burnt offerings, as well as for the Sabbath festivals, New Moon festivals, and several annual festivals. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [4]Also he told the people to bring the designated portion of their income to the priests and Levites so they could give their

time completely to the law of the LORD. {39 Bible-Bless Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}
5The people responded quickly and gave a tithe of everything generously, including the first of their crops, and grain, new wine, olive oil, honey, and other crops. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 6The people of Israel who lived in Judah and the people of Judah themselves brought a tenth of their cattle and sheep and a tenth of anything they had dedicated to the LORD, and they piled them up in big piles. 7The people started bringing these offerings in late spring, and the piles got bigger for another four months. 8When Hezekiah and his officials saw these huge piles of gifts, he thanked the LORD and His people.
9Then Hezekiah asked the priests and Levites, "Where did all this come from?" 10Azariah the high priest, a descendant of Zadok, said, "The people have been bringing their gifts to the LORD so that we have more than enough food and supplies. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} The LORD has blessed us greatly as you can see from all that is left over." {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
11Hezekiah then had storerooms built in the temple, {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} and when they were completed, 12the people brought their gifts and tithes to the temple. Conaniah, a Levite, was put in charge of the storerooms, and his brother, Shimei, was his assistant. 13Under them were these 10 supervisors: Jehiel, Azaziah, Nahath, Asahel, Jerimoth, Jozabad, Eliel, Ismakiah, Mahath, and Benaiah. Jezekiah and Azariah, the chief official over the temple made these appointments.
14Kore son of Imnah, a Levite, was the gatekeeper of the East Gate, and he was in charge of distributing freewill offerings and other things the people dedicated to the LORD. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 15His six assistants were Eden, Miniamin, Jeshua, Shemaiah, Amariah, and Shecaniah. They distributed gifts to the priests by their family clans, and divided the gifts equally among the young and old. 16They also gave gifts to all males 30 years of age and older who worked in the temple. 17And gifts were given to the priests who were listed in the records by clans and to the Levites 20 years of age and older who were listed according to their jobs. 18Gifts were given to all the family members listed in the genealogical records, including babies, wives, and sons and daughters. That's because they had all been faithful in keeping themselves ceremonially clean. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 19Hezekiah appointed men to take food and supplies to the priests who were living in villages around the towns. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} The priests had to be descendants of Aaron, and the Levites had to be listed in the family records.
20In doing all this throughout Judah, Hezekiah was doing the right thing and was being faithful to the LORD his God. 21Everything he did for the temple {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} followed the commands of the law, {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} and he obeyed

God with all his heart. As a result, he was successful in all he did.

Lord, I will bring my tithes and offerings to my church to take care of its needs, and the needs of Your workers. I will do it because of my obligation. I recognize I can't be spiritual without fulfilling my obligations. Thank You for the privilege of giving to You and Your work. Amen.

2 Chronicles 32

Assyria Invades Judah

[1]After Hezekiah had faithfully done all these things, Sennacherib king of Assyria invaded Judah, attacking fortified cities and thinking he could break into the cities. [2]Hezekiah realized that Sennacherib planned to attack Jerusalem. [3]So he talked with his officials and military advisors, and they decided to block off the water from the springs just outside the city walls, so that the Assyrians would have no water when they attacked. [4]So a large number of men stopped the flow of the springs and streams near Jerusalem.

[5]Then Hezekiah repaired the city wall wherever it was broken down and built defense towers and an outer wall to protect the first wall. He also built up the terraces at the Millo in the City of David and made many weapons and shields. [6]He appointed military officers over the soldiers and then had them gather together in the square by the city gate. He encouraged them with these words: [7]"Be strong and courageous. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} Don't be afraid or discouraged by the king of Assyria or his vast army, for there is a much power with us. [8]True, they have a great army, but they are just men. We have the LORD our God with us to help us and to fight our battles." {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} These words greatly encouraged the soldiers.

[9]While Sennacherib was attacking Lachish, he sent officials to Jerusalem with this message for Hezekiah and his people. [10]"This is what I, Sennacherib of Assyria, say to you: What makes you think you can survive my attack on your city? [11]Hezekiah told you the LORD your God will rescue you from me. But he is lying, and you will die from hunger and thirst. [12]Don't forget that He destroyed all the shrines and altars except one and told you to worship only at the altar at the temple. [13]And don't forget what I and other kings did to other nations. Their gods weren't able to save them. [14]In fact no god anywhere has been able to rescue his people from me. So what makes you think your God can do any better? [15]Don't let Hezekiah fool you or deceive you in any way. Don't believe him because no God of any nation has been able to rescue his people from me. So certainly your God can't rescue you from my power." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[16]Sennacharib's officials made fun of the LORD God and his servant Hezekiah. [17]Sennacherib also sent letters in which he made fun of the LORD, saying, "The gods of other nations couldn't rescue their people from me, so the God of Hezekiah

will not be able to rescue His people from me." [18]Then the Assyrian officials shouted this in the Hebrew language to try to scare the people in Jerusalem. [19]These officials spoke about the God of Jerusalem as if He was no different from pagan gods made by hands.

[20]Then Hezekiah and the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz, prayed to the LORD, asking for His help. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [21]The LORD sent an angel who killed every Assyrian soldier and commander. So Sennacherib returned to Assyria greatly discouraged. And when he went into the temple of his own god, some of his own sons killed him with a sword. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [22]In that way the LORD rescued Hezekiah from Sennacherib and from other enemies. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [23]People brought many offerings to the LORD at Jerusalem along with valuable gifts for Hezekiah. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} From then he was highly respected everywhere.

[24]Hezekiah became very ill and almost died. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} He prayed to the LORD who healed him and gave him a sign that he would recover. [25]But in his pride Hezekiah refused to thank the LORD for His kindness. So the LORD was angry against him and Judah and Jerusalem. [26]Then Hezekiah and the people of Jerusalem {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} turned from their pride, and so the LORD was no longer angry with them.

[27]Hezekiah was very rich and people honored him greatly. He built treasury buildings for all his silver and gold, precious stones, spices, shields, and other valuable items. [28]He also built storehouses for his grain, new wine, and olive oil. And he made many stalls for his cattle, and pens for his flocks of sheep and goats. [29]He built many towns and had many flocks and herds, because God had made him rich. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [30]He blocked the upper outlet of the Gihon Spring and brought the water through a tunnel into the City of David. The LORD gave him success in everything he did.

[31]However, some men came from Babylon to ask him about his achievements and the sign the LORD had shown him. God then let Hezekiah give his own answer {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} in order to test him and see if he would remain faithful.

[32]The other events in Hezekiah's reign and his faithfulness to the LORD are recorded in the vision of the prophet Isaiah, son of Amoz, which is included in the book of the Kings of Judah and Israel. [33]When Hezekiah died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} he was buried in the upper part of the king's cemetery. All Judah and Jerusalem honored him at his death, and Manasseh his son succeeded him as king.

2 Chronicles 33

Manasseh Is King

[1]Manasseh was only 12 years old when he became king of Judah, and he reigned for 55 years in Jerusalem. [2]He disobeyed the

LORD by following the disgusting practices of the pagan nations the LORD had forced out of the land. 3He rebuilt the hilltop shrines his father Hezekiah had destroyed, and he built altars for Baal and set up poles for worshiping the goddess Asherah. And he even bowed down to the stars and worshiped them. 4He built pagan altars in the temple where God had said His name is to be honored. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 5In both courtyards of the temple he built altars dedicated to the stars. 6Also Manasseh sacrificed his own sons in the Hinnom Valley. He practiced sorcery, fortune-telling, and witchcraft, and he asked advice from mediums and psychics. All of these evil practices made the LORD very angry.

7He even made a carved idol and placed it in the temple where God had told David and Solomon, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} "I will be honored here in the temple and in Jerusalem. 8If My people obey all the laws, commands, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and regulations I gave Moses, then I will never force them out of the land I promised to your ancestors." 9Manasseh led the people to be more sinful than the pagan nations the LORD had destroyed.

10The LORD warned Manasseh and his people, but they paid no attention. 11So the LORD sent the Assyrian army commanders to invade Judah and they captured Manasseh. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} They put a hook in his nose, and tied him up in bronze chains and took him away to Babylon. 12Coming to his senses, he humbled himself before the LORD and asked Him for help. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 13The LORD saw how sorry Manasseh was, {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} and so He made the Assyrians release him. He went back to Jerusalem, {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} and he realized from then on that the LORD is the true and only God.

14Later Manasseh rebuilt the outer wall of the City of David, making it higher than it was. This section extended west of the Gihon Spring in the Kidron valley to the Fish Gate and continued around the Ophel Hill. He stationed army commanders in all the fortified cities of Judah. 15He got rid of the pagan idols from the hills and the idol he had placed in the temple and all the altars he had built near the temple {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and elsewhere in Jerusalem, and he dumped them all outside the city. 16Then he repaired the LORD's altar of burnt offering and offered fellowship offerings and thank offerings on it. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} And he told everyone in Judah to worship only the LORD, the God of Israel. 17However, though the people worshiped only the LORD, they did so at their hilltop shrines.

18The rest of Manasseh's events, his prayer to God from Babylon, and the prophet's words to him are recorded in the book of the kings of Judah. 19His prayers, the way God answered that prayer, and his many sins, and the places where he built pagan shrines and set up Asherah poles and idols {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} are recoded in the Record of the Prophets. 20When Manasseh died, {99 Death-Facing

Prayer, Ps. 88:3} he was buried at his palace and not with Judah's other kings. Then his son Amon became king.
21Amon was 22 when he became king, and he reigned two years. 22He disobeyed the LORD just as his father Manasseh did in his earlier years. Anon worshiped the idols his father had made and he offered sacrifices to them. 23Manasseh had turned back to the LORD, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} but not Amon. In fact, he sinned even more than his father. 24Some of Amon's officials killed him in his palace. 25Then some people in Judah killed those who killed Amon, and they made his son Josiah king.

2 Chronicles 34

Josiah Is King

1Josiah was only eight years old when he became king of Judah, and he ruled for 31 years. 2He followed the example of his ancestor David in obeying the LORD all the time. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 3In the eighth year of his reign, when he was a 16-year-old, he began worshiping the LORD just as David had done. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Four years later he destroyed all the hilltop shrines, and the poles used in worshiping Asherah, and idols of foreign gods. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 4He had the altars to Baal and incense altars torn down. And he made sure the Asherah poles, carved idols, and cast images were crushed into powder, and scattered over the graves of people who had sacrificed to them. 5Also he burned the bones of dead pagan priests on their own altars to help cleanse the people of their sin. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}
6Josiah did the same things in West Manasseh, Ephraim, Simeon, and far north Naphtali. 7Everywhere in the northern kingdom he destroyed pagan altars and Asherah poles, crushed idols into powder, and smashed incense altars. Then he went back to Jerusalem.
8In Josiah's 18th year of his reign, he sent Shaphan, son of Azaliah, Maaseiah city ruler, and Joah, son of Joahaz, the government recorder, to repair the temple. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 9These three men gave Hilkiah the high priest the money the Levites had collected when they were gatekeepers at the temple. This money was collected from the people of West Manasseh, Ephraim, and all the northern kingdom as well from people in Judah and Benjamin. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 10Hilkiah gave this money to the men who supervised the temple repairs, who paid the repairmen, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 11carpenters, and masons. Those workers also used the money to buy stone and timber for rafters and beams for the temple and other buildings Judah's kings had not repaired.
12The workers worked hard {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} and were under the leadership of Jahath and Obadiah, Levites of the Merarite clan; and Zechariah and Meshullam, Levites of the Kohathite clan. Other Levites, all skilled musicians, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} 13were in charge of the workers, and carried supplies. Some

of the Levites were secretaries, scribes, and guards. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
14When the people were bringing money to the supervisors, {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} Hilkiah the priest found the book that had the laws God had given Moses. 15Hilkiah said to Shaphan the official, "Look what I found! The book of the law of Moses!" He gave it to Shaphan, 16who took it to Josiah and said, "Your workers are doing a good job. 17And the money that was collected has been given to the supervisors and workers." 18Then Shaphan said, "Here's interesting news. Hillkiah the priest found this scroll {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} and has given it to me." And Shaphan read from it to the king.
19When the king heard these words of the law, he tore his clothes in sorrow. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 20Right away he asked that Hilkiah, Shaphan, Ahikam son of Shaphan, Acbor son of Micaiah, and Asaiah the king's personal aide come see him. He told them about Hilkiah finding the scroll and then he said, 21"The LORD is probably angry with us for our not obeying the laws written in this scroll. Go to the temple and ask the LORD what we should do since we have not been doing what the law says to do." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
22So Hilkiah and the other men went to the newer (Mishneh) section of Jerusalem to talk with the prophetess Huldah. She was the wife of Shallum son of Tokhath (also called Tikrah) and grandson of Harhas. Shallum was the keeper of the temple wardrobe. 23She said to them, "The LORD, the God of Israel, has spoken. Give Josiah this message: 24This is what the LORD says: 'I will destroy this city and its people. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} The curses in this scroll will come true. 25Why? Because the people of Judah have rejected Me and have worshiped pagan idols. So I am very angry, and nothing will stop Me. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 26However, Josiah, listen to what I will say. 27You were sorry and you humbled yourself before Me {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} when you heard what I said I will do to these people. You felt sad and tore your clothes in sorrow and you cried. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 28So before I destroy this place, you will die and be buried in peace. You will not see the disaster I will bring on this place.'" {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} So they told Josiah what she said.
29Then Josiah called together the leaders of Judah and Jerusalem, and the priests and Levites. 30He went to the temple with them and all the people from the least to the greatest. He read to them the entire Book of the Covenant {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} that Hilkiah found in the temple. 31Then he stood by the column and promised to obey the LORD and the LORD's laws, commands, and regulations with all his heart and soul. He promised to obey all that was written in the scroll. 32And he asked that everyone there make the same promise, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and the people did. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

33So Josiah destroyed all the idols throughout all of Israel and required everyone to worship the LORD their God. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} Throughout his life the people remained true to the LORD.

2 Chronicles 35

The Passover Is Restored

1Josiah announced that the Passover would be celebrated in Jerusalem on the 14th of April. Passover lambs were killed the evening before. 2He made sure the priests understood their duties, and he encouraged them. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 3He told the Levites, who served the LORD {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and taught the people His laws, "You no longer need to carry the sacred chest from place to place. It is to stay in the temple, and so you can spend your time serving the LORD and His people. 4Serve in the temple by your family clans, as David and Solomon instructed. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 5Stand in your places in the temple and help the families that come to you with their offerings. 6Kill the Passover lambs, cleanse yourselves, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and assist the people when they come. Follow the instructions God gave Moses. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

7Josiah gave 30,000 sheep and goats and 3,000 bulls from his own flocks and herds for the people to sacrifice. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 8The king's officials also gave some animals to the people, the priests, and the Levites. Hilkiah, Zechariah, and Jehiel, officials in charge of the temple, gave the priests 2,600 lambs and young goats and 300 bulls for Passover offerings. 9Conaniah, his two brothers Shemaiah and Nethanel, and Hashabiah, Jeiel, and Jozabad gave 5,000 lambs and young goats and 500 bulls for Passover offerings. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

10When everything was ready for celebrating the Passover, the priests and Levites stood in their places as Josiah had ordered. 11Then the Levites killed and skinned the Passover lambs and gave some of the blood to the priests who splattered the blood on the altar. 12They gave the slaughtered animals for burnt offerings to the family groups so they could present them to the LORD as Moses instructed. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} They did the same with the bulls. 13Then they roasted the lambs on the altar and they boiled the meat for the other offerings in pots, kettles, and pans. 14Afterward the Levites prepared a meal for themselves and the priests: they had been busy all day offering sacrifices and burning the animal fat.

15Some of the Levites brought Passover meals to the musicians, descendants of Asaph, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} and the guards who were in their places all day. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 16The entire Passover celebration was completed that day, and all the burnt offerings were sacrificed on the altar of burnt offering, following Josiah's orders. 17Then the people celebrated the Festival of Bread without Yeast for the next seven days. 18Never

since the time of the prophet Samuel had the Passover been observed like this. In fact this was the greatest Passover in Israel's history. People from Jerusalem and all over Judah and Israel were there and all the priests and Levites were involved. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 19This Passover was in Josiah's 18th year as king.
20After Josiah had finished with the temple, King Neco of Egypt led his army to battle the Babylonians at Carchemish on the Euphrates River, and Josiah and his army went out to fight him. 21Neco sent messengers to Josiah with these words: "I'm not attacking you, king of Judah. I have no quarrel with you. I only want to attack my enemy. God is on my side, so if you don't stop, He will punish you." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 22Josiah refused to listen and to turn back. Instead he led his army to the plain of Megiddo and disguised himself so the enemy wouldn't recognize him. 23An Egyptian soldier shot Josiah with an arrow and wounded him. Josiah told his servants to get him out of there because he had been hit. 24So they took him out of his chariot, put him in another chariot, and took him to Jerusalem where he died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He was buried with his ancestors, and everyone in Judah and Jerusalem mourned for him. 25The prophet Jeremiah wrote funeral songs for Josiah, and choirs still sing those sad songs recorded in the Book of Laments. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 26Everything Josiah did including his obeying the LORD's instructions in the law of Moses, 27and all the events of his reign are written in the history of the kings of Israel and Judah. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Lord, I will sing the song of my heart to You. I love You and will tell You in the music of my soul. There are many who sing much better than I; so I will listen and worship You. I need Your music when I go about making money, or taking care of my family, or doing the things required of me. When I lie upon my bed, I will sing to You; when I rise in the morning I will thank You for the challenge of a new day. I will worship You through music all day long. Amen.

2 Chronicles 36

Jehoahaz Is King

1After Josiah died, the people of Judah made his son Jehoahaz king. 2Jehoahaz was 23 years old when he became king. 3King Neco of Egypt captured him and forced Judah to pay about 7,500 pounds of silver and 75 pounds of gold as taxes. 4Then Neco put Eliakim, Jehoahaz's brother, as king of Judah and changed his name to Jehoiakim. And Neco took Jehoahaz to Egypt as prisoner. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
5Jehoiakim was 25 years old when Neco made him king, and he ruled for 11 years from Jerusalem. But he disobeyed the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, attacked Jerusalem and he bound him in bronze chains and took him to Babylon.

7Nebuchadnezzar also took many of the gold objects from the temple and put them in his palace in Babylon. 8The other events in Jehoiakim's reign, including all his sinful acts, are written in the history of the kings of Israel and Judah. His son Jehoiachin became the next king.

9Jehoiachin was 18 years old when he became king of Judah and he ruled only three months and 10 days. Like his father, he disobeyed the LORD. 10In the spring of the year Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, had Jehoiachin arrested and taken to Babylon, along with more of the temple's valuable items. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then Nebuchadnezzar put Zedekiah, Jehoiachin's uncle, as king in Judah.

11Zedekiah was 21 years old when he was made king of Judah, and he reigned for 11 years. 12He disobeyed the LORD, and refused to change even after the prophet Jeremiah spoke to him. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 13Zedekiah also rebelled against Nebuchadnezzar, even though Nebuchadnezzar had forced Zedekiah to promise to be loyal to him. Zedekiah was very stubborn and would not turn back to the LORD, the God of Israel.

14The leaders of the priests and many people became unfaithful to the LORD and worshiped the pagan idols of the nations around them and even made the temple unfit for worship. 15The LORD felt sorry for His people and the temple, and so He sent prophets to warn them over and over. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 16But the people laughed at these prophets and hated their words. So the LORD finally got so angry that nothing could now stop him from punishing His people. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

17The LORD sent Nebuchadnezzar against Judah. He killed the young men who ran into the temple, and he killed many men and women, young and old. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18He took to Babylon what was left in the temple and he took treasures from the temple and from the palace storerooms. He also took the royal princes to Babylon. 19He set the temple on fire, broke down Jerusalem's walls, burned the palace, and destroyed everything of value there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 20He took the few survivors as prisoners to Babylon where he made them his servants until Persia came to power. 21The land enjoyed its Sabbaths, lying desolate for 70 years, just as the prophet Jeremiah had said.

22In the first year that Cyrus was king of Persia, he sent a message throughout his kingdom. This was just as the prophet Jeremiah had said would happen. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} 23The message said, "I am Cyrus, king of Persia. The LORD, the God of heaven, has made me ruler of every nation on earth. He has chosen me to build a temple for Him in Jerusalem, in Judah. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} If any of you want to go back to Israel and rebuild the temple, {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} you are free to go. And may the LORD watch over you who go back. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Ezra

Ch 1: The Proclamation from King Cyrus.....639
Ch 2: The Record of the Exiles Who Returned 640
Ch 3: Altar Is Built.....642
Ch 4: Enemies Oppose the Rebuilding of the Temple.....643
Ch 5: More Questions Concerning the Rebuilding.....644
Ch 6: King Darius Reinforces the Decree 645
Ch 7: Ezra Goes to Jerusalem.....647
Ch 8: The Men Who Went with Ezra 648
Ch 9: Ezra Prays for Forgiveness 650
Ch 10: God's People Confess Their Sin.....652

EZRA

Key Words: *God of Heaven* (Ezra 1:2; 5:11, 12; 6:9, 10; 7:12, 23)

Key Verse: "Rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem so that sacrifices can be made there" (6:3, *Prayer Journey Paraphrase*).

Theme: The book of Ezra tells the story of the Jewish people returning from 70 years of captivity in Babylon. King Cyrus of Medo-Persia defeated Babylon and decreed the Jews' return to their land. The first part of Ezra (chaps. 1-6) tells of Sheshbazzar and Zerubbabel leading the people back and rebuilding the temple. The longsuffering prayers of God's people are answered (Dan. 9:3-19; Ps. 137). The second part (chaps. 7-10) is a record of Ezra's leadership and the repentance of the people (with fasting) that led to revival.

Ezra's favorite name for the Lord was "God of Heaven." Since Israel was out of fellowship with the Lord, and didn't have a central place for worship; Ezra worked under the guidance of the *God of Heaven*.

Ezra teaches us to fast and pray when we face dangerous situations, and life-threatening challenges. *Lord, I know evil destroys people, so I will keep myself from sin. Like Ezra, I will fast and pray for spiritual protection from the evil one. Amen.*

Ezra 1

The Proclamation from King Cyrus

1 In the first years of the reign of King Cyrus of Persia (538 B.C.), the Lord fulfilled
the prophecy Jeremiah gave decades earlier by having Cyrus send this message to
all parts of his kingdom: {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 2 "I, King
Cyrus of Persia, announced that the LORD, the God of Heaven, has made me ruler of all
nations. He has chosen me to build Him a temple at Jerusalem, which is in Judah. {183
Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 3 Any Jews may now go back to Jerusalem
and rebuild the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel, the God who is in Jerusalem. {182
Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 4 If Jews are living in your area and they plan to return,
give them silver and gold, goods, livestock, and freewill offerings for the temple." {412
Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

5 God interested many people to return,
including tribal leaders of Judah and
Benjamin and priests and Levites, and so
they got ready to go. {364 Praise for God's
Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 6 Their neighbors
gave them silver and gold articles, supplies,
livestock, and other valuable items and
freewill offerings. {363 Praise for God's
Provision, Ps. 23:1}
7 Also King Cyrus gave the returning Jews
the things Nebuchadnezzar had taken
from the Lord's temple in Jerusalem and
had put in the temple of his own gods.
8 Cyrus told Mithredath, his national trea-
surer, to count these items and to give
them to Sheshbazzar, leader of the Jews
returning to Judah. 9 These items included
30 gold dishes, 1,000 silver dishes, 29 sil-
ver pans, 10 30 gold bowls, 410 silver bowls,
and 1,000 other items. 11 These and others
totaled 5, 400 items, which Sheshbazzar
took with him when he and the others
returned to Jerusalem from Babylon. {363
Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

The chapter teaches us "The heart of the King is in the hand of the LORD... He turns whenever He wishes" (Prov. 21:1). Just as God used Cyrus to fulfill prophecy, God completes His will in our lives by the things our rulers decide to do. Lord, I will trust You to complete Your will in my life by the things my rulers do. Therefore, I will submit to their leadership (Rom. 13:1) and pray for them (1 Tim. 2:1, 2). Amen.

Ezra 2

The Record of the Exiles Who Returned

1 Here is a list of the Jews who returned to
Jerusalem and other towns in Judah, peo-
ple who had been taken captive to Babylon
by King Nebuchadnezzar. 2 Their lead-
ers were Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah,
Seraiah, Reelaiah, Mordecai, Bilshan,
Mispar, Bigvai, Rehum, and Baanah. This
is how many returned from each family
group:
3 The family of Parosh: 2, 172
4 The family of Shephatiah: 372
5 The family of Arah: 775
6 The family of Pahath-Moab (descendants
of Jeshua and Joab): 2,812
7 The family of Elam: 1,254
8 The family of Zattu: 945
9 The family of Zaccai: 760
10 The family of Bani: 642
11 The family of Bebai: 623
12 The family of Azgad: 1,222
13 The family of Adonikam: 666
14 The family of Bigvai: 2,056
15 The family of Adin: 454
16 The family of Ater: (descendants of
Hezekiah): 98
17 The family of Bezai: 323
18 The family of Jorah: 112
19 The family of Hashum: 223
20 The family of Gibbar: 95
21 The people of Bethlehem: 123
22 The people of Netophah: 56
23 The people of Anathoth: 128
24 The people of Azmaveth: 42
25 The peoples of Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah,
and Beeroth: 743

[26]The peoples of Ramah and Geba: 621
[27]The people of Micmash: 122
[28]The peoples of Bethel and Ai: 223
[29]The citizens of Nebo: 52
[30]The citizens of Magbish: 156
[31]The citizens of West Elam: 1,254
[32]The citizens of Harim: 320
[33]The citizens of Lod, Hadid, and Ono: 725
[34]The citizens of Jericho: 345
[35]The citizens of Senaah: 3,630
[36]These are the priests who returned:
The family of Jedaiah (through the line of Jeshua): 973
[37]The family of Immer: 1,052
[38]The family of Pashhur: 1,247
[39]The family of Harim: 1,017
[40]These are the Levites who returned:
The families of Jeshua and Kadmiel (descendants of Hodaviah): 74
[41]The singers of the family of Asaph: 128
[42]The gatekeepers of the families of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai: 139
[43]The descendants of the following temple servants returned: Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth, [44]Keros, Siaha, Padon, [45]Lebanah, Hagabah, Akkub, [46]Hagab, Shalmai, Hanan, [47]Giddel, Gahar, Reaiah, [48]Rezin, Nekoda, Gazzam, [49]Uzza, Paseah, Besai, [50]Asnah, Meunim, Nephusim, [51]Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur, [52]Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha, [53]Barkos, Sisera, Temah, [54]Neziah, and Hatipha.
[55]The descendants of these servants of King Solomon returned: Sotai, Hassophereth, Peruda, [56]Jaalah, Darkon, Giddel, [57]Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-Hazzebaim, and Ami.
[58]In all the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants numbered 392.
[59]Another group returned at this time from the towns of Tel-Melah, Tel-Harsha, Kerub, Addan, and Immer. However, they could not prove that they or their families were descendants of Israel. [60]This group included the families of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda—a total of 652 people.
[61]Three families of priests—Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—also returned. (This Barzillai had married a woman who was a descendant of Barzillai of Gilead, and he had taken her family name.) [62]But the records of these three families could not be found, so they were not allowed to serve as priests. [63]The governor would not let them eat the priests' share of food from the sacrifices until a priest could consult the LORD.
[64]So a total of 42,360 people returned to Judah, [65]in addition to 7,337 servants and 200 singers. [66]They took with them 736 horses, 245 mules, [67]435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.
[68]When they arrived at the temple of the Lord in Jerusalem, some of the family leaders gave freewill offerings for the rebuilding of the temple on its original site, {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [69]and each leader gave as much as he could. Their gifts totaled 1,100 pounds of gold, about 3 tons of silver, and 100 robes for the priests.
[70]The priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, temple servants, and some of the common people settled in their towns. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

These returnees didn't seek money from the nations around them. Those who were most involved gave the most money. That means we should support with our money the projects that are closest to our heart. Lord, I will give to my church and the projects You put upon my heart. I will give willingly and pray for these projects. Amen.

Ezra 3

Altar Is Built

[1]In the fall after the Israelites had settled in their towns, the people gathered in Jerusalem. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [2]Jeshua, son of Jehozadak, with other priests and Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel, and his relatives rebuilt the altar of burnt offering and sacrificed burnt offerings as God had told Moses. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [3]Even though they were afraid of the local residents, they rebuilt the altar at its former site and sacrificed burnt offerings each morning and evening.

[4]They followed the instructions in the Mosaic Law for celebrating the Festival of Shelters, sacrificing offerings each day. [5]They offered other sacrifices, including those for the New Moon celebrations, annual festivals, and freewill offerings. [6]On September 15, the priests began sacrificing burnt offerings even though the temple foundation had not yet been laid. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

It's good to go back to where God revealed Himself to us in the past. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} The Jews rebuilt the altar on its original site. They didn't try to find a better place, or a new place, or a more convenient place. When we lose God, we usually search for Him with a new method, or a new organization, or in a new place. But when we lose God, He's usually right where we originally found Him. He may be waiting for you at the place you ran off and left Him. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Lord, I will go back to the church, Your body, to find You. I will do again those things I did when I first found You. I will turn my heart to the attitude I had when You first spoke to me. Here I come, Lord, I'm coming back. Amen.

[7]King Cyrus had said the Israelites could have logs from cedar trees from Lebanon to Joppa by the sea. The Israelites hired stone workers and carpenters and the people of Tyre and Sidon to bring the logs to Israel. They paid them with food, wine, and olive oil. [8]In April of 536 B.C. the people began rebuilding the Lord's temple. This was the second year after the people arrived in Jerusalem. Zerubbabel, Jeshua, and the priests and Levites, and everyone who returned from Persia started working on the temple. Levites 20 years of age and older were put in charge of the work. [9]The Levites who directed the whole project {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} were Joshua and his sons and other relatives, Kadmiel and his sons, descendants of Hodaviah, and the family of Henadad.

10When the builders finished the temple foundation, the priests put on their robes, and blew trumpets, and the Levites of the family of Asaph played cymbals in praise to the LORD, as King David had said for them to do. 11They praised the LORD and thanked Him {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} as they sang, "The LORD is good. His unfailing love for Israel will last forever." Then everyone shouted and praised the LORD that the temple foundation had been laid. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
12Many of the older priests, Levites, and their family leaders had seen the first temple years before, but now they cried when they saw the new foundation. But others shouted for joy. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} 13Their crying and shouting were so loud they could be heard far away.

When touched with sadness, I will weep. Lord, sometimes You make me shout, so I laugh to You. Sometimes I'm disappointed in what's happening around me. Thank You for allowing me to weep. Lord, You allow me to pray. Thank You that I don't have a sterile, dead religion, but have a vibrant relationship with You. Amen.

Ezra 4

Enemies Oppose the Rebuilding of the Temple

1Enemies of the tribes of Judah and Benjamin heard that the Jews had come back to rebuild the temple of the LORD, the God of Israel. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} 2They went to Zerubbabel and family leaders and said, "Let us help you. Ever since Esarhaddon king of Assyria brought us here we have worshiped your God and sacrificed to Him." {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

If you're doing anything for God, expect opposition. On the other hand, if you're serving God and you don't have any opposition, either your work is not significant, or you haven't given the enemy time to mount opposition. Lord, I don't want opposition, and I don't like to make people mad, but I will be true to You no matter what problems arise, or what opposition I face. Amen.

3Zerubabbel, Jeshua, and the family leaders said, "No. You cannot take part in rebuilding the temple to our God. We will build it ourselves, as King Cyrus told us to do." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}

We are not to compromise with other religions or cults. We can't worship idols and God at the same time. Lord, I will not compromise my belief in You, nor my worship of You. I believe Jesus is the only way to heaven, and He is the only true God. All other religions are false. Amen.

4Then the local residents tried to discourage the Jews and even scare them. 5They hired people to work against the Jews and to frustrate their efforts; even up to the year Darius became king of Persia (522

B.C.). {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}
6Years later, when Xerxes became king (in 486 B.C.), Judah's enemies wrote him a letter, accusing the people of Judah and Jerusalem. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 7And later, when Artaxerxes was king of Persia, Judah's enemies led by Bishlam, Mithredath, and Tabeel, sent a letter to him (in 465 B.C.) in the Aramaic language. 8Rehum the governor and Shimshai, government secretary, wrote a letter, 9which was also sent from their associates, and judges and officials, and leaders over the people of Tripolis, Persia, Erech, Babylon, the Elamites in Susa, 10and other people Ashurbanipal had relocated to Samaria and other places between the Euphrates River and the Mediterranean Sea. 11The letter said, "To Artaxerxes, from your servants in the vast area west of the Euphrates River. 12You should know that the Jews who left your country to go back to Jerusalem are now rebuilding that evil city. They are repairing the city foundation and the walls. 13If this city is rebuilt, the Jews won't pay your taxes. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 14We are sending you this information because we don't want you to be dishonored in this way. 15Check your old records, and you'll see that this city has continuously been rebellious and a constant problem to the kings and provinces. And that's why it was destroyed. 16If this city is rebuilt, you will have no control over the vast area west of the Euphrates River." {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}
17Artaxerxes replied: "To Rehum the governor and Shimshai government secretary, and associates in Samaria and the area west of the Euphrates River, Greetings. 18After the letter you sent was translated and read to me, 19I had our old records checked. You are correct in stating that Jerusalem has rebelled against many kings. 20Powerful kings have ruled over Jerusalem and the area west of the Euphrates River, and they have received taxes and tolls from Jerusalem. 21Therefore tell the people to stop rebuilding the city until I say so. 22Do not delay because we don't want the situation to get out of control." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}
23As soon as this letter from King Artaxerxes was read to Rehum, Shimshai, and their associates, they went to Jerusalem and forced the Jews to stop building the city.
24So the work on the temple in Jerusalem stopped and nothing more was done on it till King Darius' second year (520 B.C.). {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}

Lord, I don't want opposition, but I expect it. Lord, I will prepare for it. I will be strong, pray, and "put on the whole armor of God" (Eph. 6:11). Amen.

Ezra 5

More Questions Concerning the Rebuilding

1The prophets Haggai and Zechariah, a descendant of Iddo, prophesied for the

LORD to the Jews in Judah and Jerusalem. [2]Then Zerubbabel and son of Shealtiel and Jeshua, son of Jozadak, urged the people to work again on the temple. And Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them too. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[3]Tattenai, governor of the area west of the Euphrates River, and Shethar-Bozenai, and their associates went to Jerusalem and asked the workers, "Who gave you permission to rebuild the temple? [4]Give us the names of the workers." [5]But God was watching over them, so the people continued rebuilding until a report could be sent to Darius and a reply received from him.

[6]Tattenai, governor of the area west of the Euphrates, and Shethar-Bozenai, and other officials, sent this letter to King Darius: [7]"Greetings to King Darius. [8]We went to where the temple of the God of the Jews is being rebuilt with large stones, and wooden beams are being set in the walls. The people are working hard, and they are making good progress. [9]We asked the people in charge who said they could rebuild the temple. [10]And we asked for the names of the workers so we could give them to you. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}

[11]"'This is their answer: 'We are servants of the God of Heaven and earth. We are rebuilding the temple that was built years ago by our great king. [12]But our ancestors made God angry, and so He let Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon destroy this temple and take them to Babylon. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[13]However, in the first year of his reign over Persia, King Cyrus said the temple could be rebuilt. [14]He returned the gold and silver utensils that Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple and he put them in the temple in Babylon. [15]King Cyrus made Sheshbazzar governor of Judah, and he told him to put these gold and silver items back in the temple in Jerusalem.'" {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, help me to use the law to protect Your work. Help me to live by the laws of the land, but also help me not to be intimidated by those who oppose me and threaten me with their interpretation of the law. Amen.

[16]"'So Sheshbazzar went to Jerusalem and enlisted workers to rebuild the temple foundation. The people have been working on this project, and it is still going on.' {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [17]Please have someone look up the old records in Babylon to see if King Cyrus really did order the Jerusalem temple to be rebuilt. Then please send us your decision in the matter." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Ezra 6

King Darius Reinforces the Decree

[1]King Darius ordered that the old Babylonian records be searched. [2]Finally a scroll was found at the fortress in Ecbatana, the capital of Media. It said this:

[3]"'In the first year of King Cyrus' reign he gave orders to rebuild God's temple in Jerusalem so that sacrifices can be made there. It is to be 90 feet high and 90 feet

wide. [4]Every three layers of stones are to be topped with a layer of timber. All expenses will be paid by the royal treasury. [5]The gold and silver objects that Nebuchadnezzar took from the temple to Babylon are to be taken back to God's temple." {273 Large-Praying, Acts 4:23-31}

Lord, I will do research to find out how things were done in the past. I will serve You the way it was done in the past. Also I will worship You the way You want to be worshiped. I'll worship You the way it was done in the past. Amen.

[6]King Darius sent this message: "To Tattenai, governor of the area west of the Euphrates River, Shethar-Bozenai, and your officials west of the Euphrates River, 'Stay away from the temple! Don't get in their way. [7]Let them rebuild the temple at its former site. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} [8]In fact, I order you to pay their expenses from taxes I collect from your area west of the Euphrates River so that the work won't stop. [9]Give the priests whatever they need—bulls, rams, and lambs for burnt offerings to the God of Heaven, and wheat, salt, wine, and oil for the priests each day. [10]Then they can offer sacrifices to the God of Heaven and pray for me and my sons. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

[11]"'If anyone doesn't follow these orders, a wooden beam is to be pulled from his house and sharpened on one end. Then it will be driven through his body, and his house will be torn down and will be a garbage dump. [12]May the God who has chosen Jerusalem {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} destroy any king or nation who tries to change what I have written and destroys the temple. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} I, Darius, have issued this command. Be sure it is followed carefully.'"

[13]Governor Tattenai, Shethar-Bozenai, and their associates followed King Darius' orders, [14]and the Jewish leaders continued working on the temple and Haggai and Zechariah encouraged them by their preaching. The temple was finally finished as God had commanded and as kings Cyrus, Darius, and Artaxerxes had ordered. [15]The temple was completed on March 12, in Darius' sixth year as king (515 B.C.).

[16]With great joy the priests, Levites, and all the people dedicated the temple to the Lord. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [17]In the dedication they sacrificed 100 bulls, 200 rams, and 400 male lambs, and they sacrificed 12 male goats as a sin offering, one for each tribe. [18]Then the priests and Levites were divided into various groups, as Moses had written. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

[19]On April 14 the people celebrated Passover. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [20]The priests and Levites were ceremonially clean. Then the priests killed the Passover lamb for the people who had returned from Persia, and for themselves. [21]The returnees ate the Passover meal with others in the land who had turned from their sinful ways to worship the LORD, the God of Israel. {541 Worship-Prayer,

John 4:23} [22]For seven days they celebrated the Festival of Bread without Yeast. Everyone was happy because the LORD had led the king of Assyria {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} to help them build the temple.

We should worship and praise God when things go our way. We should recognize that our victories come because God works behind the scenes to make us successful. Lord, I thank You for every victory in my life. Forgive me for taking all the credit for past victories. I praise You for all the good things I enjoy. Amen.

Ezra 7

Ezra Goes to Jerusalem

[1]Later, when Artaxerxes was king of Persia, Ezra went to Jerusalem from Babylon. His genealogical line was as follows: He was the son of Seraiah, son of Azariah, son of Hilkiah, [2]son of Shallum, son of Zadok, son of Ahitub, [3]son of Amariah, son of Azariah, son of Meraioth, [4]son of Zerahiah, son of Uzzi, son of Bukki, [5]son of Abishua, son of Phinehas, son of Eleazar, son of Aaron the high priest. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [6]Ezra knew the law of Moses very well. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} Artaxerxes gave Ezra everything he asked for his trip to Jerusalem, because God was blessing him. [7]In Artaxerxes' seventh year (457 B.C.) many people went with Ezra to Jerusalem, including common people, priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants.

[8]Ezra arrived in Jerusalem on August 1 of that year [9]after starting their journey four months earlier on April 1. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [10]Ezra studied and obeyed the law of the LORD and taught those laws and regulations to others. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

The New King James rendering of Ezra 7:10 says, "Ezra prepared his heart." The Living Bible says, "Ezra had worked hard to know and obey the teachings of the Lord." {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} Study is hard work. Lord, make me discipline myself to do what is tedious, that is, to study hard and study long to know all about You. Change my attitude so I enjoy studying, then quicken my mind to learn more when I study than if I had not prayed. Lord, I love You and I want to learn as much about You as possible. Amen.

[11]King Artaxerxes gave a copy of the following letter to Ezra, the priest {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} and teacher of God's laws and commands.

[12]"From Artaxerxes, king of kings, to Ezra, the priest and a teacher of the law of the God of Heaven: Greetings. [13]Any Jew, including priests and Levites, may go to Jerusalem with you. [14]I and my Council of Seven ask you to see if the law of your God is being obeyed there. [15]Take with you silver and gold which we are giving as an offering to the God of Israel. [16]Also collect

silver and gold from people in Babylonia and freewill offerings from your people and priests for the temple. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 17With this money buy bulls, rams, lambs, grain offerings, and drink offerings, to be offered on the altar of your temple. 18If any silver or gold is left over, use it in whatever way you and your colleagues feel is God's will. 19Also take with you gold bowls and other items we are giving you for the temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 20If you need anything else for the temple, you may request funds from the royal treasury.

21"I, King Artaxerxes, order all treasurers in the area west of the Euphrates River to give you, God's priest and teacher of the law of the God of Heaven, whatever you need. 22They may give as much as 7,500 pounds of silver, 600 bushels of wheat, 600 gallons of wine, 600 gallons of olive oil, and any amount of salt, 23and whatever the God of Heaven needs for His temple so that He won't be angry with me or my sons. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 24No taxes of any kind are to be paid by the temple workers, including priests, Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and temple servants. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

25"You, Ezra, using the wisdom the LORD has given you, {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} choose officials and judges to govern the people west of the Euphrates River. If they don't know the laws of your God, teach them." {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30}

Two forces were at work here; first, Ezra studied and second, God gave him wisdom. Can we conclude that the more we study, the more wisdom God gives? Lord, give me wisdom so I can live properly for You. Also make me smart so I can do more for You. Amen.

26"Anyone who doesn't obey the law of your God or of the king will be punished by death, being forced to leave the country, or having their property taken over, or being put in prison." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

27Ezra said, "Praise the LORD, God of our ancestors, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} who led the king to honor the Lord's temple in Jerusalem. 28God has been good to me through the king and his Council of Seven and his powerful officials. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} The LORD was with me, and so I was encouraged and was able to bring several Jewish leaders with me to Jerusalem."

Ezra responded to God the way we should respond to Him. Lord, I thank You for all I am, and for all I have. You have shown me Your great love. Thank You for helping me do all I do for You. Amen.

Ezra 8

The Men Who Went with Ezra

1These are the names of the leaders and their family groups who went with me

from Babylon to Jerusalem when Artaxerxes was king of Persia. [2]Gershom of the Phinehas family; Daniel of the Ithamar family;
[3]Hattush son of Shecaniah of the David family; Zechariah and 150 other men of the Parosh family, who had family records; [4]Eliehoenai son of Zerahiah with 200 men of the Pahath-Moab family; [5]Shecaniah son of Jahaziel with 300 men of the Zattu family; [6]Ebed son of Jonathan with 50 men of the Adin family; [7]Jeshaiah son of Athaliah with 70 men of the Elam family; [8]Zebadiah son of Michael with 80 men of the Shephatiah family; [9]Obadiah son of Jehiel with 218 men of the Joab family; [10]Shelomith son of Josiphiah with 160 men of the Bani family; [11]Zechariah son of Bebai with 28 men of the Bebai family; [12]Johanan son of Hakkatan with 110 men of the Azgad family; [13]Eliphelet, Jeuel, Shemaiah who returned sometime later with 60 men of the Adonikam family; [14]Uthai and Zabbud with 70 men of the Bigvai family. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[15]I brought everyone together at the Ahava River, and we camped there three days. I went over the lists of those who were there, and to my surprise not one Levite was there. [16]So I sent for Eliezer, Ariel, Shemaiah, Elnathan, Jarib, Elnathan, Nathan, Zechariah, and Meshullam, who were Levite leaders. I also sent for Joiarib and Elnathan, who were wise men. [17]I also sent for Iddo, leader of the Levites at Casiphia, asking him and his relatives and temple servants to send us temple priests. [18]God was good to us, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and they sent us an outstanding man named Sherebiah with 18 of his sons and brothers. He was a descendant of Mahli, son of Levi and grandson of Jacob. [19]They also sent Hashabiah, with Jeshaiah, descendants of Merari, and 20 of his relatives. [20]In addition they sent 220 temple servants, a group of temple workers David first chose years ago, and they were all listed by name. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}
[21]By the Ahava River I asked the people to fast and pray, {149 Ezra's Prayer and Fast for Guidance, Ezra 8:23} and to humble themselves before God and to ask for a safe journey for us and our children and our belongings. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [22]I didn't want to ask the king for soldiers and cavalry to protect us on the way because we had told the king the LORD was with us, but He gets angry at those who turn from Him. [23]So we fasted and prayed that God would protect us, and He did. {149 Ezra's Prayer and Fast for Guidance, Ezra 8:23}

Fasting takes your prayers to a higher level. When you give up food, it demonstrates to God that you are absolutely sincere. Fasting shows how desperate you are for God to intervene in your crisis. Lord, I will fast to get answers to my prayer. So when I fast, show me how to pray and move me to a place where I can get "through" to You. Lord, my fasting demonstrates that my spiritual needs are greater than my physical needs. Amen.

[24]I chose 12 leaders of the priests—Sherabiah, Hashabiah, and 10 others—[25]to transport the silver, gold, and gold bowls, and other items that the king, his Council of Seven, his advisers and officials, and the Israelites had given for the temple. [26]I weighed the gifts as I gave them to the 12 priests. They totaled 25 tons of silver, 7,500 pounds of silver articles, 7,500 pounds of gold, [27]20 gold bowls weighing about 19 pounds, and two articles of polished bronze, as valuable as gold. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [28]I said to these priests, "You belong to the LORD, and the silver and gold are a freewill offering to the LORD, the God of our ancestors. [29]So guard these treasures well and then present them to the priests, Levites, and family leaders who are to keep them safe in the temple storerooms." {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} [30]So the priests and Levites accepted these gifts to take them to the temple.

[31]The middle of April we left the Ahava River for Jerusalem. God was with us, and He protected us all along the way. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [32]After we arrived in Jerusalem, we rested three days. [33]On the fourth day after our arrival we weighed the silver, gold, and other items and gave them to Meremoth, son of Uriah, the priest, Eleazar, son of Phinehas, and the Levites, Jozabad son of Jeshua, and Noadiah son of Binnui. [34]Everything was counted, weighed, and recorded.

Ezra kept a record to make every person accountable to the money they were carrying. Then when Ezra arrived in Jerusalem, he checked their valuables against the record. Good records keep employees honest. Lord, I will keep records on myself to make sure I'm honest with You and myself; then others will trust me. Amen.

[35]Everyone who returned with me sacrificed burnt offerings to God, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} including 12 bulls for Israel, 96 rams, 77 lambs, and 12 male goats as a sin offering. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [36]Some of the people told the king's orders to the leaders of the area west of the Euphrates River, and they helped with the rebuilding of the temple of God. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

Ezra 9

Ezra Prays for Forgiveness

[1]Later the Jewish leaders came to me and said, "Many of our people, and even some priests and Levites, are living like the people around them. They are guilty of some of the horrible customs of the Canaanites, Hittites, Perizzites, Jebusites, Ammonites, Moabites, Egyptians, and Amorites. [2]Some of our men have married these foreign women and their sons have done the same. So our race has become mixed with these foreign marriages. What's worse, our leaders and officials are some of the first offenders." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

[3]When I heard this, I tore my clothing, pulled hair from my head and beard,

and sat down shocked. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Sometimes we should confess the sins of our state and nation. O God, forgive me my sin, and forgive the sins of my nation. We have done wickedness in Your sight. We have sinned against You. Amen.

4Everyone who feared God because of this sin sat with me until time for the evening sacrifice. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}
5At the time of the evening sacrifice I was still sitting there in grief with my clothes torn. I bowed to my knees and lifted my hands to the LORD, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 6and I prayed, "O my God, I am so ashamed to face you. Our sins are higher than our heads and our guilt reaches to the heavens. 7In much of our past we have sinned. And that is why we and our kings and priests have been defeated by other kings. We have been killed, taken as slaves, robbed, and made ashamed, just as today. 8But now you have briefly shown us Your grace by giving us some security here and encouraging us and giving us some relief from slavery." {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Ezra acknowledged the mercy of God when he prayed, "You have punished us less than our sins have deserved" (Ezra 9:13). Lord, I deserve hell because of my sin, but You have given me heaven. I deserve punishment, but in grace You have been kind to me. Thank You for Your grace and forgiveness. Truly, You are a merciful God. Amen.

9"We were slaves, but You didn't turn from us. Instead You caused the king of Persia to help us rebuild the temple and repair its ruins, and he has helped us build a fence of protection around our people. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
10"But now after all this we have forgotten the commands 11You gave us through Your servants the prophets. You told us the land was full of sinful people who were polluting people with their unclean actions from one end of the country to the other. 12You told us not to let our daughters marry their sons, and not to let our sons marry their daughters, and not to help them in any way. You promised us that if we avoided these sins, we would become prosperous and leave that prosperity to our children.
13"You punished us because of our sins, {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} though not as much as we deserved, and you have brought back some of us to our land. 14Why are we disobeying your commands again by letting our sons and daughters marry these people who do such awful things? Your anger could destroy us till no survivors are left. 15LORD, the God of Israel, You are just in letting a few of us survive. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} But again our guilt makes us ashamed to face You." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}

Ezra 10

God's People Confess Their Sin

[1]While Ezra was on his knees in front of the temple and was praying and crying, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} many Israelites—men, women, and children—gathered there and cried with him. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [2]Then Shecaniah son of Jehiel, a descendant of Elam, said to Ezra, "We confess that we have disobeyed God {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} by marrying foreign women. But we believe there is still hope. [3]Let's agree to divorce these foreign wives and send them off with their children. This will follow your advice and the advice of others who respect the Lord. We will obey God's law." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

Sin and sinners would seek to influence us to sin. Sometimes sin—like the lust of the flesh—becomes a part of us. Then it's hard to get rid of what will destroy us. Lord, I will separate myself from the lust of the flesh so I can walk with You in purity. Amen.

[4]"Take courage. You must do something, and we will support whatever you do."
[5]So Ezra demanded that the priests, Levites, and all the people do as Shecaniah suggested. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[6]Ezra then went to the room of Jehohanan in the temple, and spent the night there. He ate and drank nothing because he was still grieving over the people's sin. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

Most of the people were willing for others to live with sin. They didn't make any effort to separate themselves from sin until one intercessor fasted, prayed, and was willing to stand against sin. Am I willing to be the one intercessor who will pray for revival among God's people? Lord, I will be that person. I will pray, fast, and seek Your face until revival comes. I will make a difference in my church. Amen.

[7]Ezra had a message sent throughout Judah and Jerusalem that everyone who had returned from Babylon should come to Jerusalem in three days. [8]If someone did not come in three days, he would lose everything he owned and would not be considered part of the Israelites.
[9]In three days in December the people of Judah and Benjamin arrived and were sitting in front of the temple. They were shaking because of the serious nature of the meeting and because it was raining.
[10]Ezra the priest stood and said, "You have sinned by marrying pagan women. [11]Now admit this sin, {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} and separate yourselves from these women." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
[12]The people answered loudly, "Yes, you are right. We will do what you say." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

When the people were willing to do something about their pagan wives, then something happened. As one person, no one may listen to you; but you can pray for God to

change the opinion of the majority. Then the exiles "did what the majority suggested" (Ezra 10:12). Lord, I may pray alone, but I will pray. No one may listen to me at first, but I will pray. I will not quit praying until the majority does what is right. Amen.

13"But this can't be done in a day or two because many of us are involved in this. And we can't stand here in the rain. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} 14So let everyone who has sinned in this way meet with the leaders and judges of his city. Then each situation can be cleared up, and God's anger can be turned away." {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} 15Only four people, Jonathan son of Asahel, Jahzeiah son of Tikvah, Meshullam, and Shabbethai, a Levite—were against this idea. {222 Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer)}
16So this plan was followed. Ezra chose family leaders and he listed their names. They began this process in the middle of December 17and finished three months later in the middle of March. {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1}
18These are the priests who had married foreign women:
From the family of Jeshua son of Jozadak and his brothers: Maaseiah, Eliezer, Jarib, and Gedaliah. 19They agreed to divorce their wives, and they each admitted their guilt by offering a ram as a guilt offering. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 20From the family of Immer: Hanani and Zebadiah. 21From the family of Harim: Maaseiah, Elijah, Shemaiah, Jehiel, and Uzziah. 22From the family of Pashhur: Elioenai, Maaseiah, Ishmael, Nethanel, Jozabad, and Elasah.
23These are the Levites who were guilty: Jozabad, Shimei, Kelaiah (also called Kelita), Pethahiah, Judah, and Eliezer.
24This is the singer who was guilty: Eliashib.
These are the gatekeepers who were guilty: Shallum, Telem, and Uri.
25These are the other people of Israel who were guilty:
From the family of Parosh: Ramiah, Izziah, Malkijah, Mijamin, Eleazar, Malkijah, and Benaiah. 26From the family of Elam: Mattaniah, Zechariah, Jehiel, Abdi, Jeremoth, and Elijah. 27From the family of Zattu: Elioenai, Eliashib, Mattaniah, Jeremoth, Zabad, and Aziza. 28From the family of Bebai: Jehohanan, Hananiah, Zabbai, and Athlai. 29From the family of Bani: Meshullam, Malluch, Adaiah, Jashub, Sheal, and Jeremoth. 30From the family of Pahath-Moab: Adna, Kelal, Benaiah, Maaseiah, Mattaniah, Bezalel, Binnui, and Manasseh. 31From the family of Harim: Eliezer, Ishijah, Malkijah, Shemaiah, Shimeon, 32Benjamin, Malluch, and Shemariah. 33From the family of Hashum: Mattenai, Mattattah, Zabad, Eliphelet, Jeremai, Manasseh, and Shimei.
34From the family of Bani: Maadai, Amram, Uel, 35Benaiah, Bedeiah, Keluhi, 36Vaniah, Meremoth, Eliashib, 37Mattaniah, Mattenai, and Jaasu.
38From the family of Binnui: Shimei, 39Shelemiah, Nathan, Adaiah, 40Macnadebai, Shashai, Sharai, 41Azarel, Shelemiah, Shemariah, 42Shallum, Amariah, and

Joseph. [43]From the family of Nebo: Jeiel,
Mattithiah, Zabad, Zebina, Jaddai, Joel,
and Benaiah.
[44]Each of these men, a total of 111, had a
pagan wife {160 Family-Heritage Prayer,
Matt. 1:1-17}, and some even had children
by these wives.

Nehemiah

Ch 1: The Story of History Involves a "Chance" Conversation and Nehemiah Prays 656
Ch 2: Nehemiah Arrives in Jerusalem 657
Ch 3: The City Wall Is Repaired 659
Ch 4: The Wall Is Guarded 661
Ch 5: Helps the Poor and Oppressed 663
Ch 6: Nehemiah Is Not Afraid of His Enemies 664
Ch 7: Nehemiah's Instructions 666
Ch 8: The Law of God Is Read to the People 668
Ch 9: The People Confessed Their Sins 670
Ch 10: Their Promise to Obey God's Law 673
Ch 11: The People of Jerusalem 674
Ch 12: The Priests and the Levites 676
Ch 13: Nehemiah Enforces the Law 678

NEHEMIAH

Key Word: *Remember* (Nehemiah 13:31)

Key Verse: "So the wall was finished on the twenty-fifth day of Elul, in fifty-two days" (6:15).

Theme: The book of Nehemiah covers the period following 445 B.C. when Israel re-established itself on its homeland by rebuilding the walls and re-creating a vibrant community life. Throughout, Nehemiah inserts prayers as he writes this book, "Remember me, O my God, for good" (13:31). As needs came to Nehemiah's mind, he wrote them into the scriptural record. Nehemiah teaches us to write out our prayers, and to pray as we go about our daily activities. Whether we're waiting in line or doing any normal work, we should pray spontaneously {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} as did Nehemiah. *Lord, I will pray as I do my work, just as Nehemiah prayed. I will pray as I write. Keep me close to You so I can pray at all times. "Pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). Amen.*

Nehemiah 1

The Story of History Involves a "Chance" Conversation and Nehemiah Prays

1 This is the story of Nehemiah son of Hacaliahi. In November of Artaxerxes' 20th year (444 B.C.) as king of Persia, I was in the fortress in Susa. 2 My brother Hanani came from Judah with some other men to visit me. I asked them about the Jews who had returned to our land, and I asked about Jerusalem. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 3 They said, "Those who went back to our land are facing a lot of problems. The wall of Jerusalem is still torn down and the city gates are burned." {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

Bad news should drive us to our knees. That's what Nehemiah did when his brother gave him discouraging news about Jerusalem and its inhabitants. Lord, teach me to pray when I get bad news. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} I don't want to be a pessimist, nor do I want to just react negatively when I get bad news. Teach me to trust You to do something about bad news. Amen.

4This news made me cry. For several days I mourned and went without eating {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and 5I prayed to the God of Heaven, "LORD God of Heaven, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} You are great and awesome, and You keep your promises of love to those who love You and obey You. 6Please listen {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} to the prayer of Your servant which he is voicing day and night for the people of Israel, Your servants. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} We have sinned against You, and I include myself and my family. 7We have been very wicked toward You by not obeying the commands and laws You gave Moses. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6}

8"Remember the promise You made to Moses. You said, 'If you are unfaithful, I will scatter you among the nations. 9But if you turn to Me and obey My commands, I will bring you from the most distant nations and bring you to the place where I have chosen to be worshiped.' {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

10"These people are Your servants whom you rescued by Your great strength and power. 11Please hear this prayer of Your servant and others who gladly honor Your name. Please give me, Your servant, success today by having the king respond favorably to my request." {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} I was the one who served the king his wine.

Nehemiah prayed what is called today, identificational repentance. This is when we confess the sins committed by other people. We can't get forgiveness for them if they do not confess and seek forgiveness. But we can ask God to deal with the consequences of their sin so that their consequences do not affect us and others. Lord, I confess the sin of abortion that's practiced in America; forgive our nation and don't judge us for our sin. I confess also the sin of greed, sexual deviation, and pride. Don't judge America. Rather speak to people's heart so they will repent and be saved. Lord, send revival to my nation. Amen.

Nehemiah 2

Nehemiah Arrives in Jerusalem

1In the following spring in Artaxerxes' 20th year, I served him his wine. I had never looked depressed before. 2But the king asked me, "Why do you look sad? You aren't sick, are you? You look like something is bothering you." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} I was afraid,

"What's in the well comes up in the bucket." Nehemiah's concern for Jerusalem showed on his face. Lord, teach me to pray about everything... big things... little things... even things that bother me. Amen.

3but I said, "May you live forever. Why shouldn't I feel sad when the city where my ancestors are buried is in ruins and its gates have been burned?" {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 4The king said, "What can I do for you?" Then I prayed a

quick, silent prayer to the God of Heaven, [5]and I said to the king, "If it pleases you, please let me go to Judah to rebuild the city where my ancestors are buried." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

When given a wonderful opportunity, what's the first thing you do? Nehemiah immediately prayed. Even as he stood in the presence of the king, Nehemiah prayed. Lord, I will pray—even when talking to others—for You are always with me, and You will answer the shortest and simplest prayer. Amen.

[6]The queen was sitting beside him, and he asked how long I would be gone and when I would get back. He agreed to let me go when I told him when I would be back. [7]Then I asked him, "Would you write letters to the governors of the area west of the Euphrates River, asking them to let me travel safely through their territory to Judah? [8]Also I would like to have a letter to Asaph, manager of the king's forest, asking him to give me timber to rebuild the gates of the temple fortress and timber to rebuild the city wall and to build a house for me." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} God was good to me, and the king wrote these letters. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

[9]The king even sent some army officers and horsemen along with me, and when I got to the area west of the Euphrates, I gave the governors there the king's letters. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [10]But when Sanballat the Horonite and Tobiah an Ammonite official heard I was in Jerusalem, they were very angry that I had come to help Israel.

No matter what we do for God, there will be opposition, just as Sanballat and Tobiah "were angry" and spoke against Nehemiah's task. Lord, help me look beyond opposition to Your plan for my life and Your task that I've been given. Help me to be strong when opposition comes, and help me not be dissuaded from doing Your will. Amen

[11]Three days after I arrived in Jerusalem, [12]I got up at night with a few men, {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} not telling anyone what God wanted me to do for Jerusalem. I rode a donkey, and the men with me walked. [13]I went through the Valley Gate on the west, then South toward the Jackal's Well and the Garbage Gate. As I rode, I saw the broken down walls and burned gates. [14]On the east side I headed north to the Fountain Gate and King's Pool, but my donkey couldn't get through all the debris. [15]So I went to the Kidron Valley on the east and viewed the wall from there. Then I entered the city again at the Valley Gate.

[16]The city officials didn't know I had been out there. I hadn't told any of the priests, leaders, officials, or those who would be helping me in this project. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [17]When I got back, I said to those leaders, "You know that Jerusalem is in ruins. Even the gates have been burned. So let's rebuild the city {273 Large-Praying, Acts

4:23-31} so we can be proud of it again."
18Then I told them how God had been
good to me and what the king had said.
{478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} They
all said, "What are we waiting for? Let's
start building now." So they got started.
{432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

No one can do the work of God alone, it takes a team. Nehemiah gathered the men of Jerusalem and told them, "Let's rebuild the walls of Jerusalem, and rid ourselves of this disgrace" (Neh. 2:17). Lord, I may try to do everything myself, just because I love You and want Your work done. But teach me to work with others—in Your church—to get Your work done. Amen.

19When Sanballat the Horonite, Tobiah
the Ammonite official, and Geshem an
Arab heard what we planned to do, they
made fun of us. They said, "What do you
think you are doing? Are you planning
to rebel against the king?" {334 Oppo-
sition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} 20I
answered, "We are servants of the God of
heaven, who will help us rebuild our city.
But you fellows have no right to any of
this property." {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom.
11:33}

Nehemiah 3

The City Wall Is Repaired

1Many people helped in this rebuilding
project. The high priest Eliashib and other
priests rebuilt the Sheep Gate. After set-
tling its doors in place, they dedicated it
to the LORD and the wall to the Tower
of the Hundred and the Hananel Tower.
2People from Jericho rebuilt the next sec-
tion of the wall, {353 Physical Before Spir-
itual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} and Zaccur, son
of Imri, a section beyond that.

The phrase occurs throughout the chapter, "Next to them" (Neh. 3:2, 4, 5, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, etc.). This is a wonderful picture of Christian unity, that is, people working together to accomplish God's work. Lord, I am encouraged that everyone was committed to help and that they worked in the section of Jerusalem where they lived. Lord, I want to serve my fellow man, especially those who live where I live. Amen.

3The sons of Hassenaah built the Fish
Gate, laying the beams, hanging the doors,
and putting bolts and bars in place. 4Mere-
moth, son of Uriah and grandson of Hak-
koz, repaired the next section. Meshullam,
son of Berekiah and grandson of Meshez-
abel, repaired the next section, and Zadok
son of Baana was next to him. {432 Ser-
vice-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 5The men from
Tekoa repaired the section after that, but
their leaders did not help.
6Joiada, son of Paseah, and Meshullam,
son of Besodeiah, repaired the Old Gate,
laying the beams, hanging the doors, and
putting bolts and bars in place. 7Melatiah
from Gibeon, Jadon from Meronoth, and
people from Gibeon and Mizpah, which
were under the governor of the area west
of the Euphrates. 8The next section was
rebuilt by Uzziel, son of Harhaiah, the

goldsmith. Hananiah the perfume maker repaired the section after that up to the Blood Wall on the west side. [9]Next to him was Rephaiah, son of Hur, who was mayor of half of Jerusalem.
[10]Jedaiah, son of Harumaph, rebuilt the section of the wall that was close to his house, and Hattush, son of Hashabneiah, was next to him. [11]Malkijah, son of Harim, and Hasshub, son of Pahath-Moab, rebuilt the next section and also built the Oven Towers. [12]Shallum, son of Hallohesh, who was mayor of the other half of Jerusalem, repaired the next section, and his daughters worked with him.

The wall was built with fathers, sons, and grandsons. Lord, it's good to see the sons and grandsons repair the wall because the sin of their fathers and grandfathers destroyed the wall. May I be aware that my actions influence my children and may I live godly and serve You wholeheartedly. Women also worked on the walls. May I join with all Your children to do Your work. Amen.

[13]Hanun and people from Zanoah rebuilt the Valley Gate, hanging its doors and putting bolts and bars in place. Also they repaired 500 yards of the wall, all the way to the Garbage Gate. [14]The Garbage Gate was repaired by Malkijah, son of Recab, who was ruler of the Beth-Hakkerem district. He hung its doors, and added bolts and bars.
[15]Shallum, son of Col-Hozeh, who was mayor of the district of Mizpah, rebuilt the Fountain Gate. He put a roof over it and hung its doors and put bolts and bars in place. He also rebuilt the wall at Siloam Pool, a section that was near the king's garden and that extended to the stairs that lead down from the City of David. [16]Next to Shallum was Nehemiah, son of Azbuk, mayor of half of the Beth-Zur district. He rebuilt the section of the wall to a place opposite the tombs of David and as far as the water reservoir and the army barracks.

This chapter contains a long list of those who worked to repair the wall. Lord, I'm glad for this long list of names. It shows that each person was important; it also reveals where they worked and how much they did. Lord, I'm glad You keep a record in heaven of all I do; my prayer is to please You by my efforts. Amen. *{333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2}*

[17]Next were Levites who worked under Rehum, son of Bani. Beside him were Hashabiah, mayor of half of the Keilah district, and [18]Binnui, son of Henadad, who was mayor of the other half of the Keilah district. [19]Next to him was Ezer, son of Jeshua, ruler of Mizpah, who repaired the section across from the armory where the wall turns. [20]Baruch, son of Zabbai, eagerly rebuilt the section of the wall loading from the turn to the house of Eliashib, the high priest. [21]And Meremoth, son of Uriah, and grandson of Hakkoz, built the wall to the far end of the priest's house.
[22]Next to Meremoth were those priests from around Jerusalem who worked on the wall: [23]Benjamin and Hasshub rebuilt the wall in front of their houses, and

Azariah, son of Maaseiah and grandson of Ananiah, repaired the wall in front of his house.

This chapter reveals that many people repaired the wall next to their house. I remember being in a Sunday school class when I was very young, my teacher read this chapter to us and told how each man would do a better job because he would have to sit on his porch each evening to see the job he did. Lord, when someone repaired the wall by his house, he made sure it was strong and beautiful. Then he would be safe and would enjoy looking at it in the future. I'll make sure I work diligently on the things near my house. Amen. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[24]Next to him was Binnui, son of Henadad, who rebuilt the wall from Azariah's house to the corner. [25]Palal, son of Uzai, repaired the next section starting at the corner of the wall and going to the tower of the upper level of the palace near the courtyard. Pedaiah, son of Parosh, [26]and the temple servants who lived on the Ophel Hill repaired the wall up to the Water Gate on the east and the tower guarding the temple. [27]The people from Tekoa had repaired a section of the wall and now they did another section. This section began across from the tower that guarded the temple and went all the way to the wall near the Ophel Hill. [28]Other priests rebuilt the section of the wall north of the House Gate. Each priest worked on the wall in front of his house. [29]Zadok, son of Immer, rebuilt the wall next to his house, and beyond him was Shemaiah, son of Shecaniah, guard of the East Gate. [30]Hananiah and Hanun, who had rebuilt some other sections, now repaired a section next to Shelemiah. Meshullam, son of Berakiah, also built another section, this time in front of his house. [31]Malkijah, a goldsmith, rebuilt the next section, as far as the house of the temple servants and merchants, opposite the Inspection Gate, and on to the room at the corner. [32]Other goldsmiths and merchants rebuilt the last section of the wall from the corner to the Sheep Gate. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

This chapter indicated women worked on the wall (Neh. 3:12). Lord, I'm glad women were involved, it showed fairness; also, I'm glad politicians got dirty, it showed "big wigs" cared. May I never be too proud to get my hands dirty in Your work. Amen.

Nehemiah 4

The Wall Is Guarded

[1]When Sanballat heard that we were rebuilding the wall, he got very angry and very upset. He made fun of us and laughed at us in front of his friends and his soldiers and [2]he said, "What do these feeble-minded Jews think they are doing? Do they think they can rebuild the wall and start offering sacrifices in one day? How do they think they can use burned stones from these piles of debris?" {374 Praying

against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
3Tobiah the Ammonite said, "Yes, just look at the wall they are building. Even a fox could knock over this wall." {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}
4Then I prayed, "Hear us, O God, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} for we are being hated. Please make their mocking us turn against them. Let them be taken away as captives. 5Don't forgive their sins for they have insulted You and our workers." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
6The people worked very hard, and they built up the wall to half its original height. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 7But Sanballat, Tobiah, the Arabs, the Ammonites, and the men from Ashdod heard about these repairs and that holes in the wall were being filled in. So they were very mad, 8and they decided to join forces and fight against Jerusalem and stir up trouble. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}
9But we prayed and guarded the city day and night. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
10Meanwhile the Jews were discouraged and they said, "We workers are tired out, and how can we ever get rid of all this debris? {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 11And our enemies are saying, 'Before they know what has happened, we will sneak up on them and kill them and that will put an end to their work.'" {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 12And so the Jews who lived nearby then told them wherever they turned the enemy always would be near.

There are always complaints from some of God's people. "The people of Judah began to complain that the workers were becoming tired." There was so much rubble" (Neh. 4:10, NLT). Lord, I will not complain. I will keep my eyes on You, I will not listen to those who criticize. Forgive me when I have complained in the past. May I not focus on problems, but I will focus on You and what You're doing. Amen. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

13So I placed guards from each family behind the lowest places of the wall, with their swords, spears, and bows. 14I looked things over and I said to the leaders, officials, and all the people, "Don't be afraid of them. Remember that the LORD is great and awesome. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} So think of Him as you fight for your loved ones."
15Our enemies heard that we knew of their plans against us, but God kept them from it. And so we all returned to our work on the wall. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 16From then on, I had half of the men work on the wall while the other half were on guard with spears, shields, bows, and were wearing metal armor. These guards stood 17behind the workers, 18and each worker wore his sword. And the man who was to blow the trumpet stayed with me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Building and battling. About half of the things we do for God is building up His work. The other half is defending God's

work from the enemy. Lord, I thank You for opportunities to defeat the enemy and defend Your work. It's a privilege to be Your soldier. Also, thank You for peace when I can work for You without opposition and satanic attack. In war or peace I'll serve You. Amen.

19I said to the leaders, officials, and people, "Our work is spread out, and we are separated from each other. 20So whenever you hear the trumpet, come quickly to where I am. Our God will fight for us." {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} 21Every day from dawn till the stars came out half the men worked on the walls, and the other half stood guard with their spears. {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} 22I asked some men to stay inside the city and help guard the city at night. 23None of us—myself, my relatives, the workers, the guards—changed our clothes. We always kept our weapons with us even when we went for water. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}

Nehemiah 5

Helps the Poor and Oppressed

1Some of the men and their wives 2said, "We have lots of children, and to stay alive we need money to buy food." 3Others complained, "During the famine we had to mortgage our fields, vineyards, and houses to have money to buy food." 4Others said, "To pay taxes on our fields and vineyards we've had to borrow money. 5We even had to sell our children as slaves to get some money, and some of our daughters have been raped. We are helpless, and our fields and vineyards have been mortgaged." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 6When I heard all this, I was very angry. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

It's all right to get angry at sin, or at other believers who sin; Nehemiah got angry (Neh. 5:6). However, the New Testament directs us, "Be angry and sin not" (Eph. 4:26). How do we sin without anger? We should intercede to God if we lose control of ourselves, or when we get angry for the wrong reason, or when we harm someone intentionally or unintentionally with our anger. Lord, I will control myself at all times. Sit on the throne of my heart and direct all I do. I will not be angry at You, nor at other people. I will be angry at sin. Use the energy of my anger to advance Your work and testimony. Amen. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}

7I thought about this, and then I said to the leaders and officials, "How can you charge interest of your own people?" I called a public meeting, 8and I said, "We have been trying to buy back our relatives who have had to sell themselves into slavery. But now you are selling them back into slavery. How often do we have to buy them back?" The officials said nothing because they knew what I said was true. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}
9I added, "What you have done is not right. We must respect the LORD by the way we live so the Gentiles won't mock us. 10I and my relatives and leaders have been

lending money and grain to some of our people. But we must stop charging interest on these loans. [11]So give back to their owners the fields, vineyards, olive groves, and houses and also return the interest you charged." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Nehemiah realized he was guilty of the sin that others were doing. "I myself, as well as my brothers and my workers, have been lending" (Neh. 5:10, NLT). Lord, give me eyes to see all that I do. May I not be hypocritical of accusing others of the same sin I commit. Forgive me of all my sins, both intentional and ignorantly committed. May I be a great testimony for You. Amen. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}

[12]The people said, "Okay. We will return these things as you said." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [13]Then I shook out the fold of my robe, and I said, "If you don't keep your promise may God empty you of your belongings like this." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} All the people said, "Amen," and praised the LORD and they said, "We will do what we have promised." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[14]In King Artexerxes' 20th year (444 B.C.) I was appointed governor of Judah. And during the 12 years I had that portion I and my brothers never ate the food that was provided for us. [15]This contrasts with the former governor who demanded that my people give them food and wine every day and pay a daily tax of a pound of silver. Even then assistants made things difficult for my people. But because I respected God I did not act like that. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [16]I and my men stayed at work on the wall and we did not buy any property.

[17]I regularly fed 150 Jewish officials besides visitors who came from other countries. [18]Every day I provided for them an ox, 6 fat sheep, and lots of chickens. And every 10 days we had a big supply of wine. Yet I never asked that the king give me any food allowance to cover these needs. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [19]I pray that God will remember all I have done for these people.

Right in the middle of his actions and writing, Nehemiah broke out into a prayer. "Remember, O my God, all that I have done for those people, and bless me for it" (Neh. 5:19, NLT). Lord, may I pray during my waking hours. May I pray when talking to others, and when thinking, and when reading, as well as when I write. Lord, bless what I write and read for Your glory. Amen. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

Nehemiah 6

Nehemiah Is Not Afraid of His Enemies

[1]Sanballat, Tobiah, Geshem the Arab, and other enemies learned that I had finished rebuilding the wall. The only thing yet to be done was to hang the doors in the gates. [2]Sanballat and Geshem sent me a message, asking me to meet them in one

of the villages in the Ono Valley. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18} I knew they were planning to kill me, [3]so I sent back this message: "I'm doing an important work so I can't stop just to meet with you two." [4]Four times they sent me the same message, and each time I refused to go. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} [5]Then Sanballat's servant came with an open letter [6]that said: "Geshem tells me that everywhere he goes he hears that the Jews are planning to rebel and make you their king. [7]And he hears that you have prophets in Jerusalem who are saying you are their king. You can be sure this news will get back to Artaxerxes. So let's talk this over." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Satan tried in different ways to stop the walls from being built. The enemy criticized and complained, then the enemy threatened to attack. Then the enemy tried to get Nehemiah sidetracked in discussion and negotiations. Finally, they threatened to (lie) tell the King of Persia that Nehemiah was planning a rebellion to set up his own kingdom. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} Lord, help me see how many ways satan will attack me and try to destroy both me and Your work. Make me wise to satan's tactics. Give me wisdom, what to do and think when I am attacked. I depend on You for victory. Amen. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}

[8]I sent this message back to Sanballat: "You are lying. None of this is true." [9]They were trying to scare us and keep us from working. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18} So I prayed for the Lord to give me strength. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [10]One day I went to see Shemaiah, son of Delaiah and grandson of Mehetabel. He said, "Let's go hide in the temple and lock the doors because tonight some men are coming to kill you." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [11]But I said, "Why should I, the governor of our people, run from danger? Why should I go into the temple to save my life? I won't do it."

[12]I sensed that God had not sent Shemaiah, {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} but that Tobiah and Sanballat had paid him [13]to try to scare me and make me sin by going into the temple, and that would have ruined my reputation. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [14]I prayed, "O God, please punish Tobiah, Sanballat, and Noadiah the prophetess and other so-called prophets who are trying to frighten me." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

In defeating the enemy's attacks, Nehemiah did not pay attention to what the enemy said. He focused on doing God's work and equipped the workers to build and battle at the same time. Then he prayed as he worked, but Nehemiah gave all his time and energy to put God's work first. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Nehemiah focused on finishing, and he did it. Lord, I want to

put Your work first. But most of all give me determination to be a finisher. Amen.

15The wall was finally finished in September, just 52 days after we began. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 16When our enemies in nearby nations heard about our work, they were humiliated because they realized that God had helped us finish this project. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

The walls had not been rebuilt for 142 years, but it was finished in 52 days. It wasn't the size of the job that kept Israel from rebuilding the walls. The barrier was in their minds. But when God put it within the heart of Nehemiah to finish the wall, it was done in a very short period of time. {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} Lord, I procrastinate and put off doing many good things. Forgive me for my procrastination. Forgive me of my sin. Give me instant obedience to do Your will. Transform me from being lazy about some things, and make me into Your obedient servant. Amen.

17In those 52 days the Jewish leaders had been writing to Tobiah, and he kept replying. 18That's because Shecaniah was his son-in-law, and Tobiah's son, Jehohanan, had married the daughter of Meshullam, son of Berekiah. 19They all told me Tobiah had done wonderful things, and they told him everything I had said. So Tobiah kept sending me letters, trying to scare me. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Nehemiah 7

Nehemiah's Instructions

1After the wall was rebuilt and the gates hung, I assigned work to the gatekeepers, singers, and Levites. 2I put my brother Hanani in charge of Jerusalem, and I made Hananiah commander of the fortress. Hananiah was an honest man who revered God more than most people do. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Nehemiah placed his brother over Jerusalem, the one who traveled to Persia to tell him about the sad condition of the city of Jerusalem. Since Hanani was burdened for Jerusalem, it was only right he rule Jerusalem. There's a lesson here: don't put a person in a job if that person doesn't have a burden for the job. Lord, give me a job that matches my burden for Your work. Amen. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1}

3I told them, "Keep the gates closed till well after sunrise. And before the gatekeepers go off duty at sunset, have them close and lock the gates. Choose Jerusalem residents to serve as guards, some near their homes and others at other positions." {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Just because the walls are up doesn't mean the city was safe. We have to carefully guard ourselves day and night, and "keep the gates closed at night." Lord, just because I have eternal life doesn't mean I can rest in my salvation. Satan is ever vigilant to destroy me and Your work. I will be just as vigilant.

I will guard myself and pray for spiritual protection. Keep me safe by the Holy Spirit. Amen. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

4The city was large, and not many people were living there yet, and only a few hundred were in the city. 5God told me to register the city leaders and regular citizens. I had found the record of those who had first returned to Judah, and this is what was written in it. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 6These are the people who returned to Judah after being held captives by Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. 7Their leaders were Zerubbabel, Jeshua, Nehemiah, Azariah, Raamiah, Nahamani, Mordecai, Bilshan, Mispereth, Bigvai, Nehum, and Baanah. This is how many returned from each family group:
8The family of Parosh: 2, 172
9The family of Shephatiah: 372
10The family of Arah: 652
11The family of Pahath-Moab, of the family of Jeshua and Joab: 2,818
12The family of Elam: 1,254
13The family of Zattu: 845
14The family of Zaccai: 760
15The family of Binnui: 648
16The family of Bebai: 628
17The family of Azgad: 2,322
18The family of Adonikam: 667
19The family of Bigvai: 2,067
20The family of Adin: 655
21The family of Ater of Hezekiah: 98
22The family of Hashum: 328
23The family of Bezai: 324
24The family of Hariph: 112
25The family of Gibeon: 95
26The people of Bethlehem and Netophah: 188
27The people of Anathoth: 128
28The people of Beth-Azmaveth: 42
29The people of Kiriath-Jearim, Kephirah, and Beeroth: 743
30The people of Ramah and Geba: 621
31The people of Micmash: 122
32The people of Bethel and Ai: 123
33The people of Nebo: 52
34The citizens of Elam: 1,254
35The citizens of Harim: 320
36The citizens Jericho: 345
37The citizens of Lod, Hadid, and Ono: 721
38The citizens of Senaah: 3,930.
39These are the priests who returned:
The family of Jedaiah (through the line of Jeshua): 973
40The family of Immer: 1,052
41The family of Pashhur: 1,247
42The family of Harim: 1,017.
43These are the Levites who returned: The families of Jeshua, of Kadmiel (descendants of Hodaviah): 74
44The singers of the family of Asaph: 148
45The gatekeepers of the families of Shallum, Ater, Talmon, Akkub, Hatita, and Shobai: 138.
46The descendants of the following temple servants returned: Ziha, Hasupha, Tabbaoth,
47Keros, Sia, Padon,
48Lebana, Hagaba, Shalmai,
49Hanan, Giddel, Gahar,
50Reaiah, Rezin, Nekoda,
51Gazzam, Uzza, Paseah,
52Besai, Meunim, Nephussim,
53Bakbuk, Hakupha, Harhur,

[54]Bazluth, Mehida, Harsha,
[55]Barkos, Sisera, Temah,
[56]Neziah, and Hatipha.
[57]The descendants of these servants of King Solomon returned: Sotai, Sophereth, Perida,
[58]Jaala, Darkon, Giddel,
[59]Shephatiah, Hattil, Pokereth-Hazzebaim and Amon.
[60]In all, the temple servants and the descendants of Solomon's servants numbered 392.
[61]Another group returned to Jerusalem at this time from the towns of Tel-Melah, Tel Harsha, Kerub, Addon, and Immer. However, they could not prove that they or their families were descendants of Israel.
[62]This group included the families of Delaiah, Tobiah, and Nekoda—a total of 642 people.
[63]Three families of priests—Hobaiah, Hakkoz, and Barzillai—also returned to Jerusalem. (This Barzillai had married one of the daughters of Barzillai from Gilead and had taken her family name.) [64]But the records of these three families could not be found, so they were not allowed to serve as priests.
[65]The governor would not let them eat the priests' share of food from the sacrifices until a priest could consult the LORD.
[66]So a total of 42,360 people returned to Judah, [67]in addition to 7,337 servants and 245 singers.
[68]They took with them 736 horses, 245 mules, [69]435 camels, and 6,720 donkeys.
[70]Some of the family leaders gave free-will offerings for the work. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} The governor gave to the treasury 19 pounds of gold, 50 gold basins, and 530 robes for the priests. [71]The other leaders gave to the treasury a total of 2,750 pounds of silver for the work. [72]The rest of the people gave 375 pounds of gold, about 2,500 pounds of silver, and 67 robes for the priests.
[73]So the priests, the Levites, the gatekeepers, the singers, the temple servants, along with all of the people settled in their towns in October. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Nehemiah 8

The Law of God Is Read to the People

[1]Then everyone met at the area just inside the Water Gate. They asked Ezra, the priest and teacher of the law, to read to them the law the Lord had given His people. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} [2]So on October 1 Ezra stood before all the people, [3]and read the law aloud all morning. And everyone, men, women, and children old enough to understand, listened carefully. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [4]Ezra stood on a high platform. On his right were Mattithiah, Shema, Anaiah, Uriah, Hilkiah, and Maaseiah. On his left were Pedaiah, Mishael, Malkijah, Hashum, Hashbaddanah, Zechariah, and Meshullam.
[5]Standing on the platform so everyone could see him, Ezra opened the scroll, and everyone stood up. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [6]He praised the LORD, the great God, and everyone lifted their hands toward heaven and shouted, "Amen."

Then they bowed down to the ground and worshiped the Lord. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16}

When the people heard the Word being read, they lifted their hands and shouted "Amen, Amen." {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} Lord, when Your Word is read, I will lift my hand in agreement and shout inwardly, "Amen." I look forward to learning from Your Word and doing what You want me to do. Amen. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16}

7As Ezra read from the scroll, the Levites Jeshua, Bani, Sherebiah, Jamin, Akkub, Shabbethai, Hodiah, Maaseiah, Kelita, Azariah, Jozabad, Hanan, and Pelaiah went among the people 8and explained the meaning of the passages being read. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

This was preaching at its best. Ezra read the Scriptures, the Levites interpreted it to the people so they could understand. {40 Bible-Comforting Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:18} Probably the Scriptures were read in the original Hebrew language but the people spoke Aramaic or Persian, or some corrupt form of Hebrew. So, the Levites explained what the words meant. We should study the meaning of every word of the Bible because God has inspired every word of Scripture (2 Tim 3:16). Lord, I will study carefully Your Word to know what You mean for me to know, and to do what You mean for me to do. Amen.

9The people started crying as they heard God's law being read. But I, Ezra, and the Levites explaining the passages, said, "This is a special day for the LORD, so don't cry. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 10This is a time to enjoy some good food and drink and to share with those who don't have anything. Don't be sad, because the joy of the LORD will give you strength." {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}
11The Levites encouraged the people not to be sad because this was a special day. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} 12So the people went home and celebrated the day by eating and drinking and sharing food with those who had none. They were glad because of the words of the law that were read to them.

The Lord planned festivals in the Jewish calendar for the Jews to enjoy themselves. Lord, I will eat to Your glory with enjoyment. Only once in the Jewish year did the Lord command the people to fast and show remorse for their sin (Lev. 16:29). {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} Lord, I will enjoy eating to Your glory, and at other times I will fast to show remorse for my sin. Lord, I will do all things to Your glory. Amen.

13The next day the family leaders, priests, and Levites met with Ezra to go over the law in more detail. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} 14They learned that the law said they are to live in shelters during the festival to be held that month. 15They also learned that the people should spread the word in their towns

and in Jerusalem that everyone should go into the woods and get branches from olive trees, myrtle trees, and palm trees to make shelters. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 16So the people got branches from these trees and made shelters on their rooftops, in their yards, and in the courtyard of the temple, and in the open area by the Water Gate and the Ephraim Gate. 17Everyone who returned from Babylon built a shelter and lived in it for a week, and everyone was filled with joy. The Israelites had not celebrated like this since the days of Joshua, son of Nun, about a thousand years earlier. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 18Each day of the week-long festival Ezra read from the law of Moses. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} Then on the eighth day the people gathered for worship. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}

Nehemiah 9

The People Confessed Their Sins

1On the 24th day of the same month the Israelites assembled and refused to eat, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and in grief they were wearing coarse clothing and having dust on their heads. 2They separated themselves from all foreigners and confessed their sins and the sins of their ancestors. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} 3For three hours they stood and listened to the law of the Lord as it was read to them, {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1, 8} and for another three hours they confessed their sins and worshiped the LORD their God. 4Eight Levites were standing on the platform and prayed aloud to the LORD their God. They were Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Kenani. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

In the month of October, the Jews fasted on the Day of Atonement. This is when Israelites mourned for their sins, as we see in this chapter. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Also in October, the Jews lived in "huts" during the Feast of the Shelters to remind them that their fathers lived in tents when they wandered in the wilderness for 40 years. Lord, I know You are a God who punishes sin. I will repent of all sin and I will obey Your commands. Thank You for forgiveness of sins in Christ. I rejoice in Your mercy. Amen. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11}

5Then some of these same Levites and a few there said, "Stand up and praise the LORD your God, who is from everlasting to everlasting." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} These men were Jeshua, Kadmiel, Bani, Hashabneiah, Sherebiah, Hodiah, Shebaniah, and Pethahiah.

The Levites led the people by praying a psalm. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} It is important to pray the words of Scripture because then we are praying exactly as God wants us to pray. Lord, I will pray the psalms in order to pray the way You want me to pray with the words You want me to pray. Amen. (See Praying the Psalms, by Elmer

Towns, published by Destiny Image, Shippensburg, PA).

Then the Levites prayed, "Praise His wonderful name. 6You alone are the LORD, who made the heavens, the stars, and the earth and the oceans, and everything in them. You give life to everything, and the many angels worship You. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 7You are the LORD God, who chose Abram and brought him from Ur of the Chaldeans and changed his name to Abraham. 8Because he was faithful to You, You made an agreement with him to give his descendants the land of the Canaanites, Hittites, Amorites, Perizzites, Jebusites, and Girgashites. Now You have done what You promised; You always do what You say You will do. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

9"You saw how our ancestors in Egypt suffered, and You heard their pleas for help near the Red Sea. 10You knew how Pharaoh and his officials and all his people mistreated Your people with such pride. And so You performed great miracles against them, {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and You have a wonderful reputation that still exists today. 11You divided the Red Sea so Your people could walk through on dry land. And You destroyed their enemies in the sea and they sank to the bottom like heavy stones. 12You led our ancestors by a thick cloud during the day and a column of fire at night.

13"At Mount Sinai You came down from heaven and spoke to our ancestors. You gave them laws and instructions that are fair and commands that are good. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 14You told them about the holy Sabbath and gave them commands and instructions through Moses. 15When they were hungry, You gave them bread from heaven, and when they were thirsty, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} You gave them water from a rock. Then you told them to go and conquer the land You promised them.

16"But our ancestors became proud and stubborn and didn't obey You. 17They did not listen to You, and they forgot all about the great miracles You did for them. In their stubborn rebellion they even appointed a leader to take them back to Egypt, but that would have put them in slavery again. But You are forgiving, merciful, and loving, You don't easily get angry, and You are full of unfailing love. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} You never turned away from them 18even when they made an idol shaped like a calf and said, "This god brought us out of Egypt." They sinned against You in terrible ways. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

19"Yet in Your tender love You did not leave them to die in the desert. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} You continued to guide them by a thick cloud in the daytime and by a column of fire at night. 20Your good Spirit instructed them, {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} and You gave them bread from heaven to eat and water to drink. 21For 40 years they never lacked anything in the desert. Their clothes didn't wear out, and their feet were

never swollen. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
22"You helped them conquer many nations, even some remote areas. They defeated Sihon, king of Heshbon, and Og, king of Bashan. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 23You caused our people to grow into great numbers like stars in the sky, and You brought them into the land You told our ancestors to conquer. 24In possessing the land they defeated the Canaanite people and their rulers and treated them however they wanted. 25They captured fortified cities and rich farmland; they took well-furnished houses, and wells, vineyards, olive trees, and many fruit trees, so they had plenty of food and enjoyed God's many blessings. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
26"In spite of all this they disobeyed You, rebelled against You, and ignored Your laws. They even killed Your prophets, simply because they urged them to turn back to You, and they sinned against You in terrible ways. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 27So You let their enemies defeat them and trouble them. But in those troubles, they prayed to You for help, and in heaven You heard them. Because of Your tender love You sent leaders to rescue them from their enemies. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}
28"But when things were going well, they sinned against You again. So again You let some enemies rule over them. Then again they asked You for help. You heard their prayers, and because of Your tender love You rescued them. This happened over and over. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
29"When You urged them to get back to obeying Your law, they were proud and disobeyed. But if they had obeyed Your commands, they would have had wonderful lives. However, they were stubborn, turned against You, and refused to listen. 30You were patient for years, and Your Spirit warned them through messages given by prophets. Yet they still refused to listen, so again You let nearby nations defeat them. 31But because of Your mercy You did not destroy them or forget them. You are merciful and tender loving. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
32"Therefore God, the great and awesome God, who keeps His promises of loyal love, don't overlook the sufferings that our kings, leaders, priests, prophets, and all our people have experienced from the time of the Assyrians several hundred years ago till now. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 33You have always been fair and reliable even when we sinned. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} 34True, our leaders, priests, and ancestors didn't obey Your law or listen to Your commands and warnings. 35You gave them a kingdom, and they enjoyed the many blessings of much fertile land. But still they did not serve You and did not turn from their sinful ways. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6}
36"So now here we are as slaves in this fruitful, productive, land You gave our ancestors. 37Because of our sins the harvest of this land goes to the kings You have set over us. They have power over us and

our cattle to do as they wish. We are in great misery. 38Therefore we are making a binding agreement in writing to serve the LORD. Our leaders, Levites, and priests are signing this document."

It was not enough to pray, confess sins, and to vow to repent. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} The people wrote out a vow and signed it. "On this sealed document are the names of our princes, and Levites, and priests" (Neh. 9:38). Lord, I will vow to You and write my promises in my journal or in my prayer notes. My sincere pledge is the commitment of my heart to serve You. Amen.

Nehemiah 10

Their Promise to Obey God's Law

1Nehemiah the governor, son of Hacaliah, signed this agreement: {546 Written-Prayer, 1 Chron. 4:10}

Nehemiah the governor was the first to sign the pledge. Leaders always lead, so if you're the leader of a group, you have to be an example to followers. Lord, I will go first so followers will follow. Give me wisdom to know when to lead, a strong will to make good decisions, and courage to follow through. Amen.

The priests who signed the agreement were Zedekiah, 2Seraiah, Azariah, Jeremiah, 3Pashhur, Amariah, Malkijah, 4Hattush, Shebaniah, Malluch, 5Harim, Meremoth, Obadiah, 6Daniel, Ginnethon, Baruch, 7Meshullam, Abijah, Mijamin, 8Maaziah, Bilgai, and Shemaiah.

9The Levites who signed were Jeshua son of Azaniah, Binnui from the family of Henadad, Kadmiel, 10and their fellow Levites: Shebaniah, Hodiah, Kelita, Pelaiah, Hanan, 11Mica, Rehob, Hashabiah, 12Zaccur, Sherebiah, Shebaniah, 13Hodiah, Bani, and Beninu.

14The leaders who signed were Parosh, Pahath-Moab, Elam, Zattu, Bani, 15Bunni, Azgad, Bebai, 16Adonijah, Bigvai, Adin, 17Ater, Hezekiah, Azzur, 18Hodiah, Hashum, Bezai, 19Hariph, Anathoth, Nebai, 20Magpiash, Meshullam, Hezir, 21Meshezabel, Zadok, Jaddua, 22Pelatiah, Hanan, Anaiah, 23Hoshea, Hananiah, Hasshub, 24Hallohesh, Pilha, Shobek, 25Rehum, Hashabnah, Maaseiah, 26Ahiah, Hanan, Anan, 27Malluch, Harim, and Baanah.

28The rest of the people—the priests, Levites, gatekeepers, singers, temple servants, and all who had separated themselves from their pagan neighbors to obey the law {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}—with their wives and their children who were old enough to understand, 29all these accepted this agreement. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} And they placed themselves under God's curse if they did not obey all God's laws and regulations given to Moses. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

30The people made these promises: "We promise not to let our sons and daughters marry non-Israelites. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 31If non-Israelites bring any items or food to sell on the Sabbath or any other sacred day, we won't buy them. {430

Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} Every seventh year we will not plow our fields, and we will cancel debts owed to us. 32Every year we will donate a small amount of silver for the temple. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 33This will help cover the costs of the bread for the Table of Bread without Yeast; the grain offerings and burnt offerings; offerings for the Sabbaths, new moon festivals, and annual festivals; offerings for substitutionary payment for sin; and all other expenses of the temple worship. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

34"We have thrown lots to determine when the families of priests, Levites, and ordinary people are to bring wood to burn on the altar of burnt offering, as required in the law. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 35Also each year we will bring to the temple the first part of our harvest of crops and fruits. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 36Also we will bring to the priests at the temple the firstborn of our cattle, sheep, and goats, as written in the law. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

37"We will bring to the priests the bread dough from the first harvest of grain, and the first fruit from our trees, and the first of the new wine and olive oil. Also we will give a tenth of our crops to the Levites, who collect it in our towns. 38When we give this tenth to the Levites, a priest from the family of Aaron must be present. Then the Levites are to put a tenth of this tenth in the storerooms in the temple. 39These gifts are to be placed in the temple storerooms where sacred objects are stored and are to be used by the priests, gatekeepers, and singers. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} We will not neglect the temple of our God." {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

In this chapter the people promised to bring their tithes. They gave their offering to God while the gifts were actually to take care of the temple and pay the priests. Actually the gifts were to God Himself. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} Lord, I will give my tithes to You because I am responsible to You and I am accountable to You. So receive them, use them, and bless what I give. My gifts represent my heart, so I will give my best. Amen.

Nehemiah 11

The People of Jerusalem

1Only the Israelite leaders and their families were living in Jerusalem. So lots were thrown to choose a tenth of the people in the other towns of Judah to move to the holy city. 2The people were grateful for those who willingly moved to Jerusalem. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

After Nehemiah finished rebuilding the walls, he wanted people to move and live in Jerusalem. It was a huge, empty city with very few living there. It needed businesses to sustain the population, and an operative temple where people could worship. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} Lord, You still love Jerusalem, so I pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). It is the

city where Your name dwelt and the place where Your presence came in the Shekinah cloud. It is the place where Jesus visited and was crucified. It is the place where Jesus will return. Lord, I love Jerusalem and pray for it. Amen.

3Most of the people, and the priests, Levites, temple servants, and descendants of Solomon's servants lived in their own towns.
4Leaders from the tribe of Judah were Athaiah, son of Uzziah, son of Zechariah, son of Amariah, son of Shephatiah, son of Mahalalel, of the family of Perez; 5and Maaseiah son of Baruch, son of Col-Hozeh, son of Hazaiah, son of Adaiah, son of Joiarib, son of Zechariah, a descendant of Shelah. 6There were 468 descendants of Perez who lived in Jerusalem—all outstanding men.
7Leaders from the tribe of Benjamin were Sallu, son of Meshullam, son of Joed, son of Pedaiah, son of Kolaiah, son of Maaseiah, son of Ithiel, son of Jeshaiah. 8After him were Gabbai and Sallai and a total of 928 relatives. 9Their chief officer was Joel, son of Zicri, and second in command was Judah, son of Hassenuah.
10Leaders from the priests were Jedaiah, son of Joiarib; Jakin; 11and Seraiah, son of Hilkiah, son of Meshullam, son of Zadok, son of Meraioth, son of Ahitub, the supervisor of the temple of God. 12Also 822 of their associates worked at the temple. Also there was Adaiah, son of Jeroham, son of Pelaliah, son of Amzi, son of Zechariah, son of Pashhur, son of Malkijah; 13along with 242 of his coworkers, who were heads of their families. The other priest was Amashsai, son of Azarel, son of Ahzai, son of Meshillemoth, son of Immer; 14and 128 of his outstanding coworkers. Their chief officer was Zabdiel, son of Haggedolim.
15Leaders from the Levites were: Shemaiah, son of Hasshub, son of Azrikam, son of Hashabiah, son of Bunni; 16Shabbethai and Jozabad, who were in charge of the work outside the temple; {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 17Mattaniah, son of Mica, son of Zabdi, a descendant of Asaph, who began the thanksgiving services with prayer; Bakbukiah, who was Mattaniah's assistant, and Abda, son of Shammua, son of Galal, son of Jeduthun.

Asaph was the original worship leader when David became king. "The custom of having choir directors to lead the choirs in hymns of praise and thanks to God began long ago in the days of David and Asaph" (12:46, LB). Lord, worship and thanksgiving will have a place at the center of my life. I worship You today for Your greatness, I praise You for Your goodness. Amen.

18In all, there were 284 Levites in Jerusalem.
19Also the gatekeepers were Akkub, Talmon, and 172 of their associates. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
20The other priests, Levites, and the rest of the Israelites lived in towns in Judah where their ancestors had property. 21However, the temple servants, whose leaders were Ziha and Gishpa, lived on the Ophel Hill.

[22]The chief officer of the Levites in Jerusalem was Uzzi, son of Bani, son of Hashabiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Mica. He was of the Asaph clan who were singers at the temple. [23]They were under royal orders, which determined their daily activities.
[24]Pethahiah son of Meshezabel, a descendant of Zerah son of Judah, was the royal adviser in all matters of public administration.
[25]Some of the people of Judah lived in Kiriath-Arba and its villages, Dibon and its villages, and Jekabzeel and its villages. [26]They also lived in Jeshua, Moladah, Beth Pelet, [27]Hazar Shual, Beersheba and its villages, [28]Ziklag, and Meconah and its villages,[29]in En Rimmon, Zorah, Jarmuth, [30]Zanoah, and Adullam with their surrounding villages. They were also in Lachish and its nearby fields and Azekah and its villages. So the people of Judah settled in towns from Beersheeba in the south to the Hinnom Valley in Jerusalem.
[31]The people of Benjamin tribe lived in Geba, Micmash, Aija, and Bethel and nearby villages, [32]Anathoth, Nob, Ananiah, [33]Hazor, Ramah, Gittaim, [34]Hadid, Zeboim, Neballat, [35]Lod, Ono, and in the Craftsmen Valley. [36]And some of the Levites in Judah settled in Benjamin. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Nehemiah 12

The Priests and the Levites

[1]This is the list of the priests and Levites who returned with Zerubbabel, son of Shealtiel and Jeshua, the high priest:
Seraiah, Jeremiah, Ezra, [2]Amariah, Malluch, Hattush, [3]Shecaniah, Rehum, Meremoth, [4]Iddo, Ginnethoi, Abijah, [5]Mijamin, Maadiah, Bilgah, [6]Shemaiah, Joiarib, Jedaiah, [7]Sallu, Amok, Hilkiah, and Jedaiah.
These were the leaders of the priests and their associates in the days of Jeshua.
[8]The Levites who returned with them were Jeshua, Binnui, Kadmiel, Sherebiah, Judah, and Mattaniah, who with his associates was in charge of the songs of praise. [9]Their associates, Bakbukiah and Unni, stood opposite them during the service.
[10]Jeshua the high priest was the father of Joiakim. Joiakim was the father of Eliashib. Eliashib was the father of Joiada. [11]Joiada was the father of Johanan. Jonathan was the father of Jaddua.
[12]When Joiakim, Jeshua's son, was high priest, the clan leaders of the priests were as follows:
Meraiah was leader of the Seraiah clan. Hananiah was leader of the Jeremiah clan. [13]Meshullam was leader of the Ezra clan. Jehohanan was leader of the Amariah clan. [14]Jonathan was leader of the Malluch clan. Joseph was leader of the Shebaniah clan. [15]Adna was leader of the Harim clan. Helkai was leader of the Meremoth clan. [16]Zechariah was leader of the Iddo clan. Meshullam was leader of the Ginnethon clan. [17]Zicri was leader of the Abijah clan. There was also a leader of the Miniamin clan. Piltai was leader of the Maadiah clan. [18]Shammua was leader of the Bilgah clan. Jehonathan was leader of the Shemaiah clan. [19]Mattenai was leader of the Joiarib clan. Uzzi was leader of the Jedaiah

clan.[20]Kallai was leader of the Sallu clan. Eber was leader of the Amok clan. [21]Hashabiah was leader of the Hilkiah clan. And Nethanel was leader of the Jedaiah clan.
[22]In the days of the Levites Eliashib, Joiada, Johanan, and Jaddua and when Darius was king of Persia, a record was kept of the heads of the clans of the Levites and priests. [23]The heads of the Levite families were recorded up to the time of Johanan, son of Eliashib. [24]The family leaders of the Levites were Hashabiah, Sherebiah, Jeshua son of Kadmiel, and who with their coworkers formed two choirs for praise {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} in the temple, as directed by David. [25]Mattaniah, Bakbukiah, Obadiah, Meshullam, Talmon, and Akkub were gatekeepers in charge of the storerooms at the gates. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [26]They served in the days of Joiakim, son of Jeshua, and grandson of Jozadak, when I was the governor and when Ezra was the priest and teacher of the law. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

The names and families were written for several reasons. Future generations were able to use genealogies to prove their "Jewishness." Also, priests could establish their "right" to the office. Finally, all Jews studied the records to find out about their promised Messiah. Lord, You keep records of me in heaven. I will live a righteous life so my record will not be blemished. Amen. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[27]For the dedication of the new walls of Jerusalem {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} we invited Levites throughout Judah to come celebrate by singing songs of thanks and playing cymbals, harps, and lyres. [28]Singers came from towns around Jerusalem, villages they had built for themselves, including the villages of the Netophathites, [29]and Beth-Gilgal, Geba, and Azmaveth. [30]The priests and Levites prepared themselves {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} ceremonially and then did the same for the people, the gates, and the wall. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
[31]I led the leaders of Judah to the top of the wall and divided them into two choirs. I had one group go south to the right toward the Garbage Gate. [32]This group included Hoshaiah, half of the leaders from Judah, [33]Azariah, Ezra, Meshullam, [34]Judah, Benjamin, Shemaiah, Jeremiah, [35]and some priests with trumpets. Also in the group were Zechariah, son of Jonathan, son of Shemaiah, son of Mattaniah, son of Micaiah, son of Zaccur, son of Asaph, [36]Shemaiah, Azarel, Milalai, Gilalai, Maai, Nethanel, Judah, and Hanani. They played musical instruments ordered by David the man of God. Ezra led this choir. [37]When they got to the Fountain Gate, they climbed the steps to the City of David, past David's palace to the Water Gate near the eastern wall of the city.
[38]The second group went in the opposite direction, and I followed them with the other half of the leaders of Judah. We went north past the Oven Tower to the Broad Wall, [39]The Ephraim Gate, the Old Gate, the Fish Gate, the Hananel Tower, the

Hundred Tower, and the Sheep Gate, and then we stopped at the Guard Gate. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [40]Then the two groups went to the temple. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} With me were half the leaders [41]and the trumpet-playing priests Eliakim, Maaseiah, Miniamin, Micaiah, Elioenai, Zachariah, and Hananiah. [42]Also the singers included Maaseiah, Shemaiah, Eleazar, Uzzi, Jehohanan, Malkijah, Elam, and Ezer, who were led by Jezrahiah. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [43]The people were very happy, and they offered many sacrifices to the Lord. Women and children also took part in the celebration. The people's shouts of joy could be heard far from Jerusalem. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

Since God loves symbols, the people symbolically walked all the way around the city to show the walls were completely finished. In this way, they dedicated every portion of the work done by every person who helped rebuild the walls. Lord, because You prize every person who does any service for You, I too will appreciate every believer who serves You. Give me an appreciation for jobs that are well done, and for jobs that are completely finished. Amen.

[44]At that time I put several men in charge of the storerooms where people's gifts were kept, including the first part of the harvest and a tenth of the crops and livestock. The law of Moses required that these portions be brought to the temple. And all Judah was pleased with the priests and Levites. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

The people willingly and thankfully gave for the support of temple worship. Lord, I will give a tithe of the first fruits of my income to You. I will worship You by first offering my body and life to You. Then I will offer all my material goods to You. Use the one-tenth I give to Your service, and show me how to spend and use the nine-tenths I need to support myself. Amen.

[45]The priests and Levites faithfully served the Lord. Also the singers and gatekeepers performed their duties as required by David and Solomon. [46]Centuries earlier in the days of David and Asaph, the people began the custom of having choir directors lead choirs in singing songs of praise and thanks. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [47]So now in the days of Zerubbabel and myself, Israel brought food each day for the Levite singers and gatekeepers. The Levites in turn gave a part of what they received to the many priests, who were Aaron's descendants. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

Nehemiah 13

Nehemiah Enforces the Law

[1]When the law of Moses was being read to the people, {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} they heard that God had said Ammonites and Moabites should never be allowed to enter the temple. [2]Why? Because they refused to give you food and

water and even hired Balaam to curse you, though God turned the curse into a blessing. 3When this rule was read, the Israelites sent away any who were foreigners. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
4Before this, Eliashib the priest had been put in charge of the temple storerooms and he was a relative of Tobiah, an Ammonite. 5Eliashib had changed a storage room in the temple into a nice guest room for Tobiah. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} That room had previously been used to store grain offerings, incense, temple utensils, and the tenth of the grain, new wine, and olive oil given for the Levites, singers, gatekeepers, and gifts for the priests.
6This happened in the 32nd year of Artaxerxes' rule (432 B.C.). I was not in Jerusalem at the time because I had gone back to Persia. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 7Later I asked the king if I could return to Jerusalem, and when I did, I learned about Tobiah having a room in the temple. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 8I was so upset that I tossed Tobiah's furniture out of the room, {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} 9ordered it to be cleaned, and I put back into the room the equipment, offerings, and incense that belonged there.
10I also found out that the Levites and singers had gone back to work on their farms because they had not received their share of the harvest. 11I immediately called the temple officials together and angrily I said, "Why is the temple neglected?" Then I told the Levites to return to their jobs in the temple. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 12Then everyone in Judah brought a tenth of their grain, new wine, and olive oil to the temple storerooms. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 13I put three men in charge of the storerooms: Shelemiah the priest, Zadok the teacher, and Pedaiah a Levite. Their assistant was Hanan, son of Zaccur and grandson of Mattaniah. These men were reliable, and they distributed supplies to Levites. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}
14I prayed, "Remember, O my God, what I have done for the temple." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
15One day on the Sabbath I saw some men trampling grapes, and loading their donkeys with bundles of grain, wine, grapes, figs, and other foods, to sell in Jerusalem. I reminded them that they are not to sell food on the Sabbath. 16Also some men from the city of Tyre who lived in Jerusalem were selling fish and other goods on the Sabbath. 17I scolded the leaders of Judah and said, "Why are you doing this sinful thing in defiling the Sabbath. 18Don't you remember that God punished our ancestors when they did these very same things? And you are just about to make God very angry again." {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10}
19I ordered that from then on the gates to Jerusalem were to be closed just before sunset on Friday and not opened till the Sabbath was over. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} I put some men at the city gates to be sure nothing was brought into the city on the Sabbath. 20A couple of times some merchants spent the night outside Jerusalem. 21I spoke sharply to them and said,

"Why are you spending the night by the wall? If you do this again, I will arrest you."
22I told the Levites to make themselves ceremonially clean and to guard the gates to keep the Sabbath day holy. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} Again I prayed, "Remember, O my God, what I have done, and be merciful to me because of your unfailing love." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
23I realized some of the men married women from Ashdod, Ammon, and Moab. 24Many of their children spoke the language of Ashdod or some other foreign language and could not speak Hebrew. 25Again I got angry, and I asked God to make things difficult for them. I beat some of the men and pulled out their hair. I made them promise they would not let their children intermarry with non-Jews. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 26I said, "You know that Solomon was our great king, and God loved him, but marrying foreign women led him into idolatry. 27Now you are doing the same thing, being unfaithful to God."{280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17}
28One of the sons of Joiada, son of Eliashib the high priest, had married a daughter of Sanballat the Horonite, and I forced him to leave the temple. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 29"Remember them, O my God, punish them for breaking their vows and dishonoring the Levi tribe." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
30So I got rid of everything foreign with the priests and Levites, and I assigned them their duties. 31I made sure the people brought enough wood for the sacrifices and brought their 10 percent of their harvest to the temple. "Remember me, my God, because of the good I have done." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

The people had forsaken the Sabbath observance, so Nehemiah instituted a three-step policy. First, he commanded the gates to the city to be shut on the Sabbath so people couldn't enter to sell on the Sabbath. Second, he put members of his staff at the gates to immediately guard it. Third, he got the Levites to guard the gates on a long-term basis. There is a three-fold principle of separating ourselves from compromise and sin. First, we must make a decision to shut the door of our hearts to compromise and evil. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} Second, we must use our habits and discipline to keep ourselves from sin. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} Third, we must ask Jesus, our Priest, to keep our hearts true in all things. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} Lord, I want to be pure, and I want to keep separate from evil. I have chosen to be pure. Strengthen my habits of discipline to keep myself pure; then, You, Lord, come stand in the door of my heart to keep me from evil. Amen.

Esther

Ch 1: Queen Vashti Defies the King's Command 683
Ch 2: Esther Is Made Queen 684
Ch 3: Haman's Plan to Destroy the Jews 686
Ch 4: Mordecai Asks Esther to Help Her People 687
Ch 5: Esther's Banquet 689
Ch 6: Mordecai Is Honored 690
Ch 7: Haman Is Executed 690
Ch 8: The Jews Are Allowed to Fight Back 691
Ch 9: The Jews Defeat Their Enemies 693
Ch 10: King Xerxes and Mordecai 694

ESTHER

Key Words: "*For such a time as this*" (Esther 4:14)

Key Verse: "Go, gather all the Jews who are present in Shushan, and fast for me; neither eat nor drink for three days, night or day. My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king... and if I perish, I perish!" (4:16).

Theme: While the name God is not written in this book, the presence of God is unmistakably seen in the irreversible tide of events. Queen Vashti was removed from the throne of Persia and Esther took her place. Prime Minister Haman hated the Jews and planned their entire extinction. Haman planned to hang Mordecai, but was himself hanged on the gallows he built for Mordecai. The Jews were able to successfully defend themselves against greedy, hateful men who intended their destruction. Finally, Mordecai became Prime Minister of Persia. The book of Esther teaches us to trust God who controls the affairs of this life, and to fast and pray for His intervention when circumstances seem blackest. *Lord, I determine to follow You and be faithful to You—even to death, "If I perish, I perish" (4:16). Amen.*

Esther 1

Queen Vashti Defies the King's Command

[1]Xerxes, king of Persia, ruled over 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia [2]from his palace in the fortress of Susa. [3]In the third year of his reign (412 B.C.) he gave a big banquet for all his officials, military officers, and leaders of the province. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [4]He showed off his wealth and the greatness of his kingdom for six months.

[5]Then he gave a week-long banquet for palace servants and officials, from the least to the greatest, in the palace garden. [6]The area was decorated with blue and white linen curtains tied back with purple cords that ran through silver rings attached to marble pillars. Couches of gold and silver stood on pavements that had designs made from multicolored stones, marble, mother-of-pearl, and other stones. [7]Wine was served in gold goblets, each with a different design. Much wine was available because the king was generous. [8]Each guest could drink as much as he wanted, and he told his servants to let each guest drink as much or as little as he wanted.

9At the same time Queen Vashti gave a banquet for the women of the palace. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 10On the seventh day when King Xerxes was half drunk he told his seven personal aides, Mehuman, Biztha, Harbona, Bigtha, Abagtha, Zethar, and Carcas, 11to bring him Queen Vashti, wearing her royal crown. He wanted the men to gaze on her beauty. 12The king's aides told her what he said, but she refused to go, and this made him terribly angry. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} 13So Xerxes called in his seven expert advisors. 14They were Carshena, Shethar, Admatha, Tarshish, Meres, Marsena, and Memucan. They understood the laws of the land, and the king asked their advice. 15He asked them, "Queen Vashti has disobeyed my command. What does the law say should be her punishment?"

16Memucan answered, "Queen Vashti has done wrong not only to you but also to all your officials and every citizen in your empire. 17Women everywhere will hear about this and will disobey their husbands. 18Even before the end of this day the wives of your officials will talk to their husbands the same way. This will result in a lot of family problems. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 19So I suggest you send out a decree, a law of the Medes and Persians, which can't be repealed, that Vashti never be allowed to see you again, and that someone better than Vashti be made queen. 20When the wives in your kingdom read this, they will respect their husbands." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

21The king and his officials liked what Memucan said, so 22he sent messengers to every part of his kingdom, with the message in the language of every area, and it stated that every husband should be the ruler of his family. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

The book of Esther is a wonderful declaration of the providence of God. God works behind the scenes to accomplish His will. Xerxes, the most powerful man on earth at that time, was setting the stage to save God's people—the Jews—from a holocaust. Even before Haman decided to exterminate the Jews, God set a plan in motion to save the Jews. God prepared the situation and a woman who would "save" His people. This tells us that God is not surprised by our problems, and He is never caught off guard. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24} Lord, I submit to Your providential care of my life. Teach me to trust Your unseen hand when I can't see it, and teach me to trust Your guidance when I can't hear Your voice. Amen.

Esther 2

Esther Is Made Queen

1Later King Xerxes got over being angry, but he was thinking about Vashti, realizing he would never see her again. 2His aides suggested, "Let's search for beautiful young women in your kingdom and bring them here. 3Appoint agents in every province to find these girls and bring them here to Susa. Put Hegai in charge of them who

will see that they are given proper beauty treatments. 4Then the girl who pleases you most will be the queen." Xerxes liked this idea, so he ordered that the plan be carried out. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

5A Jew named Mordecai was living in the palace at Susa. He was the son of Jair, and grandson of Shimei, and great-grandson of Kish, a Benjamite. 6He had been captured when Jerusalem was destroyed by King Nebuchadnezzar and had been taken to Babylon with King Jeconiah of Judah and others. 7Mordecai had a beautiful and lovely cousin named Hadassah, also called Esther, whose parents were dead and so Mordecai adopted her as his own daughter. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

God has a special concern for orphans. In this case Esther the orphan became the queen of the most powerful empire in the world. An orphan girl, who was among the most disenfranchised persons in the kingdom, became the most powerful woman in Xerxes' kingdom. God enjoys taking the weak and using them in a powerful way. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} Lord, thank You for Your care of orphans, both past, present, and future. Teach me Your concern for people. Amen.

8As a result of the king's order to bring in beautiful women, many were taken to the palace and Esther was one of them. 9Hegai was impressed with her and he gave her beauty treatments and special food. Also he gave her seven maids, and she and the seven had the best rooms in the palace. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

10Mordecai had told Esther not to tell anyone she was a Jewess. 11Every day he walked back and forth in front of the court where the women lived and asked how she was getting along. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

12The young women were given beauty treatments for a year. For six months each woman's skin was rubbed with olive oil and myrrh, and the last six months she was treated with perfumes and ointments. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 13When it was her turn to sleep with the king, she could choose whatever clothing or jewelry she wanted. 14The morning after being with the king she would be under the care of Shaashgaz, another servant of the king. She could not go to the king again unless he called for her by name. 15When it was Esther's turn to go to the king, she followed Hegai's advice on what to wear. Everyone who saw her was amazed at her beauty. 16Esther was taken to the king in January of the seventh year of his reign. 17Xerxes was attracted to Esther more than to any of the other women, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} and so he put a crown on her head and made her queen. 18Then he gave a great banquet in her honor for all his nobles and officials. He made that day a special holiday, and he gave gifts to everyone. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

Lord, You made Esther beautiful on the outside and inside. This was just one step in

preparing her to save the world. Lord, You gave her favor with those over her and then You gave her favor with the king. I marvel how all things work out together to accomplish Your will. Amen.

19When the young women were brought together again, Mordecai had become a government official. 20Esther still hadn't told anyone that she was a Jewess. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 21One day as Mordecai was on duty at the palace, two of the king's aides, Bigthan and Teresh, were angry at the king and were planning to kill him. 22Mordecai heard about it and told Esther, who reported it to the king, giving credit to Mordecai for passing along the information. 23The matter was found to be true, and the two officials were hanged. This was written in the book that records the king's actions. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

It was not just chance or a coincidence that Mordecai overheard Bigthan and Teresh's plot to kill Xerxes. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} This is another piece in the puzzle that God used to save His people, the Jews. Lord, give me a sense of divine governance in my life. When I sense it, may I praise and worship You. Amen.

Esther 3

Haman's Plan to Destroy the Jews

1Later King Xerxes promoted Haman, son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, to the highest position in his kingdom. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

One man—Saul—disobeyed God's commands to annihilate all the Agagites, and almost a thousand years later the Jewish nation was almost annihilated by an Agagite. Lord, teach me from this chapter the awful consequences of disobeying You. Forgive my sins, and may the consequences of my sin be marginalized. I don't want my sins to hurt anyone, not do I want my sins to hurt my ongoing life. Amen. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

2All the king's officials stationed at the king's gate bowed before Haman whenever he passed by, as the king had told them to do. But Mordecai refused to bow before Haman. {280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17}
3The king's officials asked Mordecai why he was not obeying the king's order. 4They asked him this every day, but he still refused to bow. So they spoke to Haman himself about this. Mordecai had said he wouldn't bow because he was a Jew, and they wanted to know if Haman would go along with that excuse. 5Mordecai's refusal made Haman furious. 6So he decided to kill not just Mordecai but to find a way to kill every Jew in the kingdom of Xerxes.

God's people suffer when evil men rule over them. But Haman was more than evil he was anti-God. Somehow his self-esteem and hatred of God's people formed a toxic brew, and then poison spewed out. Lord, I pray

first for the salvation of those over me, {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} then I pray their damage to Your cause may be thwarted. Deliver me from the evil one. Amen.

7In March of Xerxes' 12th year (473 B.C.) lots were tossed to decide on a day and month to get rid of all the Jews. The time decided was exactly a year later. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

When Haman chose a lucky number to punish the Jews, God was behind the choice. Some say, "The devil is in the details," but in this situation, "God was in the details." The chosen date to punish the Jews was almost a year away. That way, God's people could have opportunity to pray and prepare for the awful day. Also in that "year" God was able to work through Esther to save her people. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} Lord, I will not gamble for money, knowing "luck" is not a Christian virtue. God, You move behind the scenes to accomplish Your will, even when unsaved people don't know You are working through them. Amen.

8Then Haman said to the king, "Some people who live throughout every province of your kingdom won't associate with people of other races. Their customs are different, and they refuse to obey your laws. It would be better to get rid of them. 9Why not order that they all be killed. I will put 375 tons of silver into the royal treasury to cover the costs involved in this project." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

10Agreeing to this plan, the king gave his official ring to Haman, who hated the Jews, 11and the king said, "Keep the money, and go ahead and do what you want with these people." 12On April 13 Haman met with the king's secretaries, and had them write orders in every language in the kingdom, and the letters were sealed with the king's ring. They sent these orders to the royal officials and governors and other leaders in every province. 13Messengers carried the letters throughout the kingdom. The letters stated that about a year later all Jewish men, women, and children were to be killed and their property taken.

14These letters were to be posted where people everywhere could read them and be ready to carry out the command on the designated day. 15The command was sent out by messengers, and it was also read in the fortress of Susa. Then the king and Haman sat down to drink, but everyone was puzzled by all this. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

Esther 4

Mordecai Asks Esther to Help Her People

1When Mordecai heard about the letter, he tore his clothes in grief. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} He wore coarse clothing made from goat's hair, and put ashes on his head. He went into the city crying loudly. 2But he couldn't go past the palace gate because no one wearing coarse

clothing was allowed in the palace. [3]As the letters were read in all the provinces, the Jews mourned and cried and did not eat, and many of them lay in ashes and wore coarse clothing. {144 Esther Fast and Prayer, Est. 4:16}

[4]When Esther's servant girls and others told her about Mordecai, she sent him some clothes to put on in place of the coarse clothing. But he refused.

A lot of us are like Esther. We try to cover up embarrassment. Esther sent respectable clothes for Mordecai to wear, not realizing the distressing circumstances. Lord, when I react as Esther, open my blind eyes to see spiritual danger around me. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} And when my blind eyes are open, help me to react as Esther, that is, being willing to die for You. Amen.

[5]Esther had a servant named Hathach, and so she asked him to find out what was wrong with Mordecai. [6]Hathach went to the open area by the king's gate and found Mordecai; [7]who told him about the king's order and how much Haman had promised to give to the royal treasury for aid in destroying the Jews. [8]Mordecai gave Hathach a copy of the king's order issued in Susa to kill all the Jews. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} He said, "Show this to Esther, and ask her to go to the king and beg him to have mercy on her people, the Jews." {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

[9]Hathach told Esther what Mordecai had said, [10]and she answered, "Tell Mordecai that as everyone knows, [11]if a person goes in to see the king and hasn't been invited, he will be put to death. The only way to see him is if he holds out his gold scepter. And it's been 30 days since he has asked for me." [12]So Hathach gave her response to Mordecai. [13]Then he sent back this reply: "Don't think that because you are in the king's palace, you won't be killed. [14]If you don't speak up, we will get help somehow. But it may well be that God has made you queen for a time such as this." {273 Large-Praying, Acts 4:23-31}

[15]Then Esther sent a reply to Mordecai. [16]"Bring together all the Jews in Susa and tell them not to eat or drink anything for three days for my sake. I and my servant girls will do the same. {144 Esther Fast and Prayer, Est. 4:16} Then I will go see the king, even if it means I die." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Esther was willing to die, "If I perish, I perish." Lord, when You ask me to surrender everything, I am willing to die, so much so that I actually am dead to my ambitions and desires, long before I actually die. Lord, I say with Paul, "I die daily" (1 Cor. 15:31). Amen.

[17]Mordecai went and told all the Jews in Susa what Esther said. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Esther 5

Esther's Banquet

[1]Three days later Esther, dressed in her royal robes, entered the inner court of the palace across from the royal hall. The king was seated on his throne, facing the entrance. [2]Pleased to see her, he held out his gold scepter to her. When she went toward him she touched the scepter. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Esther wore the correct clothes, her royal clothes and stood at the right place near the pillar in the court. Lord, teach me to wear the right clothes, at the right time, for the right occasion. Help me dress to please You and not myself. May I be a good testimony to You and not be offensive to Your cause. Amen.

[3]And he said, "What is your request? Ask, and I will give you half of my kingdom."
[4]Esther replied, "I invite you and Haman to a dinner today that I will prepare." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[5]The king got Haman to go with him to the dinner Esther had cooked. [6]While they were drinking wine, the king said to Esther, "What is your request? As I said, I will give you whatever you wish, even up to half my kingdom." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [7]Esther replied, "This is my request. [8]I would like for you and Haman to come here again tomorrow for another dinner I will prepare. Then I will answer your question." {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

Esther's two-banquet-approach built up anticipation. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} Xerxes probably thought about what Esther wanted more than once in those two days. Anyway, God used Esther's womanly ways to save His people. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} Lord, help me to use all my personality to accomplish many good things for Your kingdom. Amen.

[9]All this made Haman feel great. But he quickly became furious when he saw Mordecai at the king's gate and noticed that Mordecai did not stand up before him. [10]He didn't say anything, but when he got home he got his friends and his wife Zeresh together. [11]He bragged about his great wealth and his many sons and how the king had honored him in many ways and how the king had promoted him over all the king's officials. [12]Then he added, "What's more, I am the only one Queen Esther invited for dinner with her and the king. And we are invited there for dinner tomorrow too. [13]But there is a problem. All this is nothing so long as I see Mordecai by the king's gate, refusing to bow down to me."
[14]His wife Zeresh and his friends made a suggestion: "Make a tower about 75 feet high, and in the morning ask the king to hang Mordecai on it. Then later you can enjoy dinner with the king." Haman liked this idea, so he had the tower built. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, when it seems like sin has gone as far as it can go, then You step in to put a stop to the madness. Lord, do the same thing in my life. Amen. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

Esther 6

Mordecai Is Honored

1That night the king had insomnia. So he had a servant bring the written record of his reign and read to him. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 2When the servant read the record about how Mordecai kept Bigthan and Teresh, guards at the king's doorway, from killing the king, 3Xerxes asked, "What reward or honor did we give Mordecai for doing this?" His servants said, "Nothing has been done." 4Just then Haman arrived at the palace to ask the king to have Mordecai hanged on the tower he built. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} 5When the king saw Haman was there, he asked Haman to come in. 6He asked Haman, "What is a good way to honor a person the king is pleased with?" Haman thought, "He must be wanting to honor me." 7So he answered the king, 8"Put on him some royal robes, and bring him the king's own horse with a fancy headdress, 9and lead him through the streets with people shouting, 'This is the way the king honors those who please him.'"

10"Okay, go take these robes and my horse for Mordecai the Jew, and do all that you suggested." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 11So Haman put the robes on Mordecai, and put him on the king's horse, and led him through the streets, shouting, "This is how the king honors someone who pleases him."

12Later Mordecai went back to his post at the king's gate, but Haman went home with his head covered in grief. He told his wife and friends what had happened. 13They said, "If Mordecai is a Jew, you cannot oppose him successfully. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} Try to be against him, and you will be ruined."

If Haman had repented, would he have turned to save the Jews? Lord, I love Your patience. I'm glad You didn't give up on the Apostle Paul when he was responsible for the death of Stephen. I'm glad You didn't give up on the thief on the cross. I'm glad You didn't give up on me. Amen.

14While they were discussing these matters, the king's servants arrived to take Haman to the dinner Esther had prepared. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}

Esther 7

Haman Is Executed

1At this second dinner 2the king again asked Esther, "What is your request? I will give you whatever you wish, even up to half of my kingdom?" {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 3She answered, "If you really care for me, please save my life and the lives of my people. 4People have been hired to kill me and my people. If the plan was to sell us as slaves, I

wouldn't have bothered you." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

There comes a time in life when we must remove our mask and tell the truth. Esther could no longer keep her Jewish identity hidden. She told all. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} And God used her honesty to save her people. Lord, I don't always tell all I know, but I never lie. Sometimes it's not appropriate to tell everything. Sometimes it's dangerous. But there are times when I must tell everything—hiding nothing. Teach me what to say when the time arrives. Teach me how to say it, and when to say it. Guide my words as I speak honestly. Amen. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

5King Xerxes asked her, "Who would dare do such a thing? 6She answered, "This wicked Haman is our enemy." Then Haman was terrified. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 7The king got up in anger and went out to the palace garden. Haman, realizing the king would take his life, begged Esther to save his life. 8Just as the king came back, Haman fell on the couch where Esther was reclining. The king shouted, "Will you even try to rape the queen here in my palace as I look on?" As soon as the king said this, his servants covered Haman's face, a sign he would die. 9Then Harbonah, one of the king's servants, told the king, "Haman has made a 75-foot tower near his house, and he plans to hang Mordecai on it. And as you know, Mordecai is the man who saved your life." Immediately the king ordered, "Hang Haman on his own tower!" 10Right away Haman was hanged on the very tower he built to hang Mordecai, and the king was no longer angry. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Xerxes was angry when Vashti refused him. Then he was angry when Haman deceived him. And Xerxes' rage built when he thought Haman was trying to rape his wife. God uses the anger of some for His own special purpose. Lord, teach me how to deal with angry people who keep their anger hidden, and teach me how to deal with rage when I confront it. May I always control my temper for Your glory. Then, Lord, there are times when I should get angry. So teach me to be "angry and sin not" (Eph. 4:26). Amen.

Esther 8

The Jews Are Allowed to Fight Back

1That day the king gave Haman's estate to Esther. She had told the king that Mordecai was her cousin, and so the king made Mordecai a high-ranking official. 2He gave Mordecai his official ring that Haman had worn, and Esther put him in charge of Haman's estate. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

3Again Esther went to the king. She fell at his feet crying and begged him to stop Haman's plan to kill all the Jews. 4When the king held out the gold scepter to her, she stood up and said, {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 5"If it is okay with you, please send out a letter that will

reverse Haman's plan to destroy all the Jews. 6I can't stand the thought of my people being destroyed." {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}
7King Xerxes said to Esther and Mordecai, "As you know, I have given Haman's estate to you, Esther, and he has been hanged to death."

If you hate anyone in this life, be careful; they one day may own all you have and your estate. The estate of Haman ended up belonging to Mordecai. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Lord, I don't look for wealth on this earth; I look for my reward in heaven. But I realize some of Your children will be physically blessed in this life. It's good to see You balance the scales between Mordecai and Haman. Amen. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

8"Now send out a message to save your people. Send it in my name and seal it with my official ring so that the order can't be changed." 9Immediately in July the royal secretaries were called in to write Mordecai's orders as he dictated them to the Jews, officials, governors, and local leaders of all 127 provinces from India to Ethiopia. The orders were written in every language of the kingdom, including Hebrew. 10Mordecai wrote the orders in the name of the king, sealed them with the king's official ring, and sent them by messengers who rode the king's fastest horses. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Sometimes it's not enough to stop an evil person. Their evil influence must also be stopped. Apparently the night Haman was hanged didn't stop the coming genocide. Esther went to the king a second time to get a letter written and sealed with the king's ring that allowed the Jews to protect themselves on the coming day of judgment. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} Lord, give me wisdom to see how the world is influenced by evil, and help me come up with ideas to counter the influence of evil. Then, Lord, give me a way to express my ideas and a way to publicize my ideas. Use me, Lord, to counter evil in the world. Amen.

11The king's orders gave the Jews in every city the right to defend themselves and to kill anyone who might attack them, including women and children, and to take their property. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 12The day for this event was in March; exactly one year after Haman chose that date. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 13The orders were to be issued as law in every province and posted everywhere so everyone could read it. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 14So the king ordered the messengers to ride his fastest horses and get the message out quickly. The orders were also posted in the Susa fortress.
15When Mordecai left the palace, he was wearing a blue and white royal robe, a gold crown, and a cloak of purple linen. Everyone in Susa was glad about this new law. 16And the Jews were filled with joy and

gladness and were honored everywhere. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [17]In every province and city where the orders were read, the Jews had parties and celebrated. And many people became Jews. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Esther 9

The Jews Defeat Their Enemies

[1]On March 13th the king's order to kill all the Jews was to be carried out. But now on this very day, when their enemies had hoped to destroy them, the opposite happened. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

There comes a time when one's enemy comes out in the open and he must be opposed. Lord, I will be humble and pray for them. Lord, I will not knowingly make an enemy of anyone. Lord, I will do good to all, and I will "live peacefully with all men" (Heb. 12:14). Amen. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[2]In every city the Jews on that day got together to attack those who wanted to destroy them. But no one made a move against the Jews because they were afraid of them. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [3]The leaders of the provinces, rulers, governors, and officials helped the Jews out of respect for Mordecai, [4]who had been promoted by the king and given a lot of power.

[5]The Jews killed their enemies with the sword and showed them no mercy. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [6]Even in Susa they killed 500 men. [7]They also killed Haman's 10 sons, Parshandatha, Dalphon, Aspatha, [8]Poratha, Adalia, Aridatha, [9]Parmashta, Arisai, Aridai, and Vaizatha; [10]but they didn't take any of their belongings.

The Jews did not take monetary gain for themselves when they defeated their enemies. Even though some were going to attack the Jews for loot—not just for ethnic hatred—the Jews didn't retaliate. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} Lord, teach me to keep my motives pure. May I serve You out of pure love. Take away all ill feelings of hatred from my heart. Amen.

[11]Later that day the king heard that a number of people had been killed in Susa. [12]He said to Esther, "The Jews have killed 500 people and Haman's 10 sons. What has happened in the other provinces? If you want something else done, just tell me, and I will do it." {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [13]Esther answered, "Let the Jews in Susa fight tomorrow as they did today, and have the bodies of Haman's ten sons hanged in public." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [14]Xerxes did what she asked, and Haman's sons' bodies were hanged. [15]The next day, March 14th, the Jews in Susa killed another 300 men, and they did not take any of their belongings. [16]On March 13th Jews in the other provinces killed 75,000 of their enemies, but didn't take any of their belongings. [17]On

March 14th, the same day Haman's sons were hanged, the Jews celebrated with a great festival. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

18Then on March 15th the Jews in Susa celebrated a holiday after killing their enemies the two days before. {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} 19Jews in rural villages celebrated their victory on March 14th, making it a great time of joy, feasting, and sending gifts of food to the poor. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

20Mordecai wrote down all that happened, and sent letters to Jews everywhere, 21encouraging them to celebrate on March 14th and 15th, 22as the time when they defeated their enemies and their sorrow turned into joy. He encouraged them to celebrate with feasting, joy, and giving gifts to each other. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

23The Jews followed his suggestion and held this celebration every year. 24Haman, son of Hammedatha, the Agagite, hated the Jews and had planned to destroy them. To find out the best time to do it, he threw lots, called Purim. 25When the king learned of this, he gave orders that Haman and his sons be hanged in the same way Haman had wanted Mordecai hanged. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 26Therefore this celebration is called Purim, from Pur, the Babylonian word for dice. So because of Mordecai's letter and what the Jews experienced, 27the Jews decided that they and their descendants would celebrate these two days every year, just as they were told to do. 28Every Jewish family from now on was to celebrate Purim. This is to keep alive the memory of what happened. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

29Queen Esther wrote a letter in support of Mordecai's letter about this festival. 30Mordecai sent copies of the letter to the Jews in all 127 provinces. He wished them well. 31The letter stated that the Jews and their descendants were to celebrate Purim at the time and in the way Mordecai and Esther said and that they were to follow their instructions about mourning and going without food. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} 32Esther's command confirmed these regulations about Purim and it was written down as law. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Esther 10

King Xerxes and Mordecai

1King Xerxes made everyone in his kingdom pay taxes, even people in distant coastlands. 2All his great deeds and the account of Mordecai's greatness and honors are written in the books of the kings of Media and Persia. 3Mordecai was second in rank to the king. He was highly respected by the Jews because he helped them in many ways and even spoke to the king for them. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

Mordecai became the second most important person in Persia because of his honesty and character. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Lord, thank You for this last chapter

that shows how You honored faithfulness. Help me remain faithful to You—not for my honor—but may I in faithfulness worship You. Amen. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Job

Ch 1: The Enemy Attacks 699
Ch 2: The Enemy's Second Attack 700
Ch 3: Job's Lament 701
Ch 4: Eliphaz's First Counsel 702
Ch 5: El Shaddai 703
Ch 6: Job's Answer to Eliphaz 704
Ch 7: Job's Answer (Continued) 705
Ch 8: Bildad's First Counsel 706
Ch 9: Job's Answer to Bildad 707
Ch 10: Job's Weariness 709
Ch 11: Zophar's First Counsel 710
Ch 12: Job's Answer to Zophar 710
Ch 13: Job's Faith in God 711
Ch 14: Suffering 713
Ch 15: Eliphaz's Second Response 714
Ch 16: Job's Second Answer to Eliphaz 715
Ch 17: Help Me 717
Ch 18: Bildad's Second Speech 717
Ch 19: Job's Reply to Bildad's Second Attack 718
Ch 20: Zophar's Second Speech 720
Ch 21: Job's Second Answer to Zophar 721
Ch 22: Eliphaz's Third Counsel 722
Ch 23: Job's Third Answer to Eliphaz 723

Ch 24: Questions....724
Ch 25: Bildad's Third Response....726
Ch 26: Job's Response to Bildad....726
Ch 27: Job Maintains His Integrity....726
Ch 28: Job Discusses Wisdom....727
Ch 29: Job's Nostalgic Soliloquy....728
Ch 30: Job Describes His Pathetic Condition....729
Ch 31: Job's Final Plea of Innocence....730
Ch 32: Elihu's Response....732
Ch 33: Elihu's Charge against Job....733
Ch 34: Elihu Tells of God's Justice....734
Ch 35: Elihu Tells of God's Justice....735
Ch 36: Elihu Claims to Speak for God....736
Ch 37: Elihu Continues....737
Ch 38: God Challenges Job with His Power....738
Ch 39: God Continues....739
Ch 40: The Lord Speaks....740
Ch 41: The Lord Continues....741
Ch 42: Repentence and Restoration....742

JOB

Key Words: *The Almighty* (*KJV, NIV*) appears 31 times translated from El Shaddai, See Job 5:17.

Key Verse: "'Naked I came from my mother's womb, and naked shall I return there. The LORD gave, and the LORD has taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.' In all this Job did not sin nor charge God with wrong" (1:21, 22).

Theme: The Hebrew name for God, "El Shaddai," means *Almighty*. This title occurs 31 times in Job, far more than in any other Bible book.

Job was possibly the son of Issachar mentioned in Genesis 46:13. Issachar was one of the 12 sons of Jacob who eventually went down to Egypt to live (Gen. 46:13). Issachar was approximately 40 years old when he went down to Egypt. That suggests his third son, Job, would have been about 20 years old at that time (1706 B.C.). While most of Israel originally prospered in Egypt under Joseph, possibly Job did not stay in Egypt with his parents. Maybe he returned back to the Sinai Peninsula to live in Uz. It was there Job accumulated his wealth and prosperity.

Job was approximately 70 years old when his wealth and health were taken away (Job 1, 2). When he was restored God gave him a "double blessing" (42:10), which would imply that he lived another 140 years. Apparently Job was 210 years old when he died.

The fact that Job may have been the son of Issachar accounts for him being a worshiper of the God of Abraham and accounts for his multiple use of the term El Shaddai—translated "Almighty"—a name for God used in Genesis 17:1.

The first of Job's friends—Eliphaz—was a son of Esau (Gen. 36:4, 10, 11). Eliphaz was one generation older than Job. Therefore Eliphaz who rebuked Job was really a crotchety old uncle who thought his family ties gave him the right to criticize Job. The second "comforter" was Bildad. As a Shuhite, he was probably related to Shuah, Abraham's youngest son by Keturah (Gen. 25:2).

When Job died (1516 B.C.), Moses was 55 years old and had already spent 15 years in the Sinai Peninsula watching his sheep. Job and Moses not only overlapped each other because they lived in the same area, and they may have known each other. Perhaps Moses was an "ear-witness" of the content of the book as Job told him the stories of losing his wealth and the hypocritical speeches of the three "comforters." Job's family may have even met some of Job's friends. Job may have told his amazing story of suffering to Moses who wrote it down. Moses kept the manuscript; eventually adding it to the collection of the first five books of the Old Testament that he also wrote.

The book of Job tells the amazing story of a man who held tenaciously to his integrity in the face of pain, loss, darkness, and even death. Job's integrity tells its own story that a man's relationship to God is more important than anything else, even his own physical life.

The book of Job teaches its own lesson that in this world there is sickness, pain and loss, even to those who follow God. Trouble comes to the just and unjust. This story also tells that friends can give the wrong advice to those who are sick. Their worst advice was that Job was suffering because he had sinned against God. *Lord, I will serve You in sickness and health, in the good days and in bad days. Amen.*

Job 1

The Enemy Attacks

[1]Job was Your faithful servant living in the land of Uz. He was blameless, upright, and he trusted in You. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [2]Job had seven sons and three daughters, [3]and his vast herds indicated he was wealthy. He lived in a very large house, and enjoyed an extensive reputation from surrounding neighbors.

Lord, help me be faithful in times of prosperity. Amen.

Job prayed for his children and sacrificed for them in case any of them sinned against You. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [4]Because they invited their brothers and sisters to enjoy a sumptuous feast on their birthday, [5]Job was concerned a child might sin against You so he sacrificed for them on a regular basis. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[6]When the angels came into Your presence, LORD, {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} satan came also with them. [7]You asked satan why he was there. The adversary answered that he had been examining His followers to determine their sincerity and godliness. [8]You held up Job as an example of righteousness, [9]but the accuser criticized You for putting a protective hedge around Job. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [10]Satan claimed Job was righteous because he prospered and had many belongings. [11]Satan challenged You to take away Job's belongings, and he would curse You to Your face. [12]So You allowed satan to test Job by taking away everything he owned, but You wouldn't let satan harm him physically. {491 Trial-Purifying Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7}

Lord, satan is a ruthless enemy who hates Your children; he hates every good thing that they have. Amen.

13There came a day when Job's sons and daughters were feasting in the oldest brother's house. 14A messenger arrived to tell Job an enemy-raiding party stole all his donkeys and oxen. 15Then the enemy killed all the servants and only he escaped to come tell Job. 16Another messenger arrived simultaneously to tell how lightning killed all his sheep and shepherds. The other servants were killed and only he escaped to come tell Job. 17A third messenger arrived to tell how the Chaldeans stole all the camels and killed the servants. Only he escaped to come tell Job. 18A fourth messenger arrived to tell that all Job's children were killed when they were feasting together; 19a powerful tornado collapsed the house, crushing them to death. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 20Job's faith in You was not shaken, but his immense grief was evident to all. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}

Lord, help me retain my integrity in times of trials and accidents. Amen.

21Job cried, "Naked came I from my mother's womb, and I shall be naked when I die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} The LORD gave me all things and the LORD has taken all things away; I praise the name of the LORD." {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 22Job refused to blame You for his trouble, nor did he sin in his heart against You. Amen.

Lord, I need a hedge to protect me; the enemy is powerful and I am weak. Deliver me from the evil one who would destroy me, and lead me not into temptation that would overwhelm me. Thank You for past deliverances and protection; I trust in You. You are greater than the enemy of the world. Amen.

Job 2

The Enemy's Second Attack

1The enemy, satan, came into Your presence again with the angels 2and he said he was still looking to accuse Your people. 3You pointed out that Job still worshiped You in integrity. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} Even though he lost everything, he remained faithful to You. 4Satan said, "Skin for skin"; if Job lost his health he would curse You because of physical troubles. He would say, "A man would give up everything to save his skin." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

Lord, help me understand temptations are a way of life. Amen.

5You told satan he could take away Job's health, 6but the enemy couldn't take away his life.

7And Job was inflicted with terrible boils from head to toe {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} what people of that day called black leprosy.

[8]To get relief, Job sat in ashes to absorb the mucous and he scraped himself with broken pottery to deal with his pain. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [9]Job's wife mocked him for trying to maintain his integrity. She said, "Curse God and die." [10]But Job accused her of being godless, asking, "Are we to receive only from God, and reject Him when bad days or troubles come?" {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} In all his pain, Job did not sin with his mouth, but kept his integrity before God. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

Lord, help me understand those who try to help me. Amen.

[11]Job's three friends came to see him: Eliphaz the Temanite, Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite. [12]They could hardly recognize Job because of his affliction; {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} they grieved loudly and were emotionally upset. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [13]Then they sat in silence with Job for seven days; his suffering was too great for words.

Lord, prepare me for sickness and any pain that will come when I pass from this life into Your presence. I don't want to suffer, and I'm not good with pain. Give me the integrity of Job to worship You in everything that happens to me physically. Amen.

Job 3

Job's Lament

[1]Job denounced the day of his birth, because his life didn't have hope that's promised with each new baby.
[2]Job was sorry he was conceived, [3]and he wanted to forget that he was born into a meaningless suffering world. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [4]Job said, "Let my birthday become black, and shrouded in darkness; don't even let God know about it. [5]Let a dark cloud overshadow the event, [6]and erase it off the calendar so no one will remember. [7]Don't let anyone rejoice on my birthday [8]and let everyone hear words from the pessimist about how bad it is. [9]Don't let the morning stars give any hope to that day, and may the sun not welcome my birth." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [10]Job denounced the opening of his mother's womb, and the fact he was born into all this trouble. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

Lord, may I always treasure the breath of life You give. Amen.

[11]Job asked, "Why didn't I die at birth? [12]Why did my mother let me live? [13]If I had died at birth, I wouldn't be suffering now {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} but I would be at peace and resting in the grave. [14]I would be resting with the world's dead rulers, those who are famous for what they did. [15]I would be resting with dead wealthy people with their enormous bank accounts and expensive belongings. [16]Why

was I not buried like a stillborn baby, like a child that never saw the light of day?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord, help me understand the finality of death. Amen.

17Job said, "In death, the wicked don't trouble anyone and the weary of this life find rest. 18Those who have been in prison no longer fight; there's no one in the grave to accuse or curse them. 19The rich and the poor are alike in the grave, and the slave is free from his master. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
20"Lord, why have You given light to the miserable and life to those who are bitter? 21They search for death, but can't find it; they look for it as the greatest treasure in life. 22They think death is a blessed relief when it finally comes; they actually shout for joy because death is a blessing. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 23Lord, why do You give life to those like me with no future? Why are some destined to live in pain? 24I cannot eat because I continually cry and mourn, my groans pour out like water. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 25The thing I feared most has happened to me; what I dreaded now gives me pain. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 26I have no peace, no escape and no quietness; but I only see anguish and trouble in the future." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Lord, help me look through all suffering to see Your hand in my life. Job was sorry that he was born yet You had a purpose for his life; help me see Your purpose in my life. Amen.

Job 4

Eliphaz's First Counsel

1Eliphaz finally spoke to Job after seven days because it took him that long to arrive at what he would say. 2Eliphaz said, "If I tell you what's wrong, you will get mad, {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} yet I can't keep my opinion to myself. 3Job, you have given moral instruction to many; you have strengthened feeble hands. 4You have strengthened those who were faltering 5but now misfortune has come to you, and you are surprised. 6Shouldn't you trust the Lord you fear? {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} And shouldn't your integrity be your hope?"

Lord, help me not to judge others ignorantly. Amen.

7Eliphaz told Job to think about the reasons that may have caused his trouble. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} "Think about how God always judges sin, how the Lord even destroys the guiltless. 8Those who plough sin in their life reap the whirlwind of God's punishment. 9The guilty perish, judged by the breath of God; at the blast of His anger, they are consumed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10The lions may growl, the young lions roar, and the old lion's teeth are broken; 11but lions scatter

when there is no prey, and God would not have judged you if you had not sinned." {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}
[12]Eliphaz claimed to have a vision {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} as he said, "A word was brought to me silently; my ears caught only a whisper of the message. [13]I received a vision in the night; it came to me when other people were sleeping. [14]I was scared to death when I saw the vision, {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} and my bones shook uncontrollably in fear. [15]A spirit passed in front of my face and the hairs on my skin stood up. [16]It stopped in front of me, but I couldn't discern it; there was a shadow without form. Then I heard the voice speak to me, [17]'Can a human man be more righteous than God? Can a human stand pure before his Creator?' {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [18]God knows every one of His servants is a sinner; even the angels are not perfect. [19]How much more sinful are those who live in houses of clay? {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} They are all created out of dust. They are crushed as easily as a worm; [20]they can be destroyed between sunrise and sunset. They perish forever and no one notices. [21]They die ignorantly, not realizing their sin has caused their death." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

Lord, help me to study the Bible to learn more about You in Scripture. Keep me from any wrong doctrine that comes from nightmares or from thinking I see visions, when it's not You. Amen.

Job 5
El Shaddai

[1]"Job, you may yell for help, but no one will come to you. You can turn to the angels, but they won't help you. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [2]Resentment kills those who won't listen to counsel, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} and arrogance destroys the ignorant."
[3]Eliphaz told Job that even a fool could turn to God and have momentary success and prosperity just as Job had temporary wealth but lost it all. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Lord, guard my lips from calling anyone a fool. Amen.

[4]"The children of fools have no one to help them; [5]they lose their money, belongings, and reputation. [6]Evil doesn't come from the ground and trouble doesn't come from the earth. [7]People are born into trouble and problems {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} just as surely as sparks fly upwards."

Lord, may I never give hypocritical advice. Amen.

[8]Eliphaz told Job, "Beg God for forgiveness for your sin; humbly present your case before God [9]for God is more compassionate than we understand; He performs wondrous things without number. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [10]He gives rain to the thirsty fields; He sends water to

grow our crops. [11]He raises up those who are humble, and lifts those who mourn to safety; and God will do the same for you, Job. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [12]But God frustrates the plans of the devious so that they fail with their schemes. [13]God catches the deceiver in his own trap and works their plans against them; you are guilty because you are being judged. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [14]Schemers grope in the sunlight as though they were blind; they see no better in the daylight than in darkness. [15]God rescues the poor from the enticing words of schemers and saves them from their snares. [16]God gives hope to the poor but He breaks the fangs of the wicked. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Lord, I will listen for Your still small inner voice that says, "This is the way, walk in it." Give me Your inner assurance and peace. Amen.

[17]"Happy is the one whom God corrects, so don't despise the punishment of El Shaddai. [18]God gives wounds and He also gives bandages. God strikes but He also heals. [19]God will rescue you again and again so that no evil can harm you. {516 Victory Over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} God will save you from six disasters; yes, God will deliver you from seven so you're not harmed. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [20]God will save you from death in famine and from the sword in time of war. [21]God will protect you from slander and you won't fear when destruction comes. [22]You will laugh at judgment, and wild animals will not scare you. [23]Your crops will prosper and give a good harvest; [24]God will shield you from evil threats. Your home will be safe and when you go away, nothing will be stolen from You. [25]You shall have many descendants and your offspring shall be like grass of the earth. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [26]You will live to a ripe old age and you will not die before your appointed time." [27]Eliphaz concluded, "This is what we know, listen and know it for yourself."

Lord, it's so easy to judge others; forgive me when I've been critical of people in the past. Take away any sarcasm from my heart; help me overcome any superiority I have toward others. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} Help me see my faults, then forgive me as I forgive others. Amen.

Job 6

Job's Answer to Eliphaz

[1]Job answered Eliphaz, [2]"If my troubles could be weighed and my difficulties stacked on a scale, [3]they would be heavier than the sand of the seashore. No wonder my words came out rashly and I speak so harshly; {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [4]the arrows of El Shaddai have pierced my heart. I have been poisoned by my calamities and my fate is worse than death." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} God asked Job, [5]"Does an animal bray when it has enough food? [6]Can food

be enjoyed without salt? Do egg whites have any taste?" Job draws the conclusion, "No!" [7]These things caused Job to lose his appetite just as Job's troubles took away his desire to live. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [8]Lord, Job told his friends he has only one desire, [9]that God would take away his life. [10]Then Job would feel consoled because that would end his unending pain. Then Job said he would be able to rejoice, knowing he hadn't denied the Holy One. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

[11]Job asked, "Do I have enough strength to keep suffering? Do I have any hope to keep enduring my troubles? [12]Can my body throw off storms like a rock? Am I made of bronze to blunt attacks?" [13]Job answered his own hypothetical question, "No! I am utterly defenseless." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Lord, Job then told his accuser, [14]"You should be kind to someone in trouble. [15]But you are as unreliable as a flood of water that runs dry when you run out of words to say. [16]You're like ice that dams up the streams; [17]you'll vanish when the hot weather arrives. [18]They'll die in the sweltering wilderness [19]when desert travelers come to drink of you, [20]because you have no water to give those in trouble. [21]You have become a dry streambed without life-giving water, you saw my calamity and gave me no hope or comfort. You have heaped trouble upon my trouble." {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7}

Lord, it's hard when people accuse me of things I haven't done. I know I'm not perfect, but I forgive them their debts so they'll forgive me my debts (Matt. 6:12). Keep me from slander; may complaining people not give me a negative outlook on life. Amen.

Lord, Job turned to rebuke his friends,
[22]"Did I ever ask you to give money to help me? [23]Did I ever ask you to save me from the enemy?" Job told Eliphaz, "I want a straight answer. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}:
[24]"Tell me what I have done wrong. List the sins you say I've committed." [25]Job explains, "If you speak honest words, they'll be forceful, [26]but your speech doesn't convince me of anything [27]because you didn't listen to my cry for help. [28]I have not sinned, and that is the truth. [29]Would I lie to your face especially when I'm in this terrible torment? [30]Quit telling me I'm guilty of sin; I've lived by my conscience before God." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22}

Job 7

Job's Answer (Continued)

Lord, Job told Eliphaz, [1]"Life is like serving in the army, life is long and hard and it's a struggle to stay alive. [2]Life is like working all day for wages; [3]my life's work is drudgery and futility; I don't have hope for wages, only more pain and trouble. [4]"When I go to bed, I only hope for the morning; when the sun comes up, I only

hope to sleep at night. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} 5My skin is full of worms and poison; when a scab breaks open, pus runs out.
6"My days fly swifter than a high-speed printer, each day ends without hope. 7My life is just one breath at a time; I will never see good times again. 8You see me now, but not for long; pretty soon I'll die and pass on and my life will not come back. 9I'm like a passing cloud, gone forever, 10never to be seen again." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
11Lord, Job spoke harshly against his accuser, saying, "I cannot keep quiet while you complain. 12I'm not some type of monster you have to guard but I am bitter at what you've said. 13I try to get some relief by sleeping, 14but your vision scared me to death; I don't think God was speaking by your vision. 15I'd rather die than have you comfort me, 16so, leave me alone! {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}
17"What is a man that you should care about him? 18You come here every morning looking for my sin; you analyze every word I speak, looking for mistakes; 19leave me alone, just for a few minutes. Why is my sin so important to you? What have I done to make you attack me? 20Why have you come to make my troubles more unbearable? If you think I've committed sins you haven't seen, why don't you just forgive my sin? 21Wouldn't your forgiveness help take away my pain? But no, you keep accusing me of sins I haven't committed. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} Someday I'll die and be buried in the ground, and you'll look for me but I will be gone."

Job 8

Bildad's First Counsel

1Bildad began speaking sarcastically. 2"How long will you huff and puff? 3Does God twist the truth? Does El Shaddai turn wrong into right? 4Your children were guilty of sin against God so they deserved the punishment they got. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5If you will earnestly seek God, if you will beg for His favor, 6if you will live a pure honest life, God will restore your home and family. 7Even though your beginning was small, your end can be great." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

Lord, help me understand the motives of others. Amen.

Bildad's Appeal to Tradition

8"Ask the previous generations what is right; listen to the wisdom you can learn from tradition. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 9Those who were born yesterday know very little; their days are like a passing shadow. 10The ancient elders will tell you the truth; they will not be reluctant to tell what is wrong.

Bildad Claims to Know the Truth

11"Can marsh grasses grow where there is no water? Can bulrushes live in dry sand? 12No, they die if there is no water to keep

them alive, and you are dying because you've denied the truth of God. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
13"The godless have no hope because of their sin, 14everything they count on will crumble; they are trusting spider webs to hold them up. 15The godless think their home is secure trying to hold on to their houses, but the ungodly will eventually lose everything. Job, that's why you lost your belongings and home; you are guilty of hidden iniquity. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 16The ungodly seem to be strong like a mighty tree that prospers in the sunshine and spreads its branches out over the ground. 17Its roots go down through the rocks to give it strength but it's forgotten when it's cut down. Job, that's a picture of your destiny 18when you're cut down; no one will miss you. 19"Another tree will grow to replace you." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

Lord, keep me from offering sarcastic hope. Amen.

Bildad Offers His View of Hope after Condemning Job

20"God will not reject a blameless man, nor will He prosper one who sins against Him. 21God can give you laughter again, your lips can sing praises and shout for joy. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} 22Then those who have criticized you will be embarrassed and you will be vindicated anew."

Lord, give me sensitivity to know when criticism is accurate and help me learn from it. Give me courage to reject criticism that comes from a hypocrite, or criticism that is wrongly based. I yield myself to You; I want to walk humbly with You and grow in righteousness. Amen.

Job 9

Job's Answer to Bildad

1Job admitted the truth of fallen humanity; 2how can anyone declare he is perfect before God? {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} 3Job said, "If I could answer God in a courtroom, I could never claim to be perfect in His sight."

Lord, I acknowledge I am not perfect. Amen.

4"God's choices are wise; God's ability is mighty, no one could ever successfully challenge Him. 5God moves mountains without asking anyone; {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} they quake because He speaks. 6God shakes the earth according to His will; the foundations tremble. 7God could command the sun not to shine and the stars not to shine. 8God alone spread the hemisphere in creation; He alone can walk on the waves of the sea. 9God created the stars—the Great Bear, Orion, the Pleiades; He made the constellations we can't see. 10God's purpose in creation is unsearchable, we can't count all the things He has done." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Lord, I know You are omnipotently powerful, yet I can't see You. Amen.

[11]Job agreed, "Yet I can't see the Creator nor recognize Him when He passes by. [12]He sends death to take people away and no one asks, 'What are You doing?' [13]God does not withdraw His anger; the mightiest contenders are crushed by Him."

Lord, You are greater than I can comprehend. Amen.

[14]Job said, "How can I answer God? How can I argue with God? {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [15]Even when I have my integrity I wouldn't try to answer God; I would throw myself on His mercy. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [16]Even if I summoned God to the courtroom, He wouldn't listen to my plea of innocence. [17]God could break me with a storm; He doesn't need a reason to wound me. [18]I wouldn't even have time to catch my breath for God could send the sorrows of this life. [19]If it's a matter of omnipotent power, God can do it all. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [20]If it's a matter of justice, I can't challenge Him.
[21]"Even if I proclaim my innocence, I fall short of God's standards. [22]Even if I said, 'I'm innocent,' it means I don't really know my own heart. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} So the story of life is very simple: The wicked have troubles just like the innocent; life is the same for all God's creatures. {491 Trial-Purifying Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} [23]When disaster suddenly brings death, the innocent along with the wicked dies. [24]Yet this life is controlled by wicked people and God lets them do what they want; He lets them break every law."

Lord, I know that I am finite and life isn't fair. Amen.

Job said life is like three things: [25]"Life goes by swiftly like a sprint runner, [26]life speeds along like a boat made of reeds, life swoops down to eat you up like a hungry eagle. Life is brief, precarious, and cruel." {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10}

Lord, help me not complain when trouble comes. Amen. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

[27]Job said, "If I decide to stop complaining and start living as though nothing is wrong, [28]I'll still suffer with my pain, and I'll know I'm not perfect in God's sight. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [29]I'd be condemned by a perfect God, so why should I keep quiet and act like normal people? [30]Even if I washed myself in new fallen snow and scrubbed my hands with lye, [31]I'd probably fall into a muddy ditch and I'd be filthy again. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}
"Lord, I know You don't do things as humans do." [32]Job admitted God is not mortal, so he couldn't argue with Him in a trial. [33]"If only I had a mediator to plead my case who could bring me to God, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [34]but in

this life there is none. I need a mediator to deal with my punishment; [35]then I could speak to God without fear, but I can't do it in my strength."

Job 10

Job's Weariness

[1]Job agreed, "I am worn out so I keep complaining. [2]I want to tell God, 'Don't keep punishing me; let me know what I've done wrong. [3]Is there a purpose to my suffering? What advantage is there in my pain? God, why do You allow me such agony and why do You let the wicked have a good life? You made me who I am.'" 504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord, I sometimes get tired of all my struggles. Amen.

[4]"'God can You see me as others see me? [5]Can You feel for me as do mortals? [6]Why do You look for my faults and try to find my sins? [7]God, You know I am not guilty; yet there is no relief for my agony.'" {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

Lord, help me to see Your great plan for my life. Amen.

[8]Job said, "God, You formed me with Your hands, You can destroy me when You want. [9]God, You formed me from the dust of the ground and one day I'll return to dust. [10]God, You were present when I was conceived, [11]You saw me become skin and bones. [12]God, by Your grace, You gave me life; You preserved me to this minute. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [13]"Yet You had plans for me I didn't know about, [14]You watch to see if I'll sin against You and You're ready to punish me when I sin. [15]If I have sinned against You, then I deserve my suffering. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} But I know I am innocent, yet I still suffer in pain. I can stand before You blameless because I know I have lived in integrity. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [16]Yet You allow pain to hunt me like a tiger; pain is one way Your power is shown. [17]I can't get away from my predicament; my pain keeps growing like troops attacking me wave after wave." {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

Lord, I have difficulty knowing why anyone suffers. Amen.

[18]Job questioned, "God, why was I brought from the womb? {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} [19]Why didn't You let me die at birth? Then I wouldn't have this suffering; I could have gone from the womb to death. [20]I have only a little time left, so I want Your false comforters to leave me alone and go away. [21]When You leave, I'll be happier before I go to my grave. [22]It is a land that is dark as night itself {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} where even the light is black like midnight."

Lord, I have many questions, but I never denied Your power and sovereignty over my life. I acknowledge Your control over all things—even blessings and pain. I praise

You for the good things in my life. But when pain and sorrow come, teach me to praise You, even in trouble. Amen.

Job 11

Zophar's First Counsel

[1]Zophar jumped into his accusation.
[2]"Job, you talk too much. I can't remain silent while you babble on. No one is ever proven innocent by much talking.
[3]Is your ceaseless talking supposed to shut us up? You ought to be ashamed for mocking God. [4]You claim your words are right, and you tell God you are upright in your heart. [5]I wish God would talk so He would answer you; He would tell you what is right. [6]Doesn't that make common sense to you? {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} God is punishing you for your guilt; your suffering is actually less than you deserve. [7]Can you understand the depths of God? {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} Can you discover the mysteries of God? [8]God's ways are higher than the heavens; His purposes are deeper than hell. [9]God's plans are wider than the universe and broader than the seas.
[10]"If God allows a person to be called in judgment or if He allows one to be put into prison, who can stop Him? [11]God knows those who are not true; He writes a record of their sins so God knows your heart, Job." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, help me to understand the way You do things. Amen.

[12]Zophar then said, "No human knows everything any more than a donkey can give birth to a man.
[13]"If you will straighten out your heart before God, if you will lift your hands to Him, [14]if you will repent of your iniquity, and quit living in a house of sin, [15]then, when you seek God, you will find Him {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and you will be free from your pain.
[16]Then your misery will finally come to an end like a flood, your troubles will pass away. [17]Your life will be bright like the sun and your darkness will be like the morning. [18]You will have courage because there is hope, {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} and you can sleep securely. [19]Many will come again to seek your advice but the wicked will not listen to you. [20]The wicked have no hope; they have nothing but despair."

Lord, keep me from being like Zophar who judges others wrongly. Teach me to listen to people and evaluate them according to truth. I don't want to hurt people, I want to help them become strong in faith. Amen.

Job 12

Job's Answer to Zophar

[1]Job answered his three friends, [2]"You think you know everything and that all

wisdom will die with you. [3]I can think rationally and I know a lot of things; you three are no better off than I am. [4]Everyone knows what I've been saying all along; I ask God for help in my suffering, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [5]but I've become a laughing stock to them. Yes, I have kept my integrity before God and people ridicule and mock me. The rich ridicule those in trouble and despise the poor because they have nothing; yet, in spite of their prejudice, the rich prosper. [6]The thief also prospers; even those who despise God prosper. So the three of you are wrong; a person doesn't have to be righteous to prosper; you provoked God with your silly talk.

[7]"Go ahead, ask the dumbest animal, then study the birds flying in the sky; [8]also look at the fish of the sea. [9]Every one of them knows [10]God's hand has created everything. [11]Just as my mouth knows what food it tastes, so my mind knows the truth it hears. [12]Older men—like me—may be wise, [13]but all true wisdom comes from God; {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} He alone knows what we should do. God has great strength; [14]when He destroys something, no one is able to rebuild it. [15]When God withholds the rain, the earth becomes a desert. When God sends the rain, a flood destroys all within its path. [16]When God limits a man, he cannot escape. With God is all wisdom and all strength; He does what He wills with deceivers and the deceived. [17]God can take away the good judgment of counselors so that their decisions are illogical. [18]God can take away the judgments of kings so that their office is taken from them. [19]God can disgrace the strong men of the king and take away their weapons in which they trust. [20]God can silence the trusted counselors which He should do with you three comforters." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, I recognize and yield to Your sovereignty in my life. Amen.

As Job said, [21]"Lord, You humble the earthly leaders, and take away the strength of the mighty. [22]You make light to overcome darkness and You shine light in the blindness of men. [23]You lift nations, and You put them down; You let nations, conquer, and You let them collapse. [24]You take away the wisdom of leaders so they stagger in the wilderness without a path. [25]They search for light in the darkness and stumble as a drunkard." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Job 13

Job's Faith in God

[1]Job said, "I have seen the things you describe so I know what you are trying to do to me. [2]I have as much learning as you do; you are not wiser than I am. [3]I want to talk directly to El Shaddai; I want to explain to Him my case. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Apparently you three have not understood my case. [4]You are telling me things that are not true; as teachers, you have failed the course you teach. [5]Keep quiet, and don't show your

ignorance. [6]Listen to what I have to say." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Lord, may I learn how to answer my critics from Job. Amen.

Focusing on the Person of God

[7]"Don't try to defend God with your counsel because you are dishonest; you don't tell the truth. [8]You should be objective when talking about God, but you twist the truth about Him, giving your false interpretation of El Shaddai. [9]You think you are presenting the truth from God; be careful God doesn't find out the errors you're saying. [10]You cannot mislead God like you try to mislead me. You'll be judged by God for your hypocrisy. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [11]Doesn't the thought of a holy God scare you? Be careful God doesn't judge you for your slander. [12]Your arguments are like burned out ashes blown away by the wind. Your reasoning has crumbled like a broken clay pot that shatters into pieces." {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, teach me to look beyond my critics to see You. Amen.

[13]Job told his comforters, "Be quiet. I will tell you the truth as it is and I will take my punishment if I am wrong and you are right. [14]I will stand on my faith in God; I am ready for what comes my way. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} I will take responsibility for my life but I'll believe and say what I think. [15]Though God may slay me, yet I will trust Him {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} and I will affirm my faith in God. [16]God is my salvation, but you hypocrites will be judged by Him. In my integrity, I believe in God; if I did not, He'd cast me out of His presence." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, may I have strong faith like Job. Amen.

[17]Job told his three counselors, "Hear me out, [18]I will prove my innocence. You haven't proved me wrong; [19]I would keep silent if you did." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

[20]Job prayed, "O God, I want You to do two things for me. [21]First, remove Your hand of affliction from me {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} and don't torment me with this suffering. [22]Second, invite me into Your presence {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} so You will see my faith and integrity. [23]If I have done anything wrong, show me my sin and transgression. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [24]Why have You hidden Your face from me? Why have You treated me like an outcast? {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [25]I am as worthless as a dry leaf or as dead grass; [26]why am I suffering? [27]My feet are chained and I am in prison; I am afflicted with this torture.

[28]"I am as useless as rotten wood; I am like a moth-eaten coat." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, I don't want to hide anything from You; show me any hidden sin. Forgive me for the wrong I do intentionally, and for secret sins I do unintentionally. Cleanse me by the blood of Jesus Christ and restore me to intimate fellowship with You. Amen.

Job 14

Suffering

[1]Job said, "Those born of woman only have a few days, and their life is filled with suffering.{465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [2]We are born with the beauty of a new flower but quickly we are cut down and die. [3]We are like shadows that creep across the ground, then we disappear as though we had not been here." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord, help me to make my days count in this short life. Amen.

Job said, "You three friends know life is frail; {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} what more do you expect of me? [4]Those born in iniquity cannot be perfect, so I'm not sinless, but I can live without blame. [5]The Lord has determined the years we should live, and knows when we will die; we will not live longer than He decrees." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}

Lord, may I rebuke people with a kind spirit. Amen.

Job said, "So give me a little room to be human and quit looking at me as though I'm guilty. [6]We are all employees of God; let's finish the task He's given us in life.

[7]"When a tree is cut down [8]the roots can sprout again even though its roots have been there a long time. [9]But there must be water to give it life so it can grow into a new tree. [10]When a person breathes his last and dies {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} where are they when their life is gone? [11]As water evaporates in the hot sun and as steam disappears when there is no rain, [12]so a person dies, is buried, and is gone.

[13]"They will not awake or return from the grave until heaven passes away and the resurrection gives them new life." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

Job prayed, "O hide me in the grave and keep me there until the resurrection so I can rid myself of this agony. I know You have an appointed time for me to die and I am ready to go, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} but think of me in the final day. [14]When a righteous mortal dies, can he live again? The resurrection gives me hope in suffering and death. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [15]When You call for me in death, I will answer; [16]then You'll know my integrity [17]and my sin will no longer be a question.

[18]"Just as mountains crumble and rocks tumble, [19]as water wears away stones and the earth erodes, [20]so man's hope is gone." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Lord, You let death overtake all people, and the body rots away to nothing. But one day I shall be raised in the resurrection. Amen.

21"In death no one knows what happens
to their children; 22they leave this earth in
pain and grief." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}

Lord, I know I will die—as all people die, but I have trouble handling pain and fearing the unknown; help me to die well when the final chord is sounded for I know I'll be raised in the last day with a newly transformed body. Amen.

Job 15

Eliphaz's Second Response

1And then Eliphaz sarcastically answered
Job. 2"If you are as wise as you claim, why
are your words so foolish? You are full of
the hot air of the east wind. 3What good is
all your talking when you don't know what
you're saying? 4You have no fear of God,
{163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and
you don't know how to pray to God. {106
Definition of Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 5You are
justifying your sin and you deceive your-
self. 6I don't have to condemn you because
your speech proves you are guilty." {209
Guilty-Blocking Prayer, 1 John 3:21}

Lord, help me not retaliate against sarcasm just as Job had to listen to Eliphaz. Amen.

7Eliphaz asked if Job were the first person
born or if he was born before the hills were
created. 8"Do you think God speaks only
to you? Do you think you're smarter than
everyone? 9What insights do you think
you have and what do you know that we
don't? 10The three of us are older and wiser
than you; we are older than your father.
Why don't you respect us and listen to us
as you would your father?" {421 Sarcas-
tic-Worship, John 19:2}

Lord, what can I do when my friends misunderstand the ways You work in this world? Amen.

11Eliphaz asked, "Why don't you let God
comfort you; {73 Comfortable Place to
Pray, John 18:2} are you hiding a secret
sin? 12What has blinded you to the truth?
Why are you looking the other way?
13Your stupid words and arguments prove
you have turned against God.
14"What person goes through life without
sinning and who is perfect and righteous?
15Even the heavens are not clean; God
can't even trust His angels. 16So how much
more corrupt is a sinful person who always
seeks his selfish pleasures?" {231 Hypo-
critical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

Lord, teach me to listen to my friends and not answer sarcastically when they are sarcastic to me. Amen.

17Because Eliphaz had more experience, he
demanded that Job listen to him. 18"Wise
people have been my teachers and they

learned their wisdom from their fathers. [19]God gave the earth to our forefathers not to these strangers who are moving in." {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

Eliphaz Again Falsely Accuses Job of Sin

[20]"Wicked people are tortured in this life, they are scared to death all the time. [21]Even in prosperity they fear the destroyer. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [22]Wicked people are scared of the darkness; they think they'll be killed. [23]They are always hanging on to their money, thinking they'll end up in poverty. [24]They know the darkness of death is coming {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} so they are constantly terrified. [25]They clench their teeth at God and dare El Shaddai to judge them. [26]With their fleshly weapons of war, they want to fight against God. Job, you are fighting against God." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, give me a humble spirit so I won't hurt people. Amen.

[27]Eliphaz criticized Job, "Wicked rich people blind themselves with money and think it will protect them. [28]But their houses crash in around them and the world they build also collapses, just as your wealth disappeared. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [29]The wicked rich will not endure; their money will slip through their fingers and their belongings will disappear. [30]They can't escape darkness; the flames will lick about them and the breath of God will destroy them. [31]They are deceived who trust in self-effort, they are only fooling themselves; they have no reward beyond the grave. [32]The wicked shall die before they are ready. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} What will his belongings do for him then? [33]They'll be like green grapes picked too early, only to spoil. They'll be like an olive tree that sheds its flowers so no olives grow on the tree. [34]The ungodly will not have anything in death because the flames will burn everything up just as you, Job, have lost everything. [35]Evil people think up evil to satisfy their flesh, it all comes out of an evil heart; that's your problem, Job." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Lord, may I never wrongly accuse a fellow Christian of sin, especially when I don't know all the facts. May I listen to hurting people, be kind to them, and pray for them. Give me a considerate heart. Amen.

Job 16

Job's Second Answer to Eliphaz

[1]Job told Eliphaz, "I've heard this stuff before, [2]you're a bunch of lousy comforters. [3]Is there no end to your constant criticism? What motivates you to keep up your attacks? [4]I could criticize you if I were in your place; also I could describe your sin eloquently or share my negative opinion of you. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [5]But that's not what I would do; I would say things to help you, I would try

to ease your grief." {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}

Lord, give me the patience of Job to endure criticism and help me answer with a patient spirit. Amen.

6"But you three counselors haven't helped me. I still am grieving over my loss and it doesn't help when I have to defend myself."

Lord, help me deal with critics when it's my time to suffer. Amen.

7Job told his critics, "You have stomped on me and said I have destroyed my family because of my sin. 8You say I am a skeleton, just skin and bones which proves I am a sinner. 9You say God hates me; He's eating me alive and is tearing me apart because of my sin." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
10Job told his critics, "Everyone laughs and makes fun of me, they constantly take jabs at me. Everyone has turned against me. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} 11They say God has thrown me to the dogs and delivered me into the hands of the executioner. In my integrity I know I haven't sinned but I don't understand why I'm suffering." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Lord, help me look beyond my suffering, help me understand Your plan for my life. Amen.

12Job said, "I was minding my own business, yet God allowed the destroyer to attack me. 13I became a target for the evil one who attacked me with vengeance; my blood spilt on the ground. 14He attacked me again and again with an unrelenting assault.
15"Now I sit in burlap and ashes, my body is ravished with pain. 16My face is tired of weeping and my black eyes look like I'm dying. 17Yet, my hands are free from violence and my prayer is pure." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}

Lord, teach me how to pray when I suffer. Amen.

18As Job prayed in the valley of the shadow of death, {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} he said, "The grave hasn't covered me yet; I'm not dead, I'm still continually praying for a miracle. 19Everyone in heaven knows my good witness and I need an intercessor before the throne, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} pleading my case before God. 20But my three friends don't pray or plead for me, even when I ask sincerely for their help with tears. 21I need an arbiter between me and God as a man pleads for his neighbor. 22In a few years I'll die, and I'll go to the grave where no one returns."

Lord, give me the patience of Job to endure suffering. Also, I need his wisdom to endure the sarcasm of critics. Lord, give me a sweet

answer to my critics and help me look to You in suffering as did Job in his pain. Amen.

Job 17

Help Me

[1]Job prayed, "My spirit is broken and I'm about to die. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} [2]These three mockers sit all around me and I can see bitterness in their eyes. [3]You must defend me, O God, because no one else will take my side. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [4]The minds of my three friends are blinded to the truth; don't let them get the best of me. [5]They have flattered me to my face but their angry hearts denounce me; their children will be just as blind."

Lord, I don't understand why You let righteous Job suffer just as I'll probably not understand why I'll suffer in the future. Amen.

[6]Job said, "God, why have You let people mock me and spit in my face? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [7]I'm almost blinded with my tears and I'm a skinny bag of bones. [8]The upright are angry because of what's happened to me; the average person is angry at my three friends. [9]The righteous people will still believe in You and those with clean hands will grow in spirit." {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}

Lord, help me answer my critics with kindness. Amen.

[10]Job told his three critics, "Turn around and look at me, I don't see an honest man among you. [11]My days are almost over, and my life dreams are crushed. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [12]You critics don't know the difference between night and day; you are blinded to the truth. [13]You say light is coming but I'm going to a dark grave. [14]I might as well call the grave my home and the worms my provider. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} [15]Where then is my hope in this pain? {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} Who can find some hope to give me in this world? [16]Will you three comforters follow me into the grave to see if I've found any hope?"

Lord, it's hard to see any good thing coming from my pain, but help me trust in You until the day I die. And if I die with pain, keep my hope strong in You. Amen.

Job 18

Bildad's Second Speech

[1]Bildad attacked Job, asking, [2]"How long will you keep justifying yourself? When you wise up, we'll talk. [3]Do you think we three counselors are as stupid as dumb animals? [4]You can split hairs all you want, but you won't change anything on earth; not one rock will be moved. [5]It's still clear; the light of the wicked goes out and sparks

in a fire will die; and you, Job, are being punished for your sin. 6The lamp in your house will go out and glowing embers in your fireplace will become black. 7Your wickedness will destroy your confident swagger and your scheme will collapse. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 8You, like the wicked, will be ensnared in a trap. 9A rope will grab you by your foot; 10when the noose tightens, you'll not get away. 11Dangers surround the sinner on every side; they're waiting to eat you alive. 12Suffering wants to make a meal of you; destruction will consume the sinner. 13Disease already is eating your skin and death is gradually devouring you." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:3}

Lord, keep me from being calloused to the hurting. Amen.

14"All your arguments will be ripped to shreds and you'll be dragged terrified before the destroyer. 15Strangers will live in your earthly home but you'll be like ashes, burning in brimstone and sulfur. 16Your roots below will dry up and rot; your branches above will wither. 17All memory of you will be erased, no one will even know you ever lived. 18You will be thrown out of the light and you'll be cast into eternal darkness. 19You will not have a son or posterity; your line will be snuffed out. 20People in the West are astonished at your fate, people in the East are horrified. 21Everyone will remember you were a wicked man, they will say you rebelled against God." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, may I never become so angry that I accuse anyone of the things Bildad said about Job. May I have a kind spirit and may I have words of kindness for distressed people. Amen.

Job 19

Job's Reply to Bildad's Second Attack

1Job robustly defended himself, saying, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 2"How long will you irritate me? How long will you keep up your attacks? {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 3You've assaulted me ten times with your accusations you ought to be ashamed of yourselves. 4Even if I have hidden sins, that is none of your business. 5You've taken a pious attitude about my suffering and you use my suffering to prove your point. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 6It's not my sin that's done this to me; it's all within God's sovereignty. He's put me in this hole for a reason." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, help me see Your great purpose in suffering and help me learn to live for You through trials. Amen.

7Job cried out, "When I yell for help no one seems to hear me; life is not fair. {57

Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [8]God has me pinned up behind a fence, it's too dark to see any escape route. [9]God has stripped me of my position and respect; He has taken away all the authority I had. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [10]God has broken down all my defenses, He has uprooted me like a tree; it is finished, I have no hope. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} [11]God seems to be angry with me; He treats me like an enemy and sends attackers to destroy me. [12]God's troops have surrounded my home and are ready to attack me."

Lord, I know it's easy to complain; keep me from accusing You of wrongdoing. Amen.

[13]Job prayed, "God has kept my brothers from helping me in my troubles; He won't let my friends come to my rescue. [14]My relatives have let me down; my close friends have forsaken me. [15]Those living in my house treat me like a stranger, my servants won't even attend to me. [16]When I call for my staff, they won't come even when I beg for help. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [17]My wife rejects me because I have bad breath, my sores are repulsive to children and they laugh at me. [18]All my close friends turn their backs on me; [19]those I love have turned away. [20]I'm nothing more than skin and bones; I stay alive by the skin of my teeth." {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

Lord, when I reach out for help in my hour of trials, send someone to help me. Amen.

Job Asked His Three Friends for Help

[21]"I need your comfort, not your criticism. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [22]Why are you causing me grief? Hasn't God given me enough grief? {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}

[23]"I wish my defense were written in a book [24]or carved on a monument so everyone would know eternally. Oh, that everyone would realize I trust God; {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [25]I know that my Redeemer lives and that in the resurrection I'll stand on this earth. [26]After my body decays in the grave, in my flesh I'll see God. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [27]I'll stand before God and see Him with my eyes; this is my only hope. [28]If you keep accusing me of evil [29]you three will suffer the punishment that you wish for me." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, give me the deep conviction of Job about the resurrection and hope of heaven. I'm not ready to die; I have a lot of things I want to do on earth. But when it comes my time to die give me the faith of Job. Help me look confidently beyond the grave to see You in heaven. Amen.

Job 20

Zophar's Second Speech

[1]Zophar ignored Job when he said, [2]"You make me angry with your rebuttals, [3]I've endured your drivel long enough; now I'm going to tell you what I really think.
[4]"Don't you know that from the very beginning the wicked prosper for only a short time? [5]Just as you prospered but lost everything, the ungodly are not happy very long. [6]The wicked man thinks he is the biggest thing in the world; he thinks his head reaches to heaven. [7]But the ungodly disappears like garbage; his friends ask, 'Where did he go?' [8]He is like a night dream that is forgotten, like a thought that is fleeting; [9]no one will see him anymore. [10]His children will beg for food, they will have to pay back his debts. [11]The wicked may have been a young man, but his bones rot in the desert." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, help me listen when people confess their faith and help me look for their strengths, not their failures. Amen.

[12]So Zophar said, "Wickedness tastes sweet in your mouth. You savor its delicious taste, you roll it on your tongue; [13]you keep it in your mouth to enjoy its flavor. [14]Yet your wickedness makes you sick to your stomach; it's like a snake's venom that will kill you. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [15]Your wickedness is eating up your wealth, you vomit your sin up, but it's still there. [16]Your money is like the poison of asps, the viper's fangs will kill you." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord, Zophar had a mean spirit; give me love for all people. Amen.

[17]Zophar said, "You will never again enjoy the rivers even when streams flow with honey and cream. [18]You'll have to give away money, the money you worked for; you won't get to enjoy any of it. Your hard work will not be rewarded, your wealth will not give you any joy. [19]Because you have oppressed the poor, you've taken away their homes.
[20]"'Because your greed is unquenched, you've never been satisfied with what you got. [21]You eat up everything in sight because of your sin and callousness, [22]you've lost your wealth and health." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[23]Zophar prayed, "May God give Job a belly full of pain. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} May God rain trouble on Job, [24]the trouble he planned for other people. [25]When arrows are pulled from Job's body, may they sparkle with his blood, telling Job he's dying. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [26]May his treasures be lost in the darkness, and may a forest fire destroy everything he has. [27]May heaven reveal Job's guilt [28]and may the earth agree by washing away everything he has; [29]this is the way God deals with sin." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, the prayer of Zophar was cruel and wrong; keep me from wrongly judging

anyone. Lord, You are the only One who can judge anyone. When You come to judge me, be merciful. Amen.

Job 21

Job's Second Answer to Zophar

[1]Job answered Zophar, saying, [2]"Listen to every word that I say so you won't misunderstand what I mean. [3]When you know how God deals with people then you can continue your mocking, if you wish.
[4]"My complaint is with the way people react. I have reason to be short tempered; I'm not complaining with the way God treats me. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8} [5]When you look at me, you'll be shocked so hide your eyes with your hands. [6]When I realize what's happened to me, I'm stunned and I tremble with fear." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

Lord, help me answer my critics carefully. Amen.

[7]Job clearly presented his case to Zophar saying, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} "Do not some wicked people grow to a ripe old age? And don't some get wealthy and have good health? [8]They see their children prosper {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} and they enjoy their grandchildren. [9]Their houses are safe from thieves and destruction, God does not seem to punish all the wicked in this life. [10]Their businesses succeed and become larger; they enjoy the fruit of their labors. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [11]Their little children laugh and play around the home, [12]there is the sound of happiness in the home. [13]They spend their days enjoying their life and they die a peaceful death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [14]These are the same wicked people who reject God and say, 'Leave us alone; we won't follow You.' [15]These wicked people sarcastically ask, 'Who is El Shaddai that we should obey and serve Him?' {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} They ask, 'What advantage is there for us to pray? Why should we pray to God?'"
[16]Job concluded, "Don't the wicked prosper? It doesn't seem the sinner always suffers. You three are wrong in your arguments.
[17]"The wicked seem to get away with doing wicked things; they are not punished each time they sin. [18]God seems to let some of them get away with sin; they just bounce along like straw in the wind. [19]Some foolishly say, 'God will at least punish their children,' but each person is accountable for his sin; their children are not punished for their father's iniquity. [20]Each one will suffer for his wrong doing. El Shaddai will eventually judge the sin of each. [21]What pleasure can God get from the one who is cut off in death?"

Lord, help me see the big picture before answering my critics. Amen.

[22]Job said to Zophar, "No one can teach God anything; He knows perfectly how to deal with everyone. [23]One person gets

very rich and dies in perfect health, [24]even though he had plenty to eat. [25]Another dies poor, having had a hard life. [26]Both are buried in the earth, both pass from this life and are gone." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Job confronted his three counselors, [27]"I know what you're thinking, you're plotting a scheme against me. [28]You will tell me about rich people who lost everything; you say it was because of their wickedness. [29]But everyone knows rich people don't have it hard. [30]Punishment bypasses them. [31]and no one punishes him for what he has done wrong. [32]When the rich are buried, [33]everyone shows up for their funeral. The earth receives his body just as sweetly as it receives the poor. [34]No, you three are wrong in your logic; {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} God does not punish all the wicked rich. Your words are no comfort to me."

Lord, help me remember that You don't punish a person on this earth; Your judgment comes after death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then every person will be condemned for their rebellion against You. Thank You that Christ died for my sin and that I face no condemnation after death. Amen.

Job 22

Eliphaz's Third Counsel

[1]Eliphaz didn't understand God's ways when he asked Job, [2]"Can your actions help God in any way? No! Your actions benefit only yourself. [3]Is El Shaddai pleased when you try to act righteous? {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} That would make no difference to God.
[4]"Is God punishing you severely because you never reverence Him? [5]Is not your wickedness great and your sin without limits?" {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

Lord, may I never wrongly accuse my friends of sin. Amen.

[6] Eliphaz asked Job, "Did you lend money to a friend and then keep his clothing that you took as collateral? [7]Did you refuse to give water to a tired traveler or a meal to a homeless vagrant? [8]You were a wealthy land owner who was respected and powerful. [9]Did you refuse to contribute to widows and send orphans away empty? [10]You're surrounded with danger because of your sins and you're scared of more suffering to come. [11]Your sin has blinded you to the causes of your problem; you're covered with problems because you won't repent." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Lord, may I not use my knowledge of You as a club to beat someone into seeing things my way. Amen.

[12]Eliphaz asked, "Isn't God in the heights of heaven higher than the farthest star? [13]Job, don't say that's why God can't see you; God can see through the blackness of the universe. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [14]Job, you say the clouds

block God's view; God wanders around in heaven but God knows everything you do. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 15Are you going to keep believing in the old traditions, the ones that deceive wicked people? 16Those traditions didn't work for them, they failed, and now the wicked are gone. 17They said to God, 'Leave us alone. El Shaddai can't do anything for us.'" 18Eliphaz said, "I can't see why the wicked said this. El Shaddai has filled their houses with good things. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
19"When the righteous see the wicked destroyed, they will laugh and rejoice; 20the last of them are burned up in fire."

Lord, help me to listen to the Holy Spirit's voice and not be distracted by the bad advice people give me about Your will. Amen.

21Eliphaz told Job, "Stop fussing with God; you will have peace when you yield to Him. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 22Listen to what the Spirit is saying to you and He will prosper you again. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 23If you return to El Shaddai, He will receive you and restore your life to you. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 24Quit lusting after riches and give away all the money you've horded. 25Then El Shaddai will be your reward and you'll have more happiness than money can buy. {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} 26El Shaddai will be your delight and you'll be able again to see God. 27When you keep your vow and pray to God, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} He will hear you and answer you. 28Your plans will be successful and God will shine His light on your path. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 29You will then realize why God has brought you low; it was because of your past pride but you'll be saved if you'll be humble. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 30If your hands are clean and your heart is pure, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} God will deliver you from this mess."

Lord, take away any blindness I have to my sin; keep me from being belligerent like Eliphaz. Help me to see my sin as You see it, and I'll repent and seek Your forgiveness. Help me live a pure life. Amen.

Job 23

Job's Third Answer to Eliphaz

1Job told Eliphaz, 2"I'm complaining like a bitter old person, and groaning like a broken man. 3But I'm looking for God and can't find Him; {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} I need to talk to Him about my troubles. 4I would like to tell Him my side of the story, 5then I'd listen to His explanation and understand why I'm suffering. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 6I don't think God would argue with me; He would pay attention to what I've got to say. 7God would be fair and honest with me, we'd both know that's it's not because of any sin."

Lord, help me find You when I search for answers to my problems. Amen.

Job said, [8]"I search for God in the East, He's not there; I didn't find Him in the West. [9]I didn't find God when I searched in the North, and I still didn't see Him in the South. {190 God-Hunger Prayer, Matt. 5:6} [10]Yet God knows the way I take, and when He has tried me in the fire I'll come out like purified gold. {491 Trial-Purifying Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} [11]I have followed God's footsteps. I didn't turn to the right or the left. [12]I have not disobeyed the commands of His mouth, but have guarded His words in my mouth." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Lord, help me obey You when I can't hear Your voice and follow You when I can't see Your guiding hand. Amen.

[13]Job said, "No one can change God, and He does not change His mind; He accomplishes what He wants to do. [14]So God controls my life, He will do with me what He wills. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [15]When I think of God's awesome sovereignty, I am terrified and worship Him. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [16]God made my heart tender to do His will; I am afraid to disobey Him.[17]My suffering has imprisoned me, I am surrounded by impenetrable gloom."{465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Lord, I want the faith of Job to trust You in dark sufferings, when I can't see my hand in front of my face. I yield my life to You, as did Job; and just as Job worshiped You when he didn't know what to do, so I worship You. Amen.

Job 24

Questions

[1]Job asked, "Since God knows what'll happen every day, why doesn't He tell those who know Him what is going to happen each day? {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

[2]"Why doesn't God punish the wicked because they move the stakes that mark property? [3]The wicked rustle flocks and sell them for profit, and they steal welfare checks from the poor. [4]The wicked foreclose on the property of poor widows and push away the needy. [5]The wicked force the hungry to scrounge for food in garbage dumps or any place they can find it so they have just enough for their family." {514 Victory Over Doubt-Prayer, Mark 11:23}

Lord, may I never mistreat poor people. Amen.

[6]Job said, "The poor work to make money for their boss, but don't get a bonus or raise. [7]The poor don't have clothes to keep them warm; they shiver in the storms and rain. [8]They try to get protection any way

they can, it's almost impossible to keep warm." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

Lord, may I never be heartless as some wicked rich people. Amen.

9Job said of them, "They mistreat orphans.
10The wicked rich force the poor to hock their clothes before they will loan them any money, so the poor have to freeze in cold weather. The wicked rich force the poor to serve their tables, but won't give them any food. 11The wicked rich make the poor work in their shops, but won't give them fair wages for their work. 12The poor everywhere are crying for help, yet God apparently does nothing about it." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}
13Job said, "Wicked people rebel against the light. Evil people refuse to learn what is right; {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} they will not live by Your rules."

Lord, it's so obvious that wicked people prosper on this earth even when they rebel against Your principles. Don't let me be blinded by money and power; I know You'll punish the wicked at the Great White Judgment throne. Help me live by Your godly principles during my time on earth. Amen.

14"The murderer rises from his bed to kill the innocent and needy; when it's dark he becomes a thief. 15The adulterer waits till no one sees him; he doesn't want people to know what he does. 16They commit their crimes under the cloak of darkness; they sleep in the daytime. None of them knows what is right or wrong; 17they can't tell the difference between dark crimes, and doing good things in the morning light. They use people's fear of darkness to cover their wickedness." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Lord, I pray for evil people to get saved. Amen.

18Job says, "The wicked will disappear from the earth. The wicked are scum that's washed away with the flood; all they acquire is cursed. 19The wicked will melt away just as heat melts the snow. Hell will eat them up. 20The wicked will be forgotten by his mother and the worms of death will feed sweetly on him. No one will remember the sinner; they will be broken like a limb is snapped in a windstorm 21for they have taken advantage of the orphans, and refused to help widows." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, help me to see life through Your eyes to understand justice. Amen.

22Job said, "God puts down the wicked even if they rise for a short time. 23God allows the wicked to live for a time, but He constantly watches their actions. 24Though the wicked may be momentarily powerful, they're gone in the twinkle of an eye. They are gathered in death like everyone else; then their bodies shrivel up and die." 25Job challenged his three counselors, "Tell me if I'm wrong; no one can prove otherwise." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Job 25

Bildad's Third Response

[1]Bildad said, [2]"God has all power and dominion, He rules in high places; men should fear Him. [3]God has more armies than anyone can number, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} and He gives light to all on the earth. [4]How can you, Job, possibly stand before God and claim to be righteous? No one on earth is pure. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [5]Even the moon that shines at night or the sparkling stars are not pure. [6]How can you claim to be pure, you're just a worm in God's sight?"

Lord, I know I'm a sinner and I'm not perfect. But I am grateful the blood of Jesus Christ Your Son cleanses me from all sin (1 John 1:7). I stand perfect in Your presence because Jesus has taken away my sin. Amen.

Job 26

Job's Response to Bildad

[1]Job told Bildad, "You haven't done anything. [2]You haven't given help to the helpless, nor rescued a person who was lost. [3]You give me un-needed advice, you haven't said anything that makes sense. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [4]Where did you get all these ideas? Are you repeating what you've heard from others?"

Lord, may I know how to answer bad advice. Amen.

[5]Job declared, "The dead tremble before You; [6]even hell can't hide from You. [7]God hangs the earth on nothing, and spreads the northern sky in empty space. [8]God fills the thick clouds with rain, and they do not burst with its weight. [9]God covers His throne so no one can see it; no one can see God and live. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [10]God fixed a boundary between light and darkness; He determined the oceans would not flood dry land. [11]By His power God stirs up the seas with a storm, [12]and by His skill He stills the face of the waters. [13]By God's Spirit He makes the heavens beautiful and His power restrains the slithering serpent." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Lord, I see so many reflections of You in this world, yet there is so much more to discover. Help me understand Your purpose for my life, and help me learn of You in Your Word. Amen.

[14]"We see only the edges of His power, and we hear only a whisper of His voice. When His power thunders across the land, who can fully know His greatness?" {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Job 27

Job Maintains His Integrity

[1] Job took an oath as he continued to answer his critics. [2]"I swear by the living God who has taken away my rights, and I vow by El Shaddai who has dealt bitterly with me, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[3]that as long as I live and as long as I have breath [4]I will not curse or speak evil nor will I tell a lie. [5]I can't say what you three want me to say; that would be telling a lie. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [6]I will not disobey my conscience, and I will keep my integrity till I die." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}
[7]Job said, "May you three be like the wicked who will suffer the fate of the unrighteous. [8]What hope will you hypocrites have when God takes away your life? {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} Will God hear the cry of the wicked? [9]Will God help them when trouble comes? [10]The problem with the wicked is that they will not call upon El Shaddai; they will not turn to God." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [11]Job said, "I will teach you about the hand of God, and what El Shaddai will do to the wicked. [12]You've seen this before, so why are your words so meaningless?
[13]"The unrighteous will be judged by Him. [14]If the wicked are rewarded with many children, [15]they will still die by starvation or illness; no one will grieve them. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [16]If the wicked have lots of money and clothes, [17]someone else will spend their money and wear their clothes. [18]If the wicked build a large mansion, it will collapse like their evil reputation. [19]The wicked will go to bed rich, but all their wealth will be gone when he wakes up. [20]The wicked are fearful of everything all the time; they can't sleep at night for worry. [21]The eastern sandstorm blows everything away; [22]they are battered by the storms of life. The hurricanes pound them without mercy; the wicked struggle to survive. [23]The righteous will rejoice when the wicked are judged and cast away."

Lord, I know that You will judge the wicked, so keep me from ignorant sins; or even worse, from rebellious sins. Keep me pure of motives and separate from sin. Amen.

Job 28

Job Discusses Wisdom

[1]Job said, "Silver is found in the deep mines, and gold is hidden in veins within the earth. [2]Iron must be dug from the earth, and copper must be smelted from rocks. [3]Miners must use light to dig in dark caverns, so they can dig ever deeper for earth's treasures. [4]They break open new shafts in the earth. Yet those walking on the earth's surface don't know what's beneath them; just as people in this life don't realize the valuable things about them. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1, 8} [5]The ground above grows bread to eat; the earth below is mined into precious metals. [6]Men have learned how to find sapphires, and how to dig gold out of the ground. [7]No high flying falcon can see these precious things; birds of prey can't dig them up. [8]No wild beast can unearth them; the lion does not know their value. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [9]People can crush the rocks to find sapphires; they can overturn mountains to find valuable things. [10]They can cut ditches to discover precious stones, [11]and dam up streams to unearth precious treasures.

12"But they do not know where to find wisdom, and they can't unearth understanding. 13No one realizes the value of wisdom; it can't be found anywhere in the earth." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, I want Your wisdom more than anything in life, and give me understanding to use it properly. Amen.

14"'The heart of the earth says, 'Wisdom is not here,' the depth of the sea says, 'Wisdom is not here!' 15No one can buy wisdom with gold, and there's not enough silver to purchase it. 16Not enough gold is in the richest mine to trade for wisdom; neither can onyx nor sapphires get it. 17In no way can wisdom be compared to gold; a chest of gold could not substitute for it, let alone crystal or any other valuable thing. 18The price of wisdom is far above rubies, not to mention coral or quartz. 19The topaz of Ethiopia is not its equal; wisdom is the most valuable thing on earth." {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

Lord, give me wisdom to know all things, and give me understanding to use it properly. Amen.

20Job asks, "Where does wisdom come from? What is the source of understanding? 21Inasmuch as the birds of the sky can't see it, it—like jewels and precious metals—is hidden from the eye. 22Only when one dies and it's too late, do people understand the truth of wisdom. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 23God alone understands the value of wisdom; 24He manifests it throughout the earth. 25God who determines the direction and power of the wind, also puts the oceans and rivers in their place. 26God who made laws when the rain shall come also determines when lightning shall strike. 27God who did all this knows that wisdom is the most important thing in the world. God established everything on earth by wisdom, and He tells everyone on earth about its value. 28To obey the Lord is the wisest thing in life, and those with understanding run from evil." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8}

Lord, I want to be wiser than I am. Take away any blindness I have. Reveal Your plan to me for my life; help me see truth and do it. Amen.

Job 29

Job's Nostalgic Soliloquy

1Job reflected, 2"I remember the past days in my life when God watched over me, 3when I had God's light shining on my path, and I walked easily through the dark night. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 4I remember when I was young and I felt the presence of God in my life. 5I remember El Shaddai guiding my decisions, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and I had all my children around me. 6My businesses prospered, and everything went well.

7"I went to places where important people
gathered, and they considered me one of
them. 8The young people respected me,
and the aged were glad to see me. 9The
city officials would listen to me, 10and they
wanted to know my opinions. 11Those
who heard me, listened to my thoughts,
everyone spoke well of me 12because I
gave to the poor who asked for help, and
I gave to orphans when no one else would
do it. 13I gave help to those about to die,
and widows were appreciative of my assis-
tance. 14I did the right thing and people
called me righteous. My reputation was
like a robe and crown. 15I was eyes for the
blind, and feet for the lame. 16I was a father
for the needy, and I made sure that every-
thing was done right. 17I broke the fangs
of the wicked, and took victims from their
mouths."

Lord, help me look back on my past life, and praise You for Your sovereign leadership. Amen.

18"I thought I would die comfortably in
my own bed surrounded by loving family
and friends. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts
22:3} 19I was like a spreading fruitful tree
whose branches were refreshed by the rain.
20I was constantly renewed, and I kept get-
ting more power.
21"People listened to me for my wisdom;
they didn't say anything against my opin-
ion. 22My words were like the dew of the
morning 23and like the rain that refreshed
everyone who heard me. 24I encouraged
all those who were discouraged, and my
optimism lifted them up. 25I could tell
people how to live, and they listened to
me; I comforted the mourners." {194
Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}

Lord, Job looked back on all the good things he had in life. I, too, look back and praise You for every good thing that has happened to me. I know that every good thing comes from You. Thank You for them all. Amen.

Job 30

Job Describes His Pathetic Condition

1Job lamented, "I am now mocked by
young men, those thugs who are the lowest
in society. 2They attack and hurt me, their
assaults do me no good; they have done
nothing to help me. 3Hungry, they roam
the desert at night. 4They gnaw in the dirt
for roots of trees. 5Their former friends
have nothing to do with them. 6They live
in holes in the ground or among the rocks,
7they hide in the bushes like animals.
8They are foolish nobodies completely
empty of human virtues." {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I understand why Job rejected his ungrateful critics, especially after he had done so much for them. Amen.

9Job said, "Now they taunt me, they even
use my name as a curse word. 10They won't
come near me except to spit in my face.
11Because God has allowed these troubles

to afflict me, {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} they have rejected me and hate me. 12These wretched people attack me; they trip me up so I fall helplessly on my face. 13They block my way so I can't get through. They laugh at me in public places, knowing I can't help myself. 14They attack me from the front and behind, and kick me when I fall down. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 15I am scared of them because I can't defend myself. My honor has gone, blown away by a strong wind." {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Lord, I understand why Job is bitter; help me keep my courage when things get dark for me, as they did for Job. Help me rejoice in sufferings as did Paul who said, "I know how to be abased, and I know how to abound. Everywhere and in all things I have learned both to be full and to be hungry, both to abound and to suffer need" (Phil. 4:12). Amen.

16"Now I'm a broken old man because of my desperate condition, and no one helps me. 17I can't sleep because of my pain, like something eating on my bones. 18My clothes stink and are stained with my sores, my coat hangs on me because I've lost so much weight. 19God has thrown me into the mud and mire, and I'm just dust and ashes." {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}

Lord, give me sympathy for Job, and for all others who are suffering from debilitating pain. Amen.

20Job cried, "God, I need You, but You don't answer me. God, I stand before You, but You don't see me. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 21Why are You cruel to me? Your powerful hand is persecuting me. 22I'm tossed to and fro by every wind; I don't know where I'm going. 23The only thing I know for sure is that I'll die just as every person must die.

24"God, You would not punish a man who is already ruined! If a man cried for mercy, I know You, God, wouldn't destroy him. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 25Have I not wept for those in trouble? {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Was not my soul grieved for the poor? 26Yet, when I looked for something good, all I got was bad treatment. When I expected light, darkness came and everything was black. 27My mind is all confused, and I don't understand why I am suffering all this misery. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 28I look for the sunshine, but get gloom; I cry for help, but no one answers. 29Instead, people consider me crazy like a hyena, or they think of me as an owl. 30My flesh is black with infection, my skin rots and falls off, and I'm burning up with a fever. 31My harp plays only mournful tunes, and my flute accompanies my weeping." {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

Job 31

Job's Final Plea of Innocence

1"I made a vow to have integrity before God; that vow includes not lusting after a woman, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying,

Prov. 7:18} and I have kept that vow." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [2]Job stated, "God has given to each one of us a choice, it comes with His gift of life to us. [3]God will destroy those who work iniquity, [4]and He rewards those who obey Him in integrity. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}

[5]"I have not been a hypocrite or lied to anyone; I have kept my word and done my duty. [6]I have always paid my debts, and kept honest books before God. {469 Surety-Praying, 2 Peter 1:10} [7]If I didn't walk a straight path, but turned to the left or to the right, [8]may I lose everything I gained.

[9]"If I have given into the enticement of women or lustfully flirted with another man's wife, [10]may I lose my family and be humiliated, [11]for sexual sin is a crime that should be punished. [12]Sexual lust burns like a devastating forest fire, devouring everything it touches. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}

[13]"I have not mistreated my servants, and I carefully listened to their complaints. [14]How could I face God who created masters and servants if I didn't treat them fairly? [15]God who created me in the womb, also created them.

[16]"I haven't refused to give help to the poor, [17]nor have I crushed the expectation of orphans who need help. [18]I learned wisdom as a child listens to his father, and follows the path of his mother. [19]I have given clothes to the poor, [20]and they have always thanked me for keeping them warm and protected. [21]If I have ever hit an orphan or the poor, [22]let my arm fall off in judgment. [23]That would be better than letting God judge me, because I can't endure His punishment. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[24]"Making money has never been my life's passion, nor have I placed my confidence in my checkbook. [25]My life is not based on my wealth, nor is my happiness dependent on riches and belongings. I have never been enticed to worship idols, nor have I done so. [26]I have admired the setting sun and bright morning, [27]but never have I thought of making an idol of them. [28]Anyone worshiping idols deserves judgment from God {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} for they would have denied God who created them. [29]I have never rejoiced when my enemies failed, nor was I glad when they were punished. [30]I would have sinned with my mouth, if I cursed those who hate me. [31]My servants have never turned away the hungry, [32]and I have opened my doors to travelers. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [33]I have not tried to cover my sins as most people do. [34]I realize sin can't be covered or ignored; {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} everyone eventually will be found out, and I would be ashamed to show my face in public.

[35]"If only there were someone who would listen, and not judge me before learning the facts. If only El Shaddai would show me my sins, or someone prove in a court of law that I have broken the moral law. Even if my financial record shows I've stolen, or they find stolen goods in my possession, [36]then, I would admit that I have sinned; I wouldn't deny it. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [37]Then, let me be judged according to my sins, and let me be punished according to my crime. [38]My land cannot

say I have planted in a wrong way. [39]I have not taken any food without paying for it, and no one can accuse me of stealing from them. [40]If I have sinned, I will be judged by God." (The words of Job are finished.)

Lord, I want the integrity of Job. I want to be able to stand blameless among people, knowing I have not sinned against them. And if I have sinned against any—show me what I've done—I'll go to them and ask forgiveness. Forgive my trespasses as I forgive those who trespass against me. Amen.

Job 32

Elihu's Response

[1]Job's three counselors refused to say any more to Job because he kept maintaining his integrity.

Lord, when I hear the arrogance of Elihu, I am convicted by the pride of my heart. Forgive me of boasting and presumptuousness; keep me from being important in my own eyes. Take away my vanity and give me a spirit of humility. Amen.

[2]Then young Elihu became very angry at Job because he kept maintaining he was innocent, {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} and because Job felt God was wrong for punishing him. [3]Elihu was also angry with the three counselors because they hadn't proven their point, but they unjustly condemned Job anyway. [4]Elihu had waited until the three quit speaking because of their advanced age, then he was ready to speak. [5]So Elihu spoke angrily at the three. [6]Elihu told the three, "I am young, and you're too old to understand the problem. So I held back until you were finished; I didn't dare express my opinion before now."

[7]I thought, "Age should speak first because the aged have more wisdom. [8]But there is a spirit in a man, and wisdom comes from the breath of El Shaddai. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8} [9]Therefore the elders are not automatically wise, and no one automatically gets wise by living a long time.

[10]"As a result, listen to me—because I know the answer, I will now tell you the truth. [11]I have patiently listened to your words, and tried to follow your arguments as you were searching for the right words. [12]I paid careful attention to all three of you, but none of you refuted Job's reasoning; you lost the argument. [13]Don't tell me Job is too smart for you, and only God can defeat Job. [14]If I had been arguing against Job I wouldn't have used your weak rebuttals. [15]You sat there in defeat with no response, and you didn't have anything else to say. [16]Must I remain silent because you lost the argument? [17]No! I will tell you what I think. [18]I understand Job's problem, and I can explain the answer. [19]I feel like a bottle that's about to explode; I have to speak before I burst. [20]I've got to tell you what's on my mind to get any relief for myself. [21]I won't flatter anyone with what I'll say, and I'll show no favor to any. [22]If I did play favorites—and not speak the truth—my

Creator would soon push me aside." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Job 33

Elihu's Charge against Job

Elihu said to Job, [1]"Listen to what I am going to say, and do what I tell you to do."

Lord, Elihu was right in what he knew about You, but he was wrong about Job. Help me to always listen to You so I can know You better. Amen.

[2]"The truth is on the tip of my tongue; [3]my words come from a sincere heart. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [4]The spirit of God has made me; the breath of El Shaddai gives me life. [5]See if you can answer me and express your thoughts in logical order. [6]You and I are the same before God, we are both molded from clay; but I will be your spokesman to God. [7]You don't need to be afraid of me, I will treat you right."

Lord, help me know who is telling me the truth, so I can trust them in my hour of need. Amen.

[8]Elihu said to Job, "I was previously listening to you, and I heard what you said. [9]You said you were pure without transgression, and that you maintained your integrity. [10]You claimed God was punishing you, and had made you His enemy, [11]that God had made you His prisoner." {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}

[12]Elihu told Job, "You are wrong in your opinion, let me show you where. [13]You, said, 'God is greater than any person' so why do you fight God? [14]God does not need to defend Himself; God has spoken once, sometimes twice, yet you still miss the point." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [15]Elihu explained, "God speaks to the minds of people when they are asleep. God speaks in a dream or a vision at night, {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} when a person is sleeping deeply; [16]God warns them of their actions. [17]God wants people to change their minds so they won't be proud and rebellious. [18]God warns so they won't die, or so they won't go to hell."

Lord, may I listen to my conscience as Elihu wanted Job to obey his conscience. Amen.

[19]Elihu told Job, "God also warns with pain {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [20]so that the body suffers continually [21]and they waste away to skin and bones. [22]They stand at the doorway to death, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} ready to be cast into hell; Job, is this your problem? [23]"Before God, you will need an intercessor {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} who can vouch for your integrity, [24]who will plead for God to be gracious to you, because the intercessor has paid a ransom for you, and will redeem you from being cast into hell. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} When your body is then redeemed by God, [25]your flesh will be as youthful as a child's. [26]You will pray and God will hear you; you will see God's face,

and God will reward your faithfulness.
[27]But you must declare before everyone,
'I have sinned before God; I deserve my
punishment.' {81 Confession-Prayer, 1
John 1:9} [28]Yes, God redeems those head-
ing to hell, {395 Redemptive Prayer for
the Lost, Rom. 10:1} God can fill their life
with light.
[29]"God can accomplish all these things for
you. He'll do it twice, even three times,
[30]to bring you back from the edge of hell
so you can live in the light.
[31]"Job, pay attention to what I am saying,
keep quiet and don't interrupt me. [32]So
if you will acknowledge your sin, {399
Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} speak
because I want to hear it from your lips.
[33]If not, then keep quiet; listen to me and
I'll tell you the truth."

Job 34

Elihu Tells of God's Justice

[1]Then Elihu said to Job and the three
counselors, [2]"Listen to me, you aged men
of wisdom; you don't know as much as you
think you do. [3]Just as the ear knows good
music, and the mouth knows good food,
[4]let us choose what is good in my words.
[5]"Job says, 'I am righteous but God is
not treating me fairly.' [6]Job thinks people
accuse him of hiding his sin because he still
suffers under God. [7]Has there ever lived a
man as stubborn as Job who denies the
truth of his suffering? [8]Job probably has
evil friends, and he probably parties with
lawbreakers. [9]Didn't Job arrogantly say it's
impossible to please God? {440 Sin-Reali-
zation Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[10]"Listen to what I think, and you'll agree
with me if you have understanding. God
cannot sin, nor can El Shaddai do evil.
[11]He punishes people when they sin,
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and He
rewards people who do the right thing.
Job, it's obvious you've sinned because
God is judging your life; if you did good,
God would reward you. [12]Read my lips,
'God will not do wrong, the Almighty will
always reward righteousness.' [13]God rules
the earth because He is God; no one gave
Him that authority. [14]If God took back
the Spirit He gave us, no one would live.
[15]Everyone would perish if God judged
sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[16]"If you have understanding, Job, listen
to me; could God control the world if He
did not punish sin? [17]You make God look
foolish by saying, 'I am righteous but I'm
also suffering.' {364 Praise for God's Sover-
eignty, Gen. 45:5} [18]Kings who are wicked
and unjust will not cause a righteous man
to suffer. [19]God punishes the lawbreakers
whether they are rich or poor; God treats
them all alike. [20]All were created by God,
and at death's house, they all pass away and
are removed from this life. {100 Death-
Prayer, Rev. 9:6}
[21]"God's eyes see all that people do, noth-
ing they do escapes God's watch. [22]There
is no darkness in death where the unright-
eous can hide themselves; no darkness is
thick enough to hide from God. [23]No one
has any warning when death comes, {130
Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} and they appear
before God for judgment."

Lord, I know You see all I do, and You hear all I say, and You know all I think. Forgive me of any secret sin, and I need Your grace because I am not perfect. Give me Your strength to do better in all of my life. May I continually please You in thought, word and deed. Amen.

24"God allows the mighty to be destroyed,
and places another person in their place.
25God knows everything they do, and in
one night they lose everything they have.
26God openly judges the sin of the sin-
ner so all can learn from what happened.
27God judges them openly because they
have turned aside from following Him.
28God judges the mighty because he has
ignored {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
the cries of the poor and oppressed them.
29But if God were absent, and hid His face,
we could blame Him with the trouble we
see on earth. 30Just as when an evil person
becomes ruler, we could blame Him for
our suffering. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1
Peter 4:12, 13} But since God sees all we
do, He punishes all our sin. So you, Job,
are punished because of sin; God has not
hidden His face from judgment.
31"No one can ever say to God, 'You have
chastened me but I haven't sinned.' 32Nor
have they said to God, 'I will stop sinning
if You tell me what to do.' 33Must God
punish according to your standards? The
answer is 'No!' But, Job, you think your
standards are God's standards.
34"Wise people will say you are not think-
ing clearly; intelligent people will agree
with me. 35Job speaks without knowledge,
and his words are without wisdom. {456
Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph.
3:18} 36Job, you will be on trial for a long
time because your answers come from your
wicked heart. 37You have added rebellion
to your sin, and now you are blaspheming
God."

Lord, keep me from criticism when I should be quiet. Help me accept things in life I don't understand, especially when I don't know all the facts. Give me a quiet heart in Your presence. Amen.

Job 35

Elihu Tells of God's Justice

1Elihu tried to point out Job's inconsisten-
cies, 2"First you claim you are righteous
before God, 3then you say living a right-
eous life has no benefits; let me ask you
some questions. 'What's the use of living a
righteous life, and will you have an advan-
tage if you don't sin?'"
4Elihu said, "Let me answer. 5Look to the
sky and you'll see it's higher than you. 6If
you sin, how does it hurt God? If you sin
many times how will it affect God? 7If you
do good how does it help God? Could
your goodness possibly contribute any-
thing to God? {390 Questionable-Pray-
ing, Acts 1:24} 8No! Your sins hurt only
yourself, and your good works only help
other people.
9"The oppressed suffer from tribulations,
they mourn under those with power. 10Yet,

they never cry out for God, their Creator who gives songs in the night. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 11The oppressed never ask, 'Where is the Creator who makes us smarter than birds and animals?' 12When a person cries out to God, the Lord does not answer that one person because that one finite person would think he alone could get God's attention. 13Yet God does listen to what we say; {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} El Shaddai is concerned about our problems. 14And further, God sees what happens down here, and He will judge all evil in this world. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But you must wait for His time. 15Job, don't complain to God because He does not get angry, as you have gotten angry. 16You have made yourself look foolish by protesting because you're suffering." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Job 36

Elihu Claims to Speak for God

1Elihu asked Job, 2"Bear with me; I still have words to speak on God's behalf. 3I have learned from many sources about the way the Creator does things right. 4I am not stretching the truth; my knowledge about God is true.

5"God is almighty in knowledge and power, so He does not despise anyone." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1, 8}

Lord, I believe You have power to do anything You desire. I see Your awesome power in all the world about me. Because of Your sovereignty and omnipotence, I will live righteously. Because of Your love for me, I will live godly. Amen.

6"He does not let the wicked get away with their sins, and the oppressed will eventually get justice. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 7He sees everything the righteous do, and rewards rulers who do things right. 8When trouble comes on the righteous and they suffer affliction, God lets them know why they are oppressed. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 9God shows them their sin when they misbehave; He uses suffering to get their attention {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 10so they will repent and turn from evil. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Job, why can't you see your condition? God is punishing you because of sin. 11Those who listen and obey God are blessed by Him. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} God prospers them throughout their life. 12If they refuse to listen to God, they will die violently before their time, and they won't realize it's because of their sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

13"The evil person hates God; he won't ask for mercy when God punishes him for sin, 14he dies prematurely because of his wasted life. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 15But God gets the attention of sinners through suffering, and their affliction turns them around. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} And now Job, your wickedness has corrupted your thinking; you have refused to acknowledge the punishment of God.

16"God would have brought you out of this distress, and given you a table full of delicious food, 17but you have refused to repent. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 18The wrath of God is coming shortly, and when it does, it will fall on you because when God punishes the unrighteous, there is no way you can escape it. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19Job, you have wrongly claimed to be righteous because God blessed you with wealth and position. 20Don't pray for the night to come because that's when most people die. 21Don't turn to evil because you feel cut off, for God originally sent you suffering to keep you from evil. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 22God has all power; no one can teach lessons like God. 23No one can tell God what to do, no one can tell Him He made a mistake. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 24Always sing the praises of God; magnify His works in the world. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 25I'm telling you things that everyone knows, but no one knows the ways of God completely.

26"God is exalted greater than our understanding; no one can number His years. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 27God draws water into the clouds, 28then He distills it into rain that falls from heaven and benefits all below. 29Can anyone understand how the clouds spread out over heaven, or how thunder rolls over the earth, 30or how it replenishes the ocean depths? 31By these mighty demonstrations of power, God provides abundant food for us to eat. 32His hand is evident in the crashing thunder, and 33the storm demonstrates His power to judge." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Job 37

Elihu Continues

1"The power of God thrills my heart, and I jump for joy. 2Listen, you'll hear God speaking through thunder; it rumbles from His mouth across the valleys. 3God's thunder is heard every place under heaven, His lightning spreads out over the whole earth. 4Next comes the echo of the thunder, it returns as a roaring voice, and God does not hold back its volume. 5God's voice is glorious and majestic; we humans cannot fathom the greatness of His power." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Lord, You are great in power and wisdom. You created the huge things in this universe and I stand in awe of Your power. Your wisdom created the complexities of human beings and I praise You for how I am created. Your beauty is seen in the design of this universe. I worship You. Amen.

6"God tells the snow to fall in the winter on the earth. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} In the spring He directs both the gentle and heavy rain. 7Then everyone stops working till the rain is over, and they watch God's power with amazement. 8When winter comes, animals go into their dens and remain there for the season. 9Storms come from the south, biting winter winds come from the north.

10God blows on the ponds of water, and
they freeze, turning to ice. 11The clouds
roll and swirl in the air, they go where God
commands. 12God causes things to happen
on earth 13either to correct His people,
or to bless them for His mercy. {93 Cre-
ation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
14"Job, you need to listen to me; think
about all the works of God. {392 Rec-
ognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer,
Ps. 97:5} 15Can you control the storms
like God? Can you bring lightning flash-
ing from the clouds? 16Can you place the
clouds in the sky as God did? Don't you
know that God has perfect knowledge
and power? 17Can you bring the swelter-
ing heat from the sky so that your clothes
are wet with perspiration? 18Can you make
the cooling wind die down so that people
are baked by the sun, like a giant fire that
burns the skin?
19"Tell us what to say to God; are we left
in the darkness? 20Job, tell God we want to
speak to Him; don't let God eat us up alive.
21We cannot look into the face of God just
as we cannot look into the bright sun when
there's not a cloud in the sky. 22Golden
splendor comes from God's presence; He
is surrounded with awesome majesty. {93
Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
23We cannot begin to conceive His maj-
esty, yet in His power God doesn't squash
us; and in His mercy God doesn't oppress
us (as you, Job, think God oppresses you).
24Therefore people everywhere fear God.
{163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} Wise
people will honor Him."

Job 38

God Challenges Job with His Power

1The Lord answered Job out of the storm,
2"Who is this, Job, who speaks out of igno-
rance to question My way of doing things?
3Stand up like a man to take My criticism,
I will ask the questions and you must
answer Me. {364 Praise for God's Sover-
eignty, Gen. 45:5} 4Where were you when
I created the earth? You must answer that
question since you think you're so smart.
5Do you know who determined how big
the earth would be, and who drew its
design? 6Do you know who laid the earth's
foundation, or who laid the cornerstone?
7The angels were watching from the first
row of heaven, applauding and singing
for joy. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God,
Heb. 9:5}
8"Who determined the boundaries of the
sea so that it stays in its appointed place?
9And I covered it with clouds, and clothed
it with thick darkness. 10I pre-appointed
the ocean into its place and limited its
shores. 11I said, 'You will come no farther,'
the roaring waves must stop at its shores.
{93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1,
2}
12"Can you command a new morning to
dawn and give to the world a new day,
13so that the wickedness done at night is
brought to an end? 14Can you make the
red sun rise to shine its golden rays to all,
15so that light dispels wickedness and stops
acts of violence?
16"Do you know the source of the waters
of the sea, have you explored the depths of
the oceans? 17Do you know the location

of the doors of death, or can you find the gates to hell? [18]Do you understand everything about the earth? Tell Me if you know it all. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

[19]"Do you know where light comes from? Where does darkness go where there is no light? [20]Can you lead someone to the home of light? Do you know where to find it? [21]Do you know all these answers? Were you living when I created everything? Are you old enough to know all things? {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[22]"Have you gone to snow houses to get snow? Do you know where to find hail? [23]I keep the snow and hail to send in a time of trouble, to carry out My purpose in the world. [24]Where does light come from? And where is the east wind when it's not blowing?

[25]"Who cuts the channels where rivers flow, and who controls where lightning strikes? [26]Who makes rain fall in the barren desert where no one lives, [27]soaking the dry desolate earth until grass sprouts out of the ground? [28]Does the rain have a father, or does the dew have a mother? [29]Who gives birth to the frost that falls around you, [30]and ice that becomes hard as stone, and who freezes solid the surfaces of water? {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

[31]"Can you tie the stars into a cluster or hold back Pleiades and Orion? [32]Can you make sure the seasons come in proper order or guide the stars across the sky? [33]Do you know the laws of the heavens that control the universe so that it properly influences the earth? {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[34]"Can you yell loud enough to make it rain? [35]Will the lightning go where you command it to strike? [36]Who created people with the capacity to know things and gave them the ability to understand things? [37]Can you count the number of all the clouds? Can you tilt over the water jugs of heaven [38]to turn dust into mud?

[39]"Can you provide food for the lioness [40]to feed her young lions' hunger? [41]Can you provide food for the ravens to give to their young hungry children?" {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}

Chapter 39

God Continues

[1]The Lord asked, "Do you know when the wild mountain goats give birth?"

Lord, You are holy and I am sinful. You are powerful and I am weak. You are majestic and I am lowly. You are so pure that I am not even fit to praise You with my limited vocabulary and doubting heart. Thank You for having mercy on me. Amen.

[2]"Do you know how many months they carry their young? [3]Or when they crouch down to give birth? [4]Their young grow up in the open, then become strong and leave, never to return.

[5]"Who makes the wild donkey roam freely, who gives him freedom to roam anywhere? [6]I made the desert its home

and allowed it to live there. 7The donkey is stubborn and will not heed the shouts of its drivers. 8It ranges over the hills for food, searching for anything green to eat.
9"Will a wild ox willingly serve you, and listen to your directions? 10Can you tie a rope around his neck to make him plow straight rows? 11Can you trust him to do your heavy work because of his great strength? 12Can you rely on him to gather grain and bring it to your threshing floor? 13"Do you know why the ostrich flaps its wings? It can't fly like the stork. 14She lays her eggs in the sand for the warm ground to hatch them. 15She doesn't realize a foot could crush them or a wild animal could destroy them. 16The ostrich treats its young heartlessly as though they were not her own. She doesn't worry about those things; once she lays her eggs, she goes her way. 17I have not given wisdom to the ostrich; it is devoid of understanding. 18But when she gets up to run she is faster than a horse with a rider. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
19"Did you give the horse its strength, and did you clothe its neck with a mane? 20Did you create the horse to leap like a locust; isn't its snorting majestic? 21The horse paws the ground to show off its strength and then it charges unafraid into battle, 22not fearing imminent danger. 23When arrows fly in the heat of battle and swords slash around it, 24the horse rushes fiercely into danger. 25When the trumpet sounds to attack, the horse senses the battle is on, and charges toward the enemy. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
26"Were you wise enough to create a hawk that spreads its wings and soars in the sky? 27Can you command the eagle to fly into the heavens and build its nest in the heights? 28It lives on rocky crags, and 29from there it spots its prey afar off. 30The eagle brings back the spoils of war to feed its young." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Chapter 40

The Lord Speaks

1Moreover, the Lord said to Job, 2"Do you still want to debate with Me? Those who argue with El Shaddai must still answer to Me." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

God, You can do all things You decide to do. Only You are omniscient; You know all things possible and potential. Only You are omnipresent, You are everywhere present at the same time. You are completely infinite and marvelous and I am only human. I praise You for Your greatness and majesty. Amen.

Job Responds to the Lord in Repentance

3Then Job replied to the Lord, 4"I am vile and ashamed to speak. I have no answer for You; I cover my mouth and won't speak. 5Once I have said too much so I won't make a second mistake by talking too much." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

God Challenges Job

6The Lord answered Job out of the storm
and said, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer,
Ps. 96:8} 7"Stand at attention like a man
because I have some more questions that
you must answer.
8"Are you trying to reverse My decisions,
are you trying to prove Me wrong that
you may be right? 9Is your arm as strong
as Mine? Can your voice thunder like Me?
10If you think you can, then robe yourself
in splendor and show your majesty. 11Dis-
play your anger against sin and all who
are proud to bring them down. 12Let your
glance punish the wicked, walk on those
who oppose you 13and bury them in the
dust. 14If you, Job, can do these things, you
are strong enough to survive.
15"Look at the mighty hippopotamus;
just as I created you, I created it. He eats
grass like an ox. 16He has great strength in
his loins and muscles in its stomach. 17He
moves his tail like a cedar branch, and
the muscles in his thighs are strong. 18His
bones are like bronze pipes, his limbs are
like bars of iron; 19only his Creator can
frighten him. 20The mountains grow food
for the hippopotamus where all the wild
beasts live. 21He lies quietly under the
thorny lotus bushes 22and is hidden by the
reeds in the swamp. 23He is not concerned
when the floods rage, even when the water
rushes into his mouth. 24Can anyone tame
him to follow them? Can they lead him
with a nose hook?" {392 Recognizing
God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}

Lord, You have made everything for its purpose. Everything is to glorify You. Help me find my purpose and do it that I may glorify You. Amen.

Chapter 41

The Lord Continues

1"Can you fish for a crocodile with a hook?
Can you tie his mouth with a rope? 2Can
you put a ring in its nose and lead him
about like a tamed animal? 3Can you play
with him like a house animal? 4Can you
work him on the farm? 5Could you put
a string around its neck and let little girls
play with him? 6Will merchants try to
sell him and would customers buy him?
7Can an arrow penetrate his skin and can
a spear slice his head? 8If you even touch
one, you'll have such a terrible fight you'd
never want to do it again. 9No, you can't
capture the crocodile without a great fight.
10Since you wouldn't disturb a crocodile,
then who is able to stand up to Me? Who
has ever fought against Me and prevailed?
{392 Recognizing God's Creative Pow-
er-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} 11I am describing the
awesome power of the crocodile.
12"He has strength throughout his huge
body. 13Who can penetrate his scales 14or
open his massive jaws? 15His protection
is the row of scales 16so close to the other
17that no air can get through. 18Light flashes
out when he sneezes, he sees through the
slits in his eyelids like the sliver of the sun
as it rises. 19Out of his mouth goes fire,

and sparks leap from his tongue. [20]Steam
rises from his nostrils [21]like a pot boiling
on the fire. [22]The crocodile has a hard,
strong neck [23]that scares those who meet
him in the way. [24]His heart is as hard as a
stone. [25]Even the mighty are afraid of him.
[26]A sword is useless against him, neither
will arrows or spears harm him. [27]He bites
through iron as if it were straw and bronze
as if it were rotten wood. [28]He doesn't run
from arrows [29]and stones from a sling-
shot are nothing; clubs are useless, and he
laughs at sticks. [30]His belly is slick like pot-
tery; he easily glides across the mud. [31]The
crocodile stirs the river like boiling water;
he leaves a wake when swimming. [32]There
is no creature on earth like him; [33]he fears
no one and no other animal. [34]He looks up
at all the tall animals, but he is king over
these proud beasts. Since I created the
small and great and put them all in their
place, do not I have the right to do as I
please {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty,
Gen. 45:5} with people I have made on
this earth?"

Job 42

Repentance and Restoration

[1]Then Job replied to the Lord, [2]"I now real-
ize You can do everything {392 Recogniz-
ing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}
and no one can obstruct what You do. [3]You
asked, 'Who is this that ignorantly wants
to know what I can do?'" Then Job admit-
ted to the Lord, "I asked foolish questions;
I did not understand Your wonders, Your
wisdom is far beyond me.
[4]"Lord, You told me to listen to Your ques-
tions; {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
You, Lord, told me I had to answer them.
[5]"I, Job, had only heard about You with
the hearing of my ears. But now I have
seen with my eyes, now I have experienced
Your presence personally. {377 Presence
of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [6]I'm sorry for
my rash statements. I repent in dust and
ashes." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2,
8}
[7]After the Lord finished speaking to Job,
then the Lord said to Eliphaz, the leader
of the counselors, "My anger is directed
toward you and the two friends with you
because what you said to Job was wrong.
My servant Job said the right things about
Me. [8]Now the three of you must get seven
sacrifices, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb.
13:15} give them to My servant, Job. Then
he'll offer these sacrifices for you and I
will accept his intercession when he prays
on your behalf. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer,
Rom. 8:34} I will not punish the three of
you with the treatment you deserve for you
have not spoken rightly about Me as My
servant Job has demonstrated faith." {154
Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [9]So
Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar obeyed the
Lord, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and
the Lord accepted Job's prayer for them.
[10]After Job interceded for his counselors,
{248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} the
Lord restored his wealth, giving him twice
what he previously had. [11]Then Job's broth-
ers, sisters, and former friends returned to
eat a meal in Job's home. They comforted
Job because of all the sufferings he had
endured, bringing him money and gifts.

[12]The Lord blessed Job's latter state more than before his trials, giving him twice as much wealth. Now Job had 14,000 sheep, 6,000 camels, 2,000 oxen, and 1,000 donkeys. [13]He had seven more sons and three more daughters. [14]Job named the first daughter Jemimah, the second, Keziah, and the third, Keren-Happuch. [15]Job's daughters were the most beautiful in the land, and he gave them an inheritance along with their brothers. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [16]After this, 70-year-old Job lived another 140 years; God doubly blessed his faith. Job was able to see his sons and grandchildren up to the fourth generation. [17]Then Job died after having a long, good life. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} (The Septuagint adds—And it is written that he shall rise again {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} with those whom the Lord raises up.)

Lord, thank You for the promises of Your blessings on those who trust and obey You. I claim these blessings for a good life down here on this earth and for blessings in heaven with You. Amen.

The Book of Psalms

Ch 1: A Prayer of Gratitude for God's Blessing 756
Ch 2: A Prayer to God about Those Who Rebel against Him and His Son 756
Ch 3: A Prayer for God to Defeat Your Enemies 757
Ch 4: A Prayer about Your Enemies When Thoughts about Them Keep You From Sleep.....757
Ch 5: A Prayer of Commitment to God and a Request to Eliminate Enemies.....758
Ch 6: A Prayer for God to Listen and Answer ..759
Ch 7: A Prayer for Got to Punish the Wicked...759
Ch 8: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Your Place in Creation.....760
Ch 9: A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies and for God to Punish Them 760
Ch 10: A Prayer for the Punishment of the Wicked 761
Ch 11: A Prayer for God's Judgement on Those Who Attack His Truth.....762
Ch 12: A Prayer against the Enemy's Propaganda 763
Ch 13: A Prayer for Perseverance against the

Enemy's Attacks 763
Ch 14: A Prayer about Those Who Deny God 764
Ch 15: A Prayer That Asks God Who Are His Children 764
Ch 16: A Prayer for Resurrection When Death Is Near 764
Ch 17: A Prayer for Victory as the Enemies Are Attacking 765
Ch 18: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Danger 766
Ch 19: A Prayer for Wisdom So You Can Answer Doubters 768
Ch 20: A Prayer for Protection against Opposition and a Prayer for Vindication When Doing the Right Things 769
Ch 21: A Prayer for Leaders to Defeat the Wicked 769
Ch 22: A Prayer for Help When Being Attacked by Enemies 770
Ch 23: A Prayer Recognizing God's Protective Relationship to You 771
Ch 24: A Prayer for Your Final Recognition and Triumph over the Enemy 772
Ch 25: A Prayer of the Weak Believer for Help in Trouble 772

Ch 26: A Prayer of a Conscientious Believer Who Is Sincere....773
Ch 27: A Prayer to Be in God's Presence for Protection....774
Ch 28: A Request for God to Hear Your Prayer When the Wicked Oppose You....774
Ch 29: A Prayer That Is Revealed in A Thunderstorm Glorifying God for His Power....775
Ch 30: A Prayer of Gratitude to God for Good Health....776
Ch 31: A Prayer to Help You Face the Lies of Your Enemy....776
Ch 32: A Prayer for Forgiveness after Committing Sin....778
Ch 33: A Prayer for God to Bless Sincere People....778
Ch 34: A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance from Trouble....779
Ch 35: A Prayer for God to Intervene When "Friends" Lie about You....780
Ch 36: A Prayer that Explains the Difference between Godly and Rebellious People...781
Ch 37: A Prayer Thanking God for His Protection of Good People and His Punishment of Wicked People....782

Ch 38: The Prayer of a Person Who Is Suffering Because He Did Wrong....784
Ch 39: A Prayer to Use Opportunities Wisely in This Short Life....784
Ch 40: A Prayer for Help in Times of Difficulties 785
Ch 41: A Prayer for Healing So Your Enemies Won't Spread Gossip that You Are Sick....786
Ch 42: A Prayer to Experience the Presence of God 787
Ch 43: A Prayer for Hope When You Are Discouraged....788
Ch 44: A Prayer for God to Stop Allowing Our Enemies to Defeat Us....788
Ch 45: A Prayer of Gratitude for a Good Political Ruler....789
Ch 46: A Prayer That Anticpates God's Protection During the End Times Judgment....790
Ch 47: A Prayer Glorifying the Lord Who Rules the Earth....790
Ch 48: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Protection of Jerusalem....791
Ch 49: A Prayer about the Futility of Money, Power, and Wisdom without God....792
Ch 50: A Prayer-Recognizing That God Will Judge

Everyone by His Heart Attitude 793
Ch 51: A Prayer Seeking Restoration to Fellowship with God after You Sin 794
Ch 52: A Prayer That Recognizes God's Judgment on Liars, but His Care for His People 795
Ch 53: A Prayer Thanking God for Delivering His People and Judging Sinners 795
Ch 54: A Prayer of Deliverance from Your Enemies and God's Judgment on Them 796
Ch 55: A Prayer for God to Destroy and Enemy Who Used to Be a Friend 796
Ch 56: A Prayer for Protection from a Particular Enemy 797
Ch 57: A Prayer to Glorify God When Enemies Attack 798
Ch 58: A Prayer Recognizing Evil in the World 798
Ch 59: A Prayer to Defeat Your Enemies and Praise When God Does It 799
Ch 60: A Prayer for God to Return and Help Fight Your Enemies 800
Ch 61: A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies and Blessings on Your Leader 800
Ch 62: A Prayer for God to Protect You When Your Enemies Have the Upper Hand 801

Ch 63: A Prayer of Rejoicing because You Have Worshiped God 801
Ch 64: A Prayer for Victory against Your Enemies 802
Ch 65: Praise for God's Physical Provision 803
Ch 66: Thanksgiving for God's Forgiveness and Provision 803
Ch 67: A Prayer for the Coming Kingdom of Prosperity 804
Ch 68: Praise for God's Final Victory over His Enemies 805
Ch 69: A Prayer for God to Save from Trouble 806
Ch 70: A Prayer for God to Come Quickly to Help You 807
Ch 71: A Prayer for Continued Protection in Old Age When You Can't Protect Yourself... 808
Ch 72: A Prayer for the Millennial Kingdom to Come and for Jesus to Rule the Earth.... 809
Ch 73: A Prayer that Recognizes God Will Reward You for Faithfulness and Punish the Ungodly for Their Rebellion 810
Ch 74: A Prayer to Recognize the Power of God and to Call on Him to Crush Your Enemies... 811
Ch 75: A Prayer that Recognizes God's Punishment

of the Wicked and His Protection of the Humble....812
Ch 76: A Prayer of Praise to God Because He Judges Rebellion....812
Ch 77: A Prayer for Deliverance....813
Ch 78: A Prayer that Recognizes God's Faithfulness in the Face of Israel's Unfaithfulness....814
Ch 79: A Prayer for God to Punish Those Who Persecute Israel....816
Ch 80: A Prayer for God to Deliver the Rebellious People of Israel....817
Ch 81: A Prayer of Grateful Worship....818
Ch 82: A Plea for God to Set All Things Right.819
Ch 83: A Prayer for God to Destroy His Enemies and Rule the Earth....819
Ch 84: A Prayer to Enjoy God's Presence in His House....820
Ch 85: A Prayer for Revival....821
Ch 86: A Prayer for Help in the Face of Danger....821
Ch 87: Geographical Prayer....822
Ch 88: A Prayer When Punished....823
Ch 89: A Prayer for Claiming God's Promises....823
Ch 90: A Prayer to Use the Time Allotted to You....825

Ch 91: A Prayer for Protection from Constant Dangers of Daily Life 826
Ch 92: Praise to God for Giving You Strength . 827
Ch 93: A Prayer to Recognize God's Majesty 828
Ch 94: A Prayer for Patience until God Judges Your Oppressors 828
Ch 95: A Prayer of Praise to God and Warning to the Wicked 829
Ch 96: A Prayer to Glorify God 829
Ch 97: A Prayer of Rejoicing that Recognizes the Future Reign of the Lord 830
Ch 98: Singing a New Song to God 831
Ch 99: Praise for God's Past Faithfulness 831
Ch 100: A Prayer of Gratitude when Entering God's Presence 832
Ch 101: A Prayer to Live Blamelessly 832
Ch 102: The Prayer when We Are Alienated 833
Ch 103: A Prayer to Bless the Lord 834
Ch 104: Praise to God because of His Creation . 835
Ch 105: A Prayer to Remember God's Deliverance from Egypt 836
Ch 106: A Prayer to Remember God's Faithfulness 838
Ch 107: A Prayer to Remind You of God's Punishment when You Rebel and His Blessing

when You Obey 840
Ch 108: A Prayer for Divine Help in Battle 841
Ch 109: A Prayer of Judgment on Your Enemies 842
Ch 110: A Prayer for Jesus to Reign 843
Ch 111: A Prayer of Thanksgiving Because You Understand and Follow God's Principles 844
Ch 112: A Prayer for a Godly Testimony 844
Ch 113: A Prayer of Praise to God 845
Ch 114: A Prayer that Recognizes the Power of God's Presence 845
Ch 115: A Life of Praise for God's Blessing 846
Ch 116: A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance 846
Ch 117: A Prayer of Praise from All People 847
Ch 118: A Prayer of Gratitude to God for Victory and Salvation 847
Ch 119: A Prayer for God to Use His Word in Your Life 848
Ch 120: A Prayer for Peace 854
Ch 121: A Prayer of Geographical Renewal 854
Ch 122: A Prayer for Peace in Jerusalem 855
Ch 123: A Prayer for Acceptance by God 855
Ch 124: A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance

.....855
Ch 125: A Prayer for Peace for the Godly.....856
Ch 126: A Prayer for Renewal 856
Ch 127: A Prayer of Gratitude for Your Family.....856
Ch 128: A Prayer of Blessing upon the Home.....857
Ch 129: A Prayer against Your Enemies.....857
Ch 130: A Prayer for Forgiveness and Acceptance 858
Ch 131: A Prayer of Communion with God 858
Ch 132: A Prayer for the Messiah to Come.....858
Ch 133: A Prayer for Unity among Believers.....859
Ch 134: A Prayer to Bless the Lord 859
Ch 135: A Prayer of Praise that Surveys All God Has Done for His People.....860
Ch 136: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Provision in the Past 860
Ch 137: A Prayer to Remember God 861
Ch 138: A Prayer for God's Deliverance from Trouble.....862
Ch 139: A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Oversight of Your Life.....862
Ch 140: A Prayer to Punish Those Who Attack the Godly 863
Ch 141: A Prayer for Deliverance from Evil

People 864
Ch 142: A Prayer for Deliverance from Trouble 865
Ch 143: A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies 865
Ch 144: A Prayer for Protection and Prosperity 866
Ch 145: A Prayer to Magnify God because of His Faithfulness 866
Ch 146: A Prayer to Praise God for His Watch Care 867
Ch 147: A Prayer to Praise God for the Blessings of Life 868
Ch 148: A Prayer of Worship and Praise 869
Ch 149: Praising the Lord with Singing 869
Ch 150: A Prayer of Praising the Lord in the Assembly 870

The Book of
PSALMS

Key Word: *Praise. All but one sentence in Psalm 150 begins with the word Praise.*

Key Verse: "Let the heavens declare His righteousness, for God Himself *is* Judge" (Psalm 150:6, *NKJV,* last verse in the Psalms).

Theme: The Psalms were written as prayers for the Hebrew people to sing. Their music was their deep feeling *about God*, or a prayer *to God*. Therefore each psalm is a worship event. Thus some psalms are re-written into prayers. Instead of reading "The Lord is my shepherd," you'll pray, "Lord, You are my shepherd." *Lord, teach me to talk to You through Scripture. Amen.*

Each psalm is a mirror that reflects your soul. As you pray them, you'll see in these mirrors your sin and hypocrisy more clearly than ever before. So pray the psalms of repentance and turn to God. But you'll also see in these mirrors the essence of a godly life. Then pray with the psalmist, "As the deer pants for the water brooks, so pants my soul for You, O God" (42:1). Look deep into each mirror and you'll see God. While this is not a theology textbook on God, you'll see many aspects of His person and attributes as you read through this *Prayer Bible. Lord, I want to know You. Amen.*

The Psalms are poetry, not like English poetry with rhyme and meter, for example, "Roses are red, violets are blue, the angels in heaven, know I surely love you." Hebrew poetry had neither rhyme nor meter. Their poetry had rhythm as they accentuated different phrases, so that the poetry was matched phrases. The secret of Hebrew poetry is that thoughts matched, no matching rhymes or meter.

The Psalms are written in prayers so we can identify with them and pray them. But not all the psalms were originally prayers to God. Some psalms were originally written as devotional thoughts about God (Psalm 23); a few psalms pour out anger at enemies (Psalms 3 and 4). Some psalms are instructional (Psalm 119), teaching the law of God. But in this book all of them are transposed into prayers in modern language so you can pray the words to talk to God.

Lord, I want You to feel my passionate love for You as I pray these psalms, and I want You to feel my anger as I vent my feelings about evil people. Sometimes I pray these psalms begging You for protection... for rest... or from relief from pain. Sometimes I ask You for forgiveness, or for Your guidance in my life. I need to touch You and let You touch me. I pray these psalms in order to enter Your presence. Amen.

Psalm 1

A Prayer of Gratitude for God's Blessing

[1]I am happily blessed, O Lord, so I don't walk according to ungodly counsel, hang out with sinners, or sit with scorners. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [2]Lord, I delight to live by Your principles, and I love to meditate in Your Word. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [3]Lord, may I be like a hearty tree planted by living waters; that each season bears spiritual fruit whose leaf never stops growing. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}
[4]The ungodly are not so; They are like the husk the wind blows away, [5]they shall be punished in Your judgment, they shall not enter the congregation of Your people. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}
[6]Lord, You watch over the path of those who do right but the path of the ungodly leads to destruction. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

The person who is blessed of God, or who is happy, is the one who separates from evil and meditates on God. We meditate on God when (1) we reflect on God's past goodness to us; (2) we appreciate our salvation; (3) we make plans to live for God or serve Him; (4) we "think our thoughts" the way God intends; or (5) we contemplate God's goodness and greatness. Lord, I focus my thoughts on You and Your plans for my life. I look to You only for happiness. Amen.

Psalm 2

A Prayer to God about Those Who Rebel against Him and His Son

[1]Lord, I don't understand why the unsaved rage and fight against Your plans, [2]why rulers do everything contrary to Your will and resist the ways of Christ. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [3]They strive to throw off Your restraints and say, "Let us get rid of these chains." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[4]But You, Lord, laugh as You sit in heaven and You scoff at their rebellion. [5]You are angry at their defiance, terrifying them with Your judgment. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [6]You have declared, "I established My King to rule; He will reign from the holy hill of Zion." {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}
[7]Your King is Your only begotten Son, He will execute Your will on earth. {162 Father-Cry Prayer, Gal. 4:5} [8]You have given Him all people and ethnic groups; He owns the uttermost parts of the earth. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [9]Your Son will punish rebellion with a rod of iron; He shall crush rebels in their defiance. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[10]What should be the response of the kings of the earth and what should human judges do? {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [11]Tremble before the Son because He is the Lord; serve Him with fear. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [12]Love the Son, lest He be angry when He destroys all rebellion that stands in His way. Blessed are all those who trust Your Son. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Not only do the unsaved refuse to believe in God and accept His salvation, they also inwardly hate God. Everyone must make a decision to let Christ sit on the throne of their hearts, or they will allow their "self" to rule their lives. In the struggle the unsaved "prays" (not to God, but it's their passion), "Let us break the chains that God uses to control us, let's refuse to obey God" (v. 3, paraphrase). But the Lord "who sits in heaven, laughs" (v. 4). God will eventually judge them and punish them. Lord, sit on the throne of my life and control all I do. Be glorified in my life. Amen.

Psalm 3

A Prayer for God to Defeat Your Enemies

[1]Lord, I have many enemies who are trying to destroy me. [2]They tell me not to look to You, because there is no help in God. Selah!
[3]But You, Lord, are my protecting shield; You lift me up with encouragement. [4]I cried out to You for help, You answered me from Your holy mountain. Selah!
[5]I was able to lie down and sleep, because You protected me during the night. [6]Now I am not afraid of ten thousand enemies, because You are on every side to protect me.
[7]Smite my enemy on his head, shut the mouth of those who criticize me. [8]Deliverance comes from You, O Lord; bless Your people with victory. Selah!

When we are in an emergency or we are in desperate trouble, we can call on God for help. God will protect us (3:5) and we can sleep securely, knowing that nothing can harm us that's not within God's plan. Help, Lord, when my enemies talk behind my back. Help, Lord, when my enemies attack me to hurt me. Help, Lord, when I can't help myself. Amen.

Psalm 4

A Prayer about Your Enemies When Thoughts about Them Keep You from Sleep

[1]Lord, answer my prayer; You know I am sincere. I am concerned and distressed because You have not answered my prayers. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
[2]People are accusing me of many things; they are attempting to ruin my reputation. How long will they attack me? Selah! {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [3]Lord, I am certain of one thing:
You have set apart the godly for Yourself; You will listen to me when I call. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18}
[4]I will not give in to the sin of anger, but will think about You as I go to sleep. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [5]I will confess my sin and get forgiveness because You are my Lord. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}
[6]Many tell me there are better ways to have a good time, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:2} [7]but the enjoyment of Your

presence gives me more satisfaction than food and money has given to them. {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} [8]Lord, I will lie down and sleep in peace because I know I am safe in You. Selah! {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

We pray for God to keep us safe when we face danger or our enemies. No one can take our lives from us but God because His servants are invincible until they have finished the task God has for them on earth. Lord, keep me safe. I will work to accomplish Your will because I trust in You to perform Your will in my life. Amen.

Psalm 5

A Prayer of Commitment to God and a Request to Eliminate Enemies

[1]O Lord, listen to my words; consider the things I am thinking. {325 Non-Anxiety Prayer, Phil. 4:6, 7} [2]O my God and my King, listen to my prayers because I am speaking to You. {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15} [3]I know You will hear me in the morning because it is then that I look to You and pray. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}

[4]I know You do not get pleasure out of wickedness, nor is evil found in You. [5]Those who sin foolishly cannot enter Your presence because You hate the iniquity they do. [6]You will destroy those who blaspheme because You reject murderers and liars. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}

[7]But I can come into Your presence because in mercy You receive me. I fear Your punishment, therefore I worship You in Your holy temple. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [8]Lord, help me always do the right thing, especially as I deal with my enemies; I want to live blameless before Your face. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

[9]Lord, I know my enemies never speak of Your faithfulness; they inwardly desire wickedness, their throat is a grave so I cannot trust their words. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [10]Destroy them, O Lord, with the same damnation that they plan for others because they constantly break Your law and they continually rebel against You. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3}

[11]Lord, because I have put my trust in You, and because You destroy my enemies, I constantly shout for joy. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [12]Let everyone who loves You, O Lord, constantly rejoice in You. I know You will bless the righteous, O Lord, You will constantly defend them. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1}

We can rejoice for (1) God protects us from our enemies (5:6); (2) God hates sin and evil; (3) God hears and answers us; and (4) God blesses those who do right (5:12). Lord, I have determined to do right; therefore I rejoice in Your protection, because You hate evil and protect those who do right. Amen.

Psalm 6

A Prayer for God to Listen and Answer

[1]Lord, don't fuss at me because You are angry at my failures; don't punish me because I've not pleased You. [2]Have mercy on my weakness, O Lord; heal me because I am crushed. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [3]Lord, I am disappointed in my failures. How long will I have to put up with my weaknesses?

[4]Come deliver me, Lord, from human frailties because You are merciful. I need You to save me from myself. {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} [5]If I die, how can I serve You on earth? How can I worship You in the grave?

[6]I'm sick and tired of feeling bad about my failures; I go to bed crying over my sin. All night long I weep over my predicament. [7]My eyes are red because I can't cry any longer, grief has made an old man out of me. {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12}

[8]I want everyone who accuses me of sin to leave me alone; You, Lord, have listened to my repentance; [9]You have heard my prayers, You will answer my request. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [10]Lord, make my enemies ashamed of their accusations; punish them quickly for their complaints. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

The psalmist is crying for mercy because he is in trouble. His pain is almost too much to endure and he is being persecuted by his enemies. A mercy plea is asking God for help based on our predicament and to look on us because of His mercy. Lord, I am in desperate straits. Come help me now. Amen.

Psalm 7

A Prayer for God to Punish the Wicked

[1]O Lord, I trust You with my life; {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} save me from those who persecute me. [2]They want to rip me in pieces like a lion, thinking no one will deliver me. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31}

[3]O Lord, let my enemies persecute me if I deserve it, if my hands have sinned, if I have attacked those at peace with me. (Actually, I've done good to my enemies.) [4]O Lord, if I have done evil things, [5]let my enemies stomp me under foot, let them drag my honor through the dirt. Selah!

[6]O Lord, wake up Your righteous anger because my enemies are attacking me. Awaken to carry out Your judgment. [7]O Lord, let Your people gather about You; return so they can enjoy Your presence. [8]O Lord, I know You will judge all people; judge me first and see that I try to do right. Examine me and see my integrity.

[9]O Lord, stop the wicked from doing wickedness; let the righteous do righteously. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [10]You can do this because You know the hearts of all.

[11]Therefore You are angry with the wicked and You are pleased with the righteous. [12]If the wicked will not repent, You will

bring the sword of war against them, [13]You will attack them with the arrows of persecution, You will visit them with death.
[14]My enemy is a friend of iniquity; he thinks constantly of harming others. [15]He always is digging a trap, but he falls into his self-made destruction. [16]His attack on others ends up hurting himself; his wounds are self-inflicted.
[17]But You, O Lord, will I praise; for You always deal with everyone rightly. I will praise Your name, O Lord, Most High. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

David is praying for God—who does right—to deal fairly with his enemies. Their evil works should be punished, and David calls on God to punish them according to His justice. Lord, I have tried to do right and my enemies treat me wrongly. I know I am not perfect, so forgive me when I don't measure up to Your standards. But my enemies intentionally do evil and they know they are wrong. Exercise justice. Amen.

Psalm 8

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Your Place in Creation

[1]O Lord, Your name is the most excellent one on earth; You have glorified Yourself by creating heaven. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[2]You are praised by babies and infants, but You will not accept praise by Your enemies.
[3]When I look at the heavens, I see the work of Your fingers; You planned the moon and the stars. [4]Then I realize mankind is so insignificant, but You reveal Yourself to us who are just humans. [5]You made us lower than the angels, and You crown us with glory and honor.
[6]You gave us rule over Your creation, You put it under our control. [7]You have given us sheep, oxen, and other animals; [8]this includes birds, fish, and sea creatures.
[9]O Lord, You are our Lord; how excellent is Your name on earth.

This is a psalm that worships God for all that He created, including the creation of mankind. Lord, I praise You for the majestic universe that You created. Thank You for making me as I am. Amen.

Psalm 9

A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies and for God to Punish Them

[1]Lord, I praise You with my whole heart; I tell everyone about Your marvelous works.
[2]Lord, I sing praises to Your name most high; I'm happy when I rejoice in You. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}
[3]When my enemies return to attack me, they will fail because Your presence is with me. [4]You support me because I live by the right principles; You always support the right thing. [5]You rebuke the unsaved who act wickedly, let no one remember them. [6]Lord, destroy my enemies; destroy their cities and any memory of them. [7]But You, Lord, will continue forever; You sit

on Your throne to judge all people. [8]You judge everyone in the right way, You judge everyone by the right standards. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[9]O Lord, those who are oppressed want to hide in You; they want You to be their refuge in troubled times. [10]You have not forsaken those who put You first because they put their trust in You.

[11]I sing praises to You in Zion, I will tell all people of Your works. [12]You do not forget to punish murderers, nor do You forget the plea of the humble.

[13]Lord, be merciful to me when my enemies attack me; don't let them kill me. [14]I want those near You in the temple to hear me praise You. I rejoice in Your salvation.

[15]The unsaved fall into the evil trap they set for their enemies; they are imprisoned in the cell they prepare for others. [16]Lord, You are known by the right ways You judge people; {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} the wicked are condemned to the punishment they plan for others. Selah!

[17]You turn the wicked into the anguish of punishment; You also put in hell the people who deny You. [18]You will not overlook the needy, You will also watch over the poor.

[19]Come down, O Lord, so that the wicked will not have their way; bring them before You to be judged. [20]Make the pagan fear You and Your judgment, so they will be accountable to You like everyone else. Selah!

We should thank God that He judges fairly according to truth. God does not show partiality. Lord, thank You for being fair with all people. You have judged according to what is fair. Amen.

Psalm 10

A Prayer for the Punishment of the Wicked

[1]Lord, why are You so far away from me? When I need You most, You seem to hide. {162 Father-Cry Prayer, Gal. 4:5} [2]The wicked intentionally hurt those who can't defend themselves. I pray they suffer the same pain they plan for others.

[3]These wicked boast about their tricks, they stick up for other evil people, but they hate You, O Lord. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [4]The wicked are too proud to seek You; they never realize they will have to answer to You.

[5]Because every evil thing they do succeeds, they laugh at their victims; they don't know You will punish them someday. [6]The wicked boast, "I'm not going to get hurt, I am free to do anything I want." [7]Lord, the mouth of the wicked is full of cursing and lies; their evil plans are on the tips of their tongues. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2}

[8]They crouch like a lion in dark shadows waiting to pounce on defenseless victims. [9]Much as a hungry lion goes searching for food, so they go looking for their next helpless prey. [10]Then the wicked drag their bodies away, because the weak can't defend

themselves. {218 Help the Oppressed by Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9} 11The wicked say, "God is not watching. He doesn't know what I do. He doesn't care!" {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18}
12Come down, O Lord, punish the wicked; do not forget those who can't defend themselves. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 13The wicked think they can get away with their treachery; they think You will never punish them. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}
14But You have seen everything the wicked have done. You will not forget those who can't defend themselves. You remember every thought and act of every wicked person. You will take care of those who can't take care of themselves. 15Break the arm of the wicked; don't let any of them get away. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
16Lord, You are our King who lives forever; get rid of those who worship false gods. 17Lord, you understand the desires of those who can't help themselves. Hear their prayers for deliverance. 18Bring justice to the helpless of this world so they can live in peace. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31}

The psalmist sees the strong greedy people oppressing the weak and he cries for God's justice. This is a prayer against evil in the world. It is also a prayer for help for the oppressed. Lord, when no one else will help the needy, I will pray for them and in my limited way, I will help them. I will do what I can do. Help me help them. Amen.

Psalm 11

A Prayer for God's Judgment on Those Who Attack His Truth

1I trust You, Lord, when trouble comes; even though people tell me to hide in the mountains. They tell me to fly away like a bird. 2My enemies are getting ready to attack me, they have bows and arrows to kill me; {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 3they will attack anyone who lives right. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 3Lord, if Your foundations of truth are destroyed, what can we do who live by Your principles?
4Lord, I recognize You are in Your holy temple; You see everything from Your throne in heaven. 5You will judge all people by what You see. Lord, examine both those who live right and those who hate Your principles. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 6Lord, punish those who rebel against You with the fire and brimstone of hell. Give them what they deserve. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
7Because You are a righteous God, You love those who do right. You favor them with Your presence. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

No matter what evil is planned against us, we trust in God who does all things right. God will judge the evil ones in due time.

Lord, I trust You to protect me, guide me, and use me. Amen.

Psalm 12

A Prayer against the Enemy's Propaganda

[1]Lord, help me to be godly; there are so few left who are faithful. The ones I expect to follow You are falling away. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [2]They talk with their friends about fleshly things; they lie about You and the truth, telling others it's all right not to follow You. [3]Lord, one day You will shut them up; they won't be able to lie about You anymore. [4]They won't be able to justify their sin; they won't be able to say anything they desire; they won't be able to deny Your rule over them. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[5]Lord, come strengthen the weak who are resisting the enemy's arguments. Your followers are being knocked down; they are gasping for spiritual breath. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [6]Lord, I know Your words are better than what the enemy says; I have repeatedly tried Your promises and they never fail. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [7]Lord, I know You will keep those who trust in Your Word; You will preserve them from the enemy's lies, [8]even when the enemy is all about them. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1}

We must discipline our tongues. God will judge all lying tongues (1) because of the harm they do to others; (2) because it offends God who is truth; and (3) because it destroys our character. Lord, I will tell the truth because You are the truth. I will tell the truth because of the harm that lies have on others. I will tell the truth in order to be honest with my character. Amen.

Psalm 13

A Prayer for Perseverance against the Enemy's Attacks

[1]Lord, it seems like You have forgotten me; how long will You hide Your face when I need You? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [2]Lord, I keep looking for You inside my heart; but all I see are shadows and bitterness because my enemies are defeating me.

[3]Hear me, O Lord, I need Your help; show me what to do or I'll die. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [4]I don't want my enemies to gloat over me thinking they have made me surrender.

[5]Lord, I trust in Your mercy to save me; I know You will deliver me. [6]Then I will worship You with singing, because You will abundantly bless me. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

The psalmist is begging God to help him win over his enemy. He is pleading, "How long?" Lord, when I need help, come immediately.

When I don't understand what You're doing, give me patience. Amen.

Psalm 14

A Prayer about Those Who Deny God

[1]Lord, fools say You do not exist. They deny You to justify their corrupt lifestyle. They deny You because they don't want to do good. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [2]Lord, look down from heaven into the hearts of all to see if any understand Your requirements, to see if any seek to know You. [3]The deniers turn from You, they do filthy things, they don't want to do good.
[4]Do these deniers not understand what they do? They eat up good people like bread, they never call on You. [5]Those who do right are afraid to deny You; they don't listen to the enemies; they put their trust in You, O Lord. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [6]Come from Your home to save Your people.
[7]When you catch us away to take us home, Jacob will rejoice in Your victory; Israel will be glad.

Those who reject God's work in the world (1) deny God's existence; (2) will not call on God; (3) turn to their evil ways; (4) are terrorized by the right; and (5) will turn against those who can't protect themselves. Lord, I know You exist, and You will always do right, You will judge those who reject You, and those who give themselves to sin. Amen.

Psalm 15

A Prayer That Asks God Who Are His Children

[1]Lord, who will live with You in Your tabernacle in the holy hill? {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[2]Those who follow Your principles, those who do the right thing, those who tell the truth, [3]those who do not lie about others, those who do not sin against their friends, [4]those who recognize the enemies of God, those who don't retaliate, [5]those who don't charge usury for loans, those who don't take bribes. Lord, honor those who fear Your name {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} because they will live blamelessly for You.

The psalmist asks who the true worshiper is. That person is more than one who enters God's sanctuary with sincere words. He must have a life of good works that backs up his words. Lord, I will live in accord with what I know is right. I will match my words with actions. Be pleased with my speech and my service to You. Amen.

Psalm 16

A Prayer for Resurrection When Death Is Near

[1]Lord, keep me safe because I trust in You. {298 Many Ways to Pray, Heb. 2:1-4} [2]My

soul said, "You are my Lord; apart from You I have nothing to hope for. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [3]I don't even put my trust in saints or anyone whom I like."

[4]Those who worship earthly gods will never find peace. I will not worship idols, nor confess them with my lips. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4}

[5]Lord, You are my future inheritance and present protection. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [6]You are my satisfaction who will protect me in death. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

[7]You have given me a good life; I follow the good heritage of my godly parents. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [8]I bless You Lord for guiding me throughout life, You showed me what to do in dark times. I have always made You my guide. I will not be shaken when death comes because You have been at my right hand. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[9]Now that I face death, I am satisfied; I will die with great hope in the resurrection, {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [10]You will not leave my soul in death, neither will You leave the Messiah in the grave. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [11]You will raise us up to live again; we will have fullness of joy in Your presence; we will have pleasures forever. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}

The true child of God enjoys retreating into God's presence. There they find spiritual strength and healing. There they rejoice and find peace. Lord, I love to come into Your presence to enjoy fellowship with You and worship You. Thank You for renewing me and preparing me to live in an evil world. Amen.

Psalm 17

A Prayer for Victory as the Enemies Are Attacking

[1]Listen to the prayer of those who live right; answer my request to You, O Lord, because I am sincere when I pray. {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [2]Examine those who live right, and You will know that I am blameless. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

[3]You have listened to my thoughts, You visited me in the night to see if I sin. You have examined me and found no rebellion, and that is because I determined that my mouth would not transgress. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24}

[4]I know the evil intent of those who hate You, so I stayed away from them. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

[5]Keep me in the right paths so that my feet won't slip. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[6]I have called unto You because You are listening; answer my request that I make. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [7]Show Your wonderful love to me, and save me by Your strong hand from my enemies who attack me. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [8]Keep me as the apple of Your eye; hide me under the shadow of Your wing. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps.

23:1} [9]Because wicked people are ready to attack me, they have already surrounded me. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [10]They are big and they are powerful; they brag that they will eliminate me. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [11]Like a lion ready to pounce on its prey, {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [12]they are ready to eat me up. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [13]Come to my rescue, Lord, defend me; You can defeat the wicked. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [14]They live for this world, they never think of others, they live to eat, they think only of themselves. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

[15]Lord, I will be happy when I see Your face; then I will be conformed into Your image. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

Sometimes we don't come to God to forgive our sins, nor do we ask God to deal with any issue in our lives. We come to God honestly, because we are attempting to live for Him. We cry, "I have done what You told me to do" (17:5), and, "I did not plan any evil" (17:3). Lord, I come honestly and sincerely. You know my heart. Please hear me because what I ask is true. Amen.

Psalm 18

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for Deliverance from Danger

[1]Lord, I love You because You strengthen me, [2]my rock, my fortress, my God. Lord, I trust You because You save me, my high tower. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [3]I will call on You because You are worthy to be praised; and You protect me from my enemies. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[4]The threat of death scares me, [5]the attack of the ungodly terrorizes me. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} [6]Lord, when I am afraid, I will call upon You; even though You are in Your temple, You will hear me and give attention to my prayers. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

[7]Then You shook the earth so that it trembled; the hills moved because You were angry. [8]A flame of judgment came from Your mouth; You set on fire the surrounding hills; [9]You came down to us walking on the heavens; all darkness was crushed by Your feet. [10]You came flying to us on the wind, riding on the clouds. You surrounded us. [11]You folded Your glory behind the darkness; You were accompanied by dark waters and thick clouds. [12]You are brightness and glory and fire, yet You came to us in hailstones, lightning, and thunder.

[13]Like an arrow of death Your lightning struck them. [14]You scared them, You killed them, You defeated them. [15]Then You sent the floods to wash them away, to judge them with Your anger. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[16]You came from above to rescue me, to save me from drowning. [17]You saved me from a powerful enemy that was too strong for me, that hated everything I believed. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter

5:7} [18]My enemy almost overwhelmed me, but You, Lord, saved me. {322 New-Day Praise, Ps. 98:1} [19]You lifted me into a secure place, You put Your delight in me. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
[20]Lord, You came to reward me; {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [21]because I have lived by Your principles, because I have separated myself from sin. {155 Faithful-Request Prayer, Heb. 3:2} [22]You showed mercy to us who received Your mercy. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [23]You judged us righteously who relied on Your righteousness. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [24]You showed Yourself pure to those who sought Your purity. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3}
[25]You showed Yourself merciful to those who need mercy. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [26]You saved those who are sorry for their sin, {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [27]You punished those who refused to humble themselves. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [28]Lord, light my candle so I can see; take darkness away from my life. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [29]By You, Lord, I can defeat a troop of men; with Your help I can jump over a wall. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [30]Lord, Your principles for living are correct; many have experimented with them, but You help all those who obey You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}
[31]Who is God, but You, Lord? {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [32]Who is our stability, but You, Lord? {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [33]You make my feet sure like the mountain deer; You allow me to climb the heights. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} [34]You teach my hands how to fight, so I can break the weapons of my enemies. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[35]You have protected me with the shield of Your salvation; You have helped me to stand against my enemy; {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [36]Your gentleness has made me strong. You made my footsteps steady so that I did not slip and fall. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14}
[37]I chased my enemy and caught him; I did not quit until I defeated him. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [38]I wounded him so that he could not fight back; I stomped on him with my feet. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}
[39]You gave me strength to fight the battle, You defeated my enemies that hate You. {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} [40]You enabled me to destroy them. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[41]The enemy cried out in pain; their voices reached You in heaven, but in hell it is too late for them. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} [42]I crushed the enemy so that they became dust, they were like the dirt in the street. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[43]You have made me the leader of the pagan; I am above the people; those I don't know will serve me. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[44]They will obey my orders when they hear me; they will submit to my authority. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [45]Strangers will be afraid of me; they will hide from me in their houses. {480

Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [46]Lord, I bless You for giving me life and strength; {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [47]I exalt you for giving me salvation. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[48]Lord, You have not delivered me over to my enemies; You have given me authority over the people. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [49]Therefore among the pagan I give You thanks; I sing praises to Your name. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

[50]Lord, You have delivered Your king; You have shown mercy to David, You will preserve his seed forever. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

We should not forget to thank God for deliverance after we have prayed for it. The natural heart is not always thankful, but the redeemed heart should especially give thanks for salvation, and for every time God delivers us from a desperate condition. Lord, I am grateful to You for saving me, I am thankful for every victory You give me over sin and persecution. Amen.

Psalm 19

A Prayer for Wisdom So You Can Answer Doubters

[1]Lord, the heavens declare Your glory; the stars reveal Your craftsmanship.

[2]Each new day tells You are the Creator; each new night shows Your mighty power. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [3]No one on earth can debate that You began all things, because the universe answers all their arguments. [4]Your hand in creating the universe is seen everywhere. Your majestic plan extends to the last detail.

[5]You made the night as a tent for the sun; sunrise is like a bridegroom coming out of that tent. [6]The new day is like a runner beginning a marathon, the sun races from one horizon to the other. The sun gives life to everything it touches.

[7]Your Scripture, like the universe, is perfect; converting the soul when applied. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} [8]Your principles never change, making the ignorant wise when learned. [9]Fearing You takes away doubts and ignorance; those who apply Your truth live forever. Your decisions are always accurate, those who obey You live right. [10]Lord, Your truth is better than riches; obeying Your principles is more satisfying than sweets. [11]Your truth keeps me on guard against danger; the satisfaction of obedience is its own reward.

[12]Because no one is able to perceive their slightest deviation from truth, [13]therefore keep me from making ignorant mistakes. Also keep me from making presumptuous errors; I don't want to be controlled by my faults. I want to live blamelessly by Your principles, I want to be kept from making life-destroying decisions.

[14]May the words that I speak, and the thoughts that I think, be acceptable to You, my Lord and my Redeemer. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

The beauty and vast majesty of the universe is a reflection of the beauty and majesty of God, its Creator. We should never worship the universe as naturalists seem to do, but any expanding feeling of awe for the universe should be directed to God its Creator. Lord, I see Your vastness in this seemingly unending universe (but it is limited, for only God is infinite, that is, without end). I see Your unfathomable wisdom in the minute interaction of Your world. The beauty of all You created turns my praise to You. Amen.

Psalm 20

A Prayer for Protection against Opposition and a Prayer for Vindication When Doing the Right Things

[1]Lord, hear my prayers when pressures come; defend me by the power of Your name. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} [2]Come to me with help from Your sanctuary; give me strength to endure rejection. [3]Remember that I poured out my heart to You, and see that I come with a yielded spirit.
[4]Give me what Your heart desires for me to have; carry out Your plans in my life. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [5]Then I will rejoice when You save me; I will tell everyone what You have done, that You have carried out Your will in my life.
[6]Now I know You care for Your chosen ones. You hear their prayers in heaven; You save them by Your strong hand.
[7]Some trust in chariots, some trust in horses; but I trust in Your name, Lord God. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [8]Then will my enemies be defeated and eliminated, then will I be vindicated and stand before You.
[9]Save me, Lord, hear me when I call to You. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7}

We should praise God when He protects us against oppression and gives us victory. We should thank Him for allowing us to overcome our opposition. Lord, some trust in chariots and others trust in houses, but I trust in Your Name, O Lord. I will praise You when I stand vindicated before You. Amen.

Psalm 21

A Prayer for Leaders to Defeat the Wicked

[1]Lord, I am encouraged when my leaders rejoice in You, when they shout "Amen" after a victory. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [2]Lord, give my leaders what they want; hold back nothing from them. Selah!
[3]You rejoice with them when they have spiritual victories; You give them recognition and honor. {344 Pastor-Prayer, 2 Cor. 1:11} [4]My leaders asked You to preserve their life. You answered their request; You gave them long life. [5]Actually, it was Your victory they achieved, You gave them ability and success. [6]You gave them the enablement to win each victory; You gave

them the privilege of ruling for You. [7]But the leaders must trust in You if they expect to keep their position. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}
[8]You will defeat all Your enemies; Your strength will overcome all who hate You. [9]You will destroy them in a flaming furnace; You will consume them in hell's fire. [10]One day there will be no wicked people on earth; they and their descendants will be eliminated. [11]Although the wicked plot against Your principles, their rebellious plans will not succeed. [12]The wicked will be completely defeated when You judge them. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}
[13]I worship You for Your great strength, with singing I celebrate Your power. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Psalm 22

A Prayer for Help When Being Attacked by Enemies

[1]My God, my God, why have You forsaken me? Why are You so far away when I need You? Why don't You hear my agonizing prayer? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[2]O God, You don't hear my prayers in the day, and in the night You are not near.
[3]O God, You are the Holy One of Israel; You come to Your people when they worship You. [4]Our fathers trusted in You during troubled times, and You led them through their problems. [5]When they cried for deliverance, You gave them great victories. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}
[6]But I am not equal to our fathers; [7]people laugh at me and hate me. They reject me openly to my face; they make fun of me in front of others. [8]They think I'm crazy for putting my trust in You; they tell me You won't come to me in trouble, nor will You vindicate me.
[9]But You are the One who formed me in the womb, You set me apart for a special task when I was a baby. [10]I've had my trust in You since I was born, O God. You are the only hope I have. [11]So don't cut me off from Your protection; I don't have another way to solve my problems. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[12]My enemies are smart and they are powerful, they attack me at my weaknesses. Their accusations and lies are tearing me up; [13]their words hurt more than physical suffering.
[14]My spirit is crushed and I don't want to live; evil pressure is worse than physical suffering. When my soul is attacked by the enemy's warfare [15]my body aches all over and I want to give up. I don't know what to say. Why have You allowed these trials to attack me? {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}
[16]Like wild dogs, the enemy is chewing me up, they are trying to kill me. They are nailing me to a cross, [17]all my bones ache from being pulled out of joint. [18]They have stolen everything from me, and they are gambling over my clothes.
[19]O Lord, don't stand so far away from me; come near me to help me through this difficulty. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}
[20]Give me inner strength to stand up to them [21]and give me inner confidence to overcome their tricks.

[22]I will tell everyone how You came to me;
I will testify of Your goodness to other
believers. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts
22:3} [23]They need to know that You take
care of those who trust You;
[24]they need to trust You as I do because
You will come to us when we are in trou-
ble. You will not hide Your face from us
when we need You. I will praise You to
other believers;
[25]I will do everything that I promised.
[26]Then weak Christians will be encouraged
to trust You, they will continue following
You throughout their lives.
[27]The unsaved will recognize what You do
for Your children, and they will turn to You
for salvation. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer,
Prov. 11:30} [28]Your kingdom shall come
on earth one day, and Your rule will be
recognized by all. {74 Coming-Kingdom
Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
[29]Your children will enjoy Your kingdom
and worship You, but the unsaved cannot
escape Your coming judgment.
[30]There will always be a small remnant who
serves You; they are the ones You recog-
nize and protect. They will declare to all
how You take care of Your children; [31]and
each new generation will contain more
believers who will also declare Your good-
ness and care.

Lord, I am encouraged when my leaders look to You for victory and they are encouraged by You. Answer their prayers and give me victory through their efforts. Amen.

Psalm 23

A Prayer Recognizing God's Protective Relationship to You

[1]Lord, You are my Shepherd; I don't need
anything. [2]You make me lie down in green
pastures. You lead me beside still waters.
{73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2}
[3]You renew my spiritual energy. You guide
me in the right paths to glorify Your name.
{307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
[4]When I walk through dark valleys, I will
not be afraid of death shadows. Because
You are with me, Your rod and staff pro-
tect me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2,
3}
[5]You prepare a banquet table for me, and
my enemies watch me eat. You pour oil on
my head to honor and heal me. You fill my
cup so it runs over. {388 Provision of Food
Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [6]Surely Your goodness
and mercy will follow me, as long as I live
on this earth; and in eternity I will live in
Your house forever. {215 Heaven's-Prayer,
1 Thess. 4:13, 14}

God has promised to protect His followers as they obey and follow Him. Lord, You are my shepherd, I don't need anything when I'm close to You. You make me lie down in green pastures and lead me beside still waters. When I walk through dark shadows of death, I'll not be afraid because You walk with me, and Your rod protects me. I look forward to a satisfying banquet and living in Your house forever. Amen.

Psalm 24

A Prayer for Your Final Recognition and Triumph over the Enemy

[1]Lord, You cause Your earth to give good things; You also own everyone who lives on this earth. [2]You created the earth as a watery sphere and on the first day You divided the waters from the land. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}
[3]Who can come into Your presence, O Lord; who is able to stand before You? {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[4]Only those who have clean hands and a pure heart, those who separate themselves from sin. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
[5]Those standing in Your presence receive Your blessings, You declare them righteous through salvation. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} [6]These are the ones who seek to know You; these are the ones who want to stand in Your presence. Selah!
[7]Lord, I know You will open wide the eternal gates; enter because You are the King of glory. [8]Your enemies ask, "Who is the King of glory?" You are the Lord, mighty to destroy them. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [9]So march through the eternal gates; enter triumphantly, my King of glory. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} In judgment they continue to ask, [10]"Who is the King of glory?" The Creator of all the universe is the King of glory. Selah!

Lord, those who stand in Your presence will have clean hands and a pure heart. Then You will declare them righteous. You will open wide Your gates to them and they will enter with Christ. Amen.

Psalm 25

A Prayer of the Weak Believer for Help in Trouble

[1]To You, O Lord, I come in prayer; [2]O God, I trust You; do not let me be embarrassed, nor let me be defeated by my enemies. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
[3]Lord, don't let any of Your children be embarrassed because they put their trust in You. Let those who rebel against You be embarrassed.
[4]Show me the principles to follow in life; [5]teach me to obey Your truth. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Make me follow Your principles because You are the God who has salvation; I come to You for my deliverance.
[6]Lord, remember Your tender mercies for me; You have always shown Your love to me. [7]Don't remember the sins I commit as a youth. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} O Lord, deal with me according to Your mercy.
[8]Lord, in Your goodness You always do right; therefore make rebels obey Your way of living. [9]I know You will take care of the meek in judgment and You will teach them how to obey Your way. [10]You always do the right thing; You show mercy to those who obey Your principles. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [11]Forgive me my

sin for Your name's sake because I have not been perfect in many ways.
12The ones who will fear Your name, guide them to do the right things. 13Give them peace because of their obedience; let their children prosper. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 14Lord, I know You have the secret to life; You have agreed to give life to those who obey You. 15Lord, I always look to You for deliverance; You will lead me through trouble. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}
16Make me always look to You for future deliverance; sometimes I am too dumb and weak to do it. 17My heart deceives me about decisions; 18make me follow You out of my problems. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 19I have many enemies that hate me, they want to destroy me. 20Keep me close to You when trials come, I don't want to be embarrassed; I trust You to deliver me. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 21Help me always tell the truth and guide me to always do the right thing.
22Save Your people out of their trouble.

Lord, I come to You when I'm in trouble, because You will not let my enemies defeat me. You will not let me be embarrassed, because I put my trust in You. Amen.

Psalm 26

A Prayer of a Conscientious Believer Who Is Sincere

1O Lord, examine me to see my integrity because when I put my trust in You, I did not slip. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 2Examine my intentions thoroughly, because I have not willingly sinned in my thoughts and intents. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} 3I have meditated on Your love to me, and I have tried to live by Your principles. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} 4I have not listened to Your enemies, neither have I had fellowship with them. 5I don't hang out with those who disobey You, and I do not let them influence me.
6I have tried to always live innocently; therefore I walk in Your forgiveness. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 7I tell everyone I am thankful for You, and that I am grateful for Your work in my life. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} 8Lord, I have to come into Your presence to spend time with You in Your home. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}
9Don't lump me in with disobedient sinners, nor with murderers who take innocent lives. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 10They constantly reject Your truth; they lie when they break Your law. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
11As for me, I will be true to my integrity; redeem me because of Your mercy. 12I know I am on solid ground, so I join other believers to bless You, Lord. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

Lord, examine me to see my integrity. I'm not perfect, but I sincerely follow You and try to live a blameless life. See Your love in my heart; I love You with all my heart. Amen.

Psalm 27

A Prayer to Be in God's Presence for Protection

[1]Lord, You are my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? Lord, You are the strength of my life; why should I be afraid? {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [2]When evil persons come to eat me up, they stumble and fall. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [3]Though a host of evil people attack me, I will not be afraid of them because I know You will protect me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [4]Lord, there's one thing I want from You; I want to be in Your house to see Your beauty, I want to delight in Your presence. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [5]Lord, when troubles and problems attack me, hide me in Your presence; set me on a rock so my enemies can't reach me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [6]Lord, lift me up above my enemies; I will bring the sacrifices of joy to You; I will sing praises to You. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [7]O Lord, hear when I cry unto You; send me the help I need. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} [8]When You said to me, "Seek My face," I answered, "Your face will I seek." {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [9]Don't hide Your face when I'm searching for You; I need You because only You can save me. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [10]Even if my mother and father forsake me, I know You will not leave me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [11]Lord, teach me how to successfully follow Your way, because my enemies are waiting to attack me. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [12]Lord, don't let my enemies capture me because they tell lies about me and threaten my life. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [13]I would have fainted and given up if it hadn't been for Your goodness to me. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [14]Lord, I will wait courageously for You because I know You will deliver me; I know You will come to me. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8}

The followers of God will seek after intimacy with God and pray to enjoy fellowship with God as they wait in His presence. Lord, I come into Your presence to spend time with You; don't lump me with disobedient sinners. Let me see Your beauty and worship You. I will be faithful to come to Your house to praise and worship You with other believers. Amen.

Psalm 28

A Request for God to Hear Your Prayer When the Wicked Oppose You

[1]Lord, I pray to You for help; don't be silent. If You don't hear and answer my prayer, I'll be like the unsaved who can't pray. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [2]Hear my prayers when I plead with You, when I stretch out my hands toward Your presence. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

[3]Don't treat me as You treat the wicked, who lie and violate Your principles. Judge them because they commit sin, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [4]punish them with the anguish they curse on others. [5]The wicked do not live by Your principles, nor do they care how You run the world; they destroy all that You've done. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[6]Lord, I bless You for hearing my prayers; {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} [7]You are my strength and protector. Because I trusted You I was delivered. Therefore I sing praises for Your protection. Lord, You give me ability to overcome difficulties [8]just as You gave Your anointed strength during His suffering. [9]Save Your people and bless them with Your presence; give them food to eat on life's journey and when they die, take them to Your eternal home. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, I need Your help; don't be silent. If You don't answer my prayer, I'll be just like the unsaved. Don't treat me like them; I seek Your help, but they ignore You. You are my strength and protection. I sing Your praise for past deliverance and for what You will do for me now. Amen.

Psalm 29

A Prayer That Is Revealed in A Thunderstorm Glorifying God for His Power

[1]Lord, I glorify You because of Your awesome creation; I recognize Your demonstrated power in this created world. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [2]Lord, all of us who enjoy this earth are obligated to worship You because it reflects the beauty of Your holiness. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

[3]Lord, I hear You speak in the sound of powerful rivers; I hear Your thunder in the storms; Your presence is felt when the floods sweep things away. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [4]I am awed by Your powerful voice in the storm; Your presence is majestic and compelling. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[5]Lord, You speak when storms uproot trees; You speak when trees are snapped and broken. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [6]Your storms skip playfully through meadows like a calf; Your winds tear up the bushes like a young ox. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [7]Your voice pierces like the lightning; Your voice like the wind sweeps across the desert. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

[8]You speak when the oaks are broken, {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [9]and Your sound is heard as the forest is stripped bare. All in Your temple cry "glory!" {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[10]because You rule over the storms. You sit enthroned in heaven; You rule over all that happens on earth. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [11]Lord, You give me strength to live through the storms of life; You give me inner peace while the storms rage. {322 New-Day Praise, Ps. 98:1}

Lord, I hear Your mighty voice in the thunder, and I hear You roar in the waves of the sea. I feel Your strength in the powerful floods, and I'm awed by Your powerful voice in the storms. You sit enthroned in heaven and rule what happens on earth. Give me Your strength to live through the storms of life. Amen.

Psalm 30

A Prayer of Gratitude to God for Good Health

[1]Lord, I lift You up because You have protected me; You have not allowed the enemy of death to conquer me. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [2]When I was sick, I begged You to let me live and You healed me. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [3]Lord, You delivered me from dying; You kept me alive for a purpose. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5}
[4]I sing unto You, O Lord, with the saints, and remember Your majestic holiness. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [5]You have allowed me to be sick for only a moment and now You have allowed me to live. I wept throughout the night, but joy came in the morning. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[6]When I was healthy, I thought I'd live forever; I said I shall never get sick. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [7]Now I realize I live by Your pleasure; You have made me as strong as a mountain. When You withheld Your spiritual blessings from me, I was scared that I might die. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}
[8]Then I begged You to let me live; I prayed for You to hear me. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} [9]I said there is no reason for me to die because I cannot praise You if I am in the grave. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} [10]Hear my urgent prayer for mercy; come heal me in my hour of need. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[11]Thank You for turning my mourning into dancing. You let me take off my hospital gown and put on happiness. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [12]I want my healing to praise You. O Lord, my God, I give You thanks forever. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, You have protected me and not allowed the enemy to defeat me. You have kept me through sickness and delivered me from dying. I have wept through the night, but You always brought joy in the morning. Amen.

Psalm 31

A Prayer to Help You Face the Lies of Your Enemy

[1]Lord, I trust You to deliver me; don't let me be embarrassed. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [2]Come down here to listen to me; I need You quickly. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
[3]I need You to be as strong as a rock to keep me from being defeated. I need to hold Your hand so You can lead me out

of this trouble. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [4]Get me out of this predicament; I know You can do it. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [5]I put myself into Your hands because You are my Redeemer. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

[6]I hate those who tell lies because I serve You, the God of truth. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} [7]I happily depend on Your mercy because You know the mess I'm in and You know how miserable I feel. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [8]You have not boxed me in with my enemies; You have given me lots of space. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

[9]Please be merciful to me in my trouble because I am eaten up with anxiety. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [10]My eyes are swollen from crying; I'm so tired I can't do anything. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [11]My enemies kept chewing on me, even my friends turned against me. They avoided me by walking the other way. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} [12]No one cares what happens to me; I am thrown in the trash like a broken glass. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} [13]When I heard the lies my enemies told about me it scared me to death. Then my enemies began planning together how to get rid of me. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12}

[14]You are the only One I can trust; You are my Lord and my God. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [15]I commit my life to You. Deliver me from my enemies who hate me and from those who are trying to get me. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [16]I want to see Your face; in Your mercy protect me. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [17]Lord, I don't want to be embarrassed; I ask You to protect me. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [18]Embarrass my enemies, O Lord, and confuse their plans against me. Shut up their lying mouth so they can't tell lies against those who live by Your principles. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

[19]Lord, You are so good to me when I obey You; therefore I trust You with my reputation. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} [20]Give me access to Your secret presence; I feel protected when I'm near You. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[21]Lord, I bless You for Your mercy because You protect me from all kinds of danger. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} [22]I'm sorry for complaining about being cut off. But in spite of my complaint, You answered me. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

[23]Lord, I love You for protecting me and for punishing those who lie about me. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [24]Lord, make me courageous in the face of lies; strengthen me to deal with them because I put my hope in You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Every believer will face those who lie about them. What can they do after all efforts fail to talk to the person? The psalmist teaches us to bring the matter in prayer to God. Lord, I need You to help me because lies are being told about me. I hate lies because I serve

You, the Truth. Even my friends believe the lies. Protect me when I can't protect myself. I pray for the "liars" that You might save them from sin. Strengthen me to deal with them. May I do it in truth. Amen.

Psalm 32

A Prayer for Forgiveness after Committing Sin

[1]Lord, I am blessed because You forgave all my rebellion. [2]Lord, I am blessed because You cover my sin. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} Now I can enjoy Your presence.

You bless me by erasing my errors from Your books; You don't even remember them.

[3]When I refused to recognize my sin, my whole body cried out with conviction. [4]Day and night my guilt racked me with pain, my mouth was so dry I couldn't speak. Selah! {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

[5]I recognize my sin that made me a wreck; I can no longer hide my faults from You. Selah! So I confessed my transgression to You and repented, then You forgave my terrible sin. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[6]Because You are gracious to forgive our iniquity, every godly person will rest securely in You when judgment comes on us. [7]I will hide in You when that day comes; I will worship You with songs of deliverance. Selah! {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

[8]Lord, teach me the proper principles of living; guide me so I don't make mistakes. [9]I don't want to be like a horse that can't understand so You have to jerk me about with a bit in my mouth. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[10]Those who rebel against You have a hard life, but You show mercy to those who trust You. [11]I am happy because I follow Your principles and I shout for joy because You make me do right. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

I am happy because You forgave all my sins and You covered my transgressions. Now I enjoy Your presence, and I follow Your principles. I live happy in Your mercy and grace. Amen.

Psalm 33

A Prayer for God to Bless Sincere People

[1]Lord, I rejoice because You allow me to approach You; I worship You as I come to You. [2]Everyone should praise You, Lord, with stringed instruments. With instruments we should magnify You. [3]I write new songs to worship You; I sing praises to You from the bottom of my heart [4]because everything You say is right, everything You do is perfect. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [5]You love to do right things and make right decisions; You have made everything on earth good.

[6]You spoke and the hemisphere just appeared; You breathed life into all the

angels. 7You scooped all the earth's water into Your hands; You planned the deepest part of the oceans. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}
8Therefore everyone on earth ought to recognize Your power; they should be afraid of Your authority. 9Everything You spoke was done just like You said; everything happened just as You wanted it to happen. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
10Lord, You mess up the plans of the ungodly when they try to go against Your principles. 11Lord Your decisions are always right. Anyone, who wants to, can know Your principles. 12You will always bless any group that follows Your laws; You will make them Your people. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
13You look down to find conscientious worshipers; You examine every heart to see who is sincere. 14Not a single person escapes Your scrutiny. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} 15You gave everyone the same opportunity to seek You; now You want to see what they have done with their chances.
16No leader is saved just because he has a big following; You do not save anyone by their ability. 17No one can put his trust in earthly transportation because that won't get anyone into Your presence. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
18You see everyone who reverently follows You. You know those who trust in Your mercy. 19You will deliver their soul from hell; You will take care of them on this earth. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}
20I humbly wait for Your blessing; You are my help and my protection. 21I will rejoice in what You give me because I trust You to protect me and give me good things. 22Lord, show me Your mercy in this life because You are the only one I can trust. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Lord, I rejoice because I can approach You and enter Your presence in worship. You do everything right, and make right decisions, You have made everything on earth good; therefore everyone on earth should praise You. You have given everyone the same opportunity to seek and find Your presence. But only those who sincerely seek You find You. I humbly seek Your blessing on my life and seek Your mercy, because You are the only one who can bless me. Amen.

Psalm 34

A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance from Trouble

1I will worship You, Lord, at all times. Your praise will continually be in my mouth. 2I will tell everyone that I trust in You. Those who hardly obey You will rejoice with me.
3Lord, I magnify Your greatness; I want everyone to join me in praising You. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
4I searched for You when I was scared to death; You took away my anxiety. 5Others looked to You when they were afraid; You did not disappoint them. 6When I was scared, I cried to You for help; You heard me and delivered me from all my troubles.
7You sent angels to protect me; You told

them to surround me and deliver me. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}
[8]I have eaten the good food You provide. Thank You for satisfying me with Your presence. [9]I want all Your children to trust You because I know You will take care of them. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}
[10]The young rebellious lions go hungry but Your children enjoy the good things You give.
[11]So I want everyone to listen to me because I can teach them how to find satisfaction. [12]Lord, I know the average person doesn't want to die; they want to live a long time and have a good life. [13]To get it they must quit speaking evil and begin seeking the truth found in You. [14]They must repent of their evil ways and live peacefully according to Your principles. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
[15]I know You see everything that Your children do and You hear everything that they say. [16]But Your face is against those who do evil; they die and You kick them out of Your presence. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[17]Your children who live right cry to You and You deliver them out of all their troubles. [18]You are near to those who have a broken heart; You save those who are sorry for their sin. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [19]I know we who try to live right have many afflictions, but You deliver us out of them all. [20]You protect us when they want to kill us; they don't do us any permanent harm. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[21]The sinners will agonize in their sins; those that hate peace-loving people will never have peace. [22]But You will redeem the lives of those who serve You; You will never abandon us. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

Lord, I worship You at all times because You delivered me from trouble when I was scared to death. You sent angels to protect me and Your grace was good to me. I know we who try to do right have many afflictions, but You deliver us from them all. Amen.

Psalm 35

A Prayer for God to Intervene When "Friends" Lie about You

[1]Lord, I want You on my side; against those who are out to get me. [2]Protect my back side against my enemies and oppose their evil plans against me. [3]Use their lying tactics to confuse them and give me confidence to deal with them. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
[4]Undermine their arrogance and evil determination; make them suffer the humiliation they plan against me. [5]Cut them down like weeds and let Your angels blow them away like the wind. [6]Blind them so they stagger like a blind person; let Your angels punish them. [7]My enemies didn't have any reason to attack me. I didn't do anything to make them mad. [8]So punish them when they don't know it's coming just as they attacked me when I didn't expect it. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
[9]I rejoice in You, Lord, because You have saved me from my enemies. {397 Rejoicing

in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [10]I thank You deeply for delivering me from an enemy that was too strong for me.
[11]They lied about me behind my back; I didn't even know they were plotting against me. [12]I had been kind to them and helped them, but they returned evil for the good I did for them. [13]When they were in trouble, I spent my time praying for them. I went without food fasting for them. Did I waste my time caring about them? {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [14]I treated them like a friend, I pledged myself to them with a hand shake.
[15]But when I got in trouble, they spread bad news about me when I wasn't around. I didn't know they were plotting against me; they did everything possible to destroy me. [16]To my face they were hypocrites, but behind my back they ripped me to shreds. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[17]Lord, are You going to just watch their treachery from heaven? Come help me in my struggle against them. [18]Then I will tell all who trust You how You defeated them to save me.
[19]Don't let my enemies be the ones rejoicing, make them howl with pain for what they've done. [20]Because they don't want to follow You, they want to turn Your followers against each other. [21]They keep pointing out my troubles to other people saying I deserve to be punished. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
[22]Lord, You've seen what they've done to me; don't keep still in heaven. Don't turn Your back on me. [23]Get up and do something about it; come to my defense, O Lord. [24]Examine me to see if I am sincerely following You; don't listen to their lies about me. [25]Don't let them convince others I am a fraud; don't let them eat me up.
[26]Embarrass them because they lied about me; they tried to make me look bad. Now let everyone see their lies and hypocrisy. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[27]Lord, let Your followers rejoice because You step in; let them know that You will do the right thing and that You will punish those who will not follow You. [28]Lord, I praise You because You will do right; I will praise You all day long. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

Lord, I want You to deliver me because there are enemies out to get me. Protect my backside against attacks. Confuse those who have evil plans to hurt me. Give me confidence to deal with them. Amen.

Psalm 36

A Prayer that Explains the Difference between Godly and Rebellious People

[1]Lord, I know the wicked reject You in their hearts; the way they live shows they do not fear You. [2]They live to glorify themselves and their pride is despicable. [3]They only curse or deceive others; they can't do good things because they are rebellious. [4]They constantly think up evil things to do and they are not sorry when they break Your laws. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[5]Lord, Your mercy lets all people live; You are continually faithful to this plan. [6]You are the source of how to live right and You allow all people to live out their lives.
[7]Your love to all is perfect. Therefore, Your children trust You to protect them. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}You give them the purpose to live; You let them drink until they are satisfied from Your rivers. [9]Lord, You are the source of life; You give us light to guide our lives.
[10]Continue loving those who obey Your principles and help them live right according to Your standards. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [11]Don't let arrogant people attack me and keep them from destroying me. [12]They will fail because of their sin and when they die, they will not live in Your presence. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, I know the wicked reject You in their hearts because they love sin. They can't please You because their hearts won't let them. Yet Your constant love reaches out to those who seek You. You let people do as they please. But sinning does not please me, it pleases me to obey You. Amen.

Psalm 37

A Prayer Thanking God for His Protection of Good People and His Punishment of Wicked People

[1]Lord, I'm not going to worry about lawbreakers because I don't care what they get illegally. [2]They will soon dry up like cut grass; they will eventually die just like new flowers wither.
[3]Lord, I put my trust in You and I live right; I know You will protect me and provide for me. [4]You satisfy me more than anything else and You fulfill every desire of my heart. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}
[5]I commit my days' activities to You; I know You will work everything out. [6]You will make my sincerity bright like a sunrise; my decisions will shine like the noonday.
[7]Lord, I rest in Your presence; I wait patiently for Your guidance. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [8]I won't worry about those who make money off their illegal deals.
[9]Lord, I've stopped getting mad at those who cheat and I don't envy those who get ahead unlawfully because You will eventually cut them off. [10]But You will prosper those who follow You; it won't be long till You get rid of deceivers; and those who care about them won't be able to find them. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}
[11]But the meek will be rewarded by You, then will they live happy and secure lives.
[12]The lawbreakers plan to deceive Your children and they tell lies about them. [13]But You just laugh at them because You know payday is coming soon. [14]The wicked have made elaborate plans to defraud Your followers and to steal everything they possess. [15]Lord, use their cheating ways against them; may they lose everything they have stolen. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

16I know it is better to be godly with a little
than to get rich off evil schemes.
17You cut off the wretched hand that tries
to steal while you are protecting Your
children.
18You take care of Your children each day
and You give them a reward they will never
lose. 19They will not be ashamed when You
judge them, and in difficult times You will
provide for them. 20But Your enemies shall
be burned up, they shall just disappear like
smoke.
21They take from us and never give any-
thing back, but Your children are kind and
genuine. 22They shall eventually inherit
the earth; You will not judge them or cut
them off. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1
Peter 3:12}
23You direct the steps of good people as
they delight to follow Your principles.
24Good people do not stay down when
they are knocked down; You help them
get up each time.
25Lord, You have let me live from infancy
till I am old; I have never seen You turn
Your back on Your children. 26You have
always taken care of Your own.
27Lord, help Your followers to not follow
evil, but help them always follow good
principles. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom.
12:1, 2} 28Because You will love those who
do right, You never forsake them who
follow You; You will cut off those who
do wickedness. 29Those who do right will
inherit the earth one day; they will live
there forever with You.
30They will always say the right things;
they will tell everyone that You do right
things. 31They will live by Your laws; their
feet will not be tripped up by sin.
32The wicked will keep their eye on Your
children, looking for ways to trip them
up. 33But You will not abandon Your fol-
lowers to evil people; You will remember
them when judgment comes. {387 Protec-
tion-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
34Lord, I wait on You and try to obey You;
I know I will inherit the earth with Your
children, {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer,
Rom. 2:4} but You will cut off the wicked.
35Lord, the wicked seem to have great
influence; they seem to prosper like a
spreading oak tree. 36But I know they will
pass away; one day I won't be able to find
them anywhere. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer,
Rom. 8:34}
37Lord, watch the one who obeys Your
principles because that one will make
peace. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
38But the disobedient will be altogether
destroyed; they will be completely cut off.
39You will save those who do right, You
will strengthen them when trouble comes.
40You will help them make it through dif-
ficult times. You will deliver them from
wicked ones because they trust in You.
{110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps.
18:6}

Lord, there are many evil doers in this world. But I won't let them upset me, because I trust You to protect me from them. They will die, but You will bless those who obey You. I delight in serving You, so I dwell securely in Your presence. Amen.

Psalm 38

The Prayer of a Person Who Is Suffering Because He Did Wrong

[1]O Lord, don't fuss at me when I've made
You angry and don't punish me because
I've disobeyed You. [2]I can't forget about
Your punishment; Your hand stings me
because of my wrong. [3]I don't have the
strength to endure Your punishment.
I can't find rest because of my sin. [4]My
rebellion brought this all on me. Now this
is too heavy to bear. [5]My wounds where
You punish me are infected; I am hurting
because of my stubbornness. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
[6]I am troubled; I cry all the time. [7]My
miserable body aches all over; I am not
getting any better. [8]My rebellious spirit is
broken [9]and I have no will to go on living.
[10]I don't have any more love in my heart
and I don't have any ambition. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[11]My friends have all forsaken me and my
family doesn't even come around anymore.
[12]My enemies are still trying to destroy me;
they lie about me behind my back.
[13]Because I don't care about anything, [14]I
don't listen to what they say; I don't even
try to defend myself.
[15]Lord, You are the only thing I have left; I
know You will listen to me. [16]Don't let my
enemies gloat over my misfortune; don't
let them use my weaknesses to their advantage. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
[17]I'm ready to give up because I messed
up so badly. [18]I recognize I've disobeyed
You; I am sorry for my sin. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [19]My enemies
jump on every opportunity, every day
more join them to attack me.
[20]They never consider anything I've done
right, they render evil for the good I've
done. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
[21]Lord, don't leave me now; don't keep
Your distance. [22]Come quickly to help me;
Lord, You are my salvation. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Sometimes God allows His people to suffer pain, knowing it will drive them back to Him. God is too loving to hurt us, but He sees the larger picture. He knows we don't like pain, but suffering will drive us to follow Him. Lord, I'm hurting because of my rebellion. I am in pain. I cry all the time, and I ache both in body and soul. I'm now getting worse, not better. Forgive me my sin; I repent and come back to You. Cleanse me from every sin, and bless me with Your presence. Amen.

Psalm 39

A Prayer to Use Opportunities Wisely in This Short Life

[1]Lord, I will pay attention to how I live; I
will not sin with my words. I will be careful what I say, especially when I'm around
non-Christian people. [2]I was speechless
because I was accomplishing so little, but
inwardly I was about to explode. [3]My
heart burned with fire as I thought about
it, then I had to admit my weaknesses. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [4]Lord, help

me understand what's happening to me and help me use my time wisely; I know my weaknesses. [5]Lord, You have given me a certain amount of time; my life span is short compared to You. Even when I do my best, it's insignificant. Selah! [6]I'm like others who also do insignificant things; they are not satisfied with their accomplishments; they build up a nest egg but someone else spends it.

[7]So Lord, I look for satisfaction in You; my hope is in You. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} [8]Deliver me from the consequence of my sin; don't let non-Christians ridicule me. [9]Now I refuse to complain anymore because You answered my prayer. [10]Take away Your punishment from me; I am about to die from it. [11]You do not take away my life because of my sin, yet my beautiful youth is fading away because that is the destiny of mankind. Selah! {280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17}

[12]O Lord, listen to my request; I am crying because You are far away; I'm just a traveler in this life like those before me. [13]Spare me from afflictions so I can get strong because I'll soon die and leave this earth. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1}

Lord, help me understand what's happening to me, and help me know my heart. May I use my time wisely, and may I find Your will for my life. Guide every thought I think and guide every step I take. If I follow You in every step, then my path will be right. Amen.

Psalm 40

A Prayer for Help in Times of Difficulties

[1]Lord, I wait patiently for You; listen to me and hear my request. [2]You brought me up out of a horrible pit; You set me on a rock and established my life. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [3]You put a new song in my heart, even praise to You for delivering me. Many will hear my song of worship to You; they too will put their trust in You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

[4]You bless all those who trust You for salvation and those who repent from their lies and arrogance. [5]Lord, You have done many wonderful works; You have kept me in Your thoughts. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} I cannot understand all You do for me; the things You do for me cannot be remembered.

[6]You do not want me to bring sacrifices to You; [7]I come to You the way You command in Scripture. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

[8]You want me to obey Your will; my heart delights to do Your command.

[9]I have told everyone to live right; You know I was never ashamed to testify for You. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [10]I have not been a "secret believer"; You know I told everyone about Your faithfulness to me. I didn't keep quiet about my faith; I told everyone I was Your follower. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[11]Therefore don't withhold Your tender mercy from me; Lord, preserve me as You have promised. [12]There are so many

temptations I can't count them; they make me feel guilty and discouraged. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}
13Lord, please come deliver me from the evil one; come quickly, I need You now.
14Embarrass them who are trying to defeat me; let them suffer the defeat they plan for me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
15Let them experience the misery of their sin that they plan for me to experience.
16Let all who seek You rejoice in Your salvation; let them have the pleasure of magnifying You continually. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} 17Lord, You know I am poor and needy; look to me in my time of need. Come help me get through my difficulties; come quickly, God, because I need You now. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2}

We all have difficulties, and these situations are different than when we sin or we walk away from God. Difficulties are the stones on the path that hurt our feet, or emergencies that need our attention, or mistakes that hurt, or failures that distract. Lord, hear me when I have trouble and help me out of my difficulty. Deliver me from the evil one and don't let me get too close to temptation. Put a song in my heart. Amen.

Psalm 41

A Prayer for Healing So Your Enemies Won't Spread Gossip that You Are Sick

1Lord, You bless those who look after the poor; You promise to deliver those who defend the poor. 2You promised to preserve that person's life and You will not deliver them to their enemies. 3When that person gets sick, You will take care of them; You will be with them in their illness. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4}
4Now I am that person who needs Your mercy; heal me, even though I have sinned against You. 5My enemies tell everyone about my troubles; they are anxious for me to die. 6They lie when they come to pay a sick call on me; they are just gathering gossip to spread to my enemies. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
7Everyone who hates me continues to spread dirt so they can destroy my reputation and my life. 8They claim I am about to die because of my sin and that I cannot recover from this problem. 9Even some close friends whom I used to trust are trying to knife me in the back. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
10Now, Lord, be merciful to me in my sickness; raise me up so I can go after them.
11When You raise me up it will be a signal that my enemies cannot defeat me. 12I know You will judge me with integrity and that I will enjoy Your presence.
13I bless You, the Lord of Israel, You are the same from everlasting to everlasting. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

God expects us to call on Him when we are sick. He can (1) give our strength back; (2) make us well; and (3) heal us. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} Sometimes we are sick because of our sin, or neglect of our bodies, or germs or infection, or we've

been exposed to sickness, or we've been in an accident. Lord, thank You for all the times I've felt good, and thank You for the past times I've been healed. Now I pray for health or healing. Amen.

Psalm 42

A Prayer to Experience the Presence of God

[1]As the young deer being chased will thirst for water, so my soul longs for Your presence, O Lord. [2]I thirst for You, O God. When will You let me stand again in Your presence? {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [3]Day and night I have cried for You while my enemies jeer, "Where is Your God?" [4]I remember when I used to come to You; now it breaks my heart that I can't come into Your house. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} Because I remember coming to You with a crowd of worshipers, I was singing and giving You thanks. I was praising You with other worshipers.

Lord, I thirst for You, I want to stand in Your presence. Night and day I search for You. I used to be close to You, now I weep because I can't come into Your house. I will sing and give praise to You. I will worship You with other worshipers. Amen. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

[5]Now I am discouraged in my soul; I am cut off from Your house. Yet, in the future I will return to Your presence; I will come again to Your house to praise You. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} [6]Now I am depressed because I can't drink from Your fountains because I remember You sent us water from Mount Hermon where the head waters of the Jordan begin and from Mizpah where Your presence first dwelt in the land. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [7]I hear the waves roaring in the sea and I want You to refresh me again. [8]So I must drink daily from Your love to me, I must worship You each night with songs and prayer.

[9]Even when I can't come close to You in the temple, I feel lost in the darkness. [10]And my enemies laugh at my commitment to You. They taunt me, saying, "Where is Your God?"

[11]When I am discouraged in my soul and my spirit is sad, I will worship You in my heart because You strengthen my confidence. You are my Lord and my God. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

There are times when God seems to be ignoring our requests, and the more we pray, the less we know. The "deep" of my pain calls to the "deep" of God's mystery. We must learn to trust God because He is there, He loves us, and He will do good for us. But no answer. We ask, "Where is your God" (Ps. 42:3)? We question further, "Why are you cast down, O my soul?" (Ps. 42:5). Lord, You allow storms, but they don't last a lifetime. You allow me to get lost in the desert, but You also lead me beside still water. I will wait. Amen.

Psalm 43

A Prayer for Hope When You Are Discouraged

[1]O Lord, examine me carefully then tell the ungodly what You see. Deliver me from my deceitful enemies and don't let dishonest people trap me. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [2]You are my strength, O God; why have You not listened to me? Why am I hurting because of my enemies? {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1}

[3]Give me the light of Your wisdom so I can make good decisions. Let Your light guide me into godliness; I need to come into Your presence. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [4]I will come to the altar to confess my sin, then I will happily come to You and then I will joyfully sing Your praises. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

[5]But now I am miserable and lonely, why am I so upset? O God, my hope and encouragement is in You. I will continue to praise You, You are my health and my Savior. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, I am far away and I feel alienated. Send light and truth to lead me into Your presence. I will confess my sins that separate me from You. Then I will praise You for forgiveness. Amen.

Psalm 44

A Prayer for God to Stop Allowing Our Enemies to Defeat Us

[1]O Lord, I heard with my own ears all the mighty works You did in the past. [2]How You drove out the pagan from the Holy Land; You were the One who defeated them. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [3]Our fathers did not originally conquer the land by their strength; You allowed them to possess it. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

[4]You are my King, O God, You can give the Promised Land to us. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [5]By Your power we will push the pagan out of the land; we will subdue them when they rise up against us. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [6]We will not trust in arms for victory, [7]but You will save us from our enemies. We will boast in You all day long; we will praise Your name forever. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} Selah!

[9]But You abandoned us and let them defeat us, You didn't fight with us against our enemies. [10]You let us run away from our enemies and they plundered our belongings. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [11]We were as defenseless as sheep; we were defeated and scattered. [12]We were sold out to our enemies, but You did not get anything out of it. [13]We were a reproach to our neighbors. Those around us were puzzled when we were defeated. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [14]We were cursed by our enemies and mocked by everyone else. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [15]I don't understand what is happening and I am

embarrassed by our failure. [16]I don't know how to answer those who attack me; I don't have any reason to give them.
[17]Everything has gone bad for us yet we have not forgotten You, and we have not stopped obeying You. [18]Our heart is not hardened against You, nor have we quit following You, {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} [19]even though You let our enemies punish us and let the shadow of death fall over us. {216 Heavy-Load Problem Prayer, Matt. 11:28-30}
[20]We have not forgotten the power of Your name, nor have we stretched out our hands to false gods. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} [21]Will You not examine us now and know the secrets of our hearts? {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} [22]We are suffering all the time because of Your will; we are like sheep ready to be slaughtered.
[23]Awake, don't sleep when we need You; don't cast us off forever. [24]Don't hide Your face from us and don't put our suffering out of Your mind. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [25]Because our spirit is crushed, our desire to live is gone. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [26]Get up and come help us and save us because You are merciful. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

Lord, I confess my sin that allowed my enemies to triumph over me. My sword and battle skills will not give me victory. Come help me, for You are the only One who can save me. Amen.

Psalm 45

A Prayer of Gratitude for a Good Political Ruler

[1]O Lord, I have been thinking of a good thing; I'm speaking of the things about Your king. My tongue is a ready writer to record them.
[2]The king is fairer than the children of man; grace pours from his lips. You have always blessed him, my God. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} [3]The king straps his sword on his hip, he rides gloriously and majestically. [4]He prospers because of his truth and meekness; his right hand will act swiftly. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [5]He will pierce the heart of his enemies; the nations will be subdued by him.
[6]He shall rule for You forever; his scepter is Your scepter. [7]He loves those who do the right thing and hates those who do wickedly. [8]Therefore You anoint him with the oil of gladness. His clothes smell of myrrh and aloes, You rejoice in the influence of his palace. [9]The king can choose a wife from many honorable women, one is chosen queen by your authority. {103 Dedication-Success Prayer, Mark 10:16}
[10]All women should consider it an honor to leave their family to become part of his family. [11]Therefore the king will choose one who is beautiful; we follow him because he is wise. [12]Many women will bring gifts to the wedding; the rich will also seek the king's favor.
[13]The bride shall have inward character; her sparkling dress is woven from pure gold. [14]Needlework sets off her flowing train;

her bridesmaids follow her down the aisle.
15They rejoice as they enter the king's presence, the beautiful bridesmaids enhance the ceremony. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}
16The king shall have many sons by her, they shall be princes in his kingdom. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
17Lord, Your name will be forever remembered; Your people will praise You forever. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

Lord, You give us political leaders to lead us in peace, security, and beauty. Bless their lives, their families, and all they do. Amen.

Psalm 46

A Prayer That Anticipates God's Protection During the End Times Judgment

1God, You are my refuge and strength;
You are present to help when I have trouble. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2Therefore I will not be afraid when the earth crumbles, when the mountains are cast into the seas, 3though all the oceans roar with storms, and the mountains shake with earthquakes. Selah! {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}
4I will rest safely beside Your river in Your city in the holy place of Your tabernacle. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
5Your city shall not be shaken because you are in the midst of it. You shall give it stability. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} 6The pagan will be angry; the kingdoms of mankind will be overthrown.
But when You speak the Word, the earth will melt under Your judgment.
7You, O Lord of Hosts, will be with me;
You, the God of Jacob, will be my refuge. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} Selah!
8All people will see Your mighty works; they will behold how You judge the earth.
9You will make all war cease when the earth comes to its end.
You will break all weapons; You will destroy all attack vehicles. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
10I will be still in Your presence so I can learn to know You intimately. We who have followed Your principles will be vindicated in that day among the pagan. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
11You, O Lord of Hosts, will be with us;
You, the God of Jacob, will be my refuge. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, the present is a time of testing to see if all people will choose Your rule. But there is coming a time when You will rule all nations. I let You sit on the throne of my heart to rule me now so I can enjoy Your reign in the future. Amen.

Psalm 47

A Prayer Glorifying the Lord Who Rules the Earth

1Lord, I clap my hands to show You my approval; I shout praises to You for Your triumph. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev.

19:6} [2]For You, the Most High God, are awesome; You are the great King over the earth. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [3]You subdue our enemies before us, putting them under our control. [4]You choose where I shall live just as you loved Jacob in giving him the Promised Land. Selah! {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

[5]Lord, You enter Your temple with mighty shouts; You are glorified with trumpet blasts. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [6]Everyone is singing praises to You; they are singing worship songs to You our King. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [7]You are the King over all the earth; I understand why I am praising You.

[8]Lord, You reign over all people; You sit on a holy throne. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} [9]The rulers of all the nations are here; they join me in praising You, the God of Abraham. All the earth's rulers get their authority from You; You are everywhere honored. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

Lord, I sing praises to You because You created the universe and everything in it. One day You will return to take the rulership over all the nations of the earth. I praise You now as I will praise You in the future day of Your glorification. Amen.

Psalm 48

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Protection of Jerusalem

[1]Lord, You are great in Your city and I greatly praise You in Your holy mountain. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [2]Jerusalem is beautiful sitting among the peaks; the whole earth wants to see it. Built on Mount Zion, the holy place, it is Your city, my great King. [3]Lord, You live in Jerusalem's temple; {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} Your people live in safety there.

[4]The kings of the earth assemble their armies; they planned to attack the city. [5]But when they saw the city's defenses, they retreated, knowing they couldn't take it. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [6]They were afraid to attack it like a woman fears her coming labor pains, [7]like mighty ships fear an approaching hurricane. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [8]I have heard about Jerusalem's glory; now I have seen it with my eyes. This is Your city, O Lord of Hosts, You will keep it safe forever. Selah! {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

[9]O God, I meditate on Your loving kindness when I enter Your presence in the temple. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [10]Your name deserves recognition, O God; You should be praised from the ends of the earth because Your hand defends this city. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [11]Let all the inhabitants of Mount Zion rejoice when You finish inspecting the city, [12]when You've walked around the city's defenses, after You finish counting

the towers, [13]and You have examined the fortified walls, and You've taken note of her palaces so You can describe it to future generations. [14]For You, Lord, are our God forever; You will look out for us until we die. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, any place You dwell is glorious for Your glory magnifies its natural beauty. You have chosen Jerusalem and You have secured it with Your protection. People praise You for what has happened to that city. Amen.

Psalm 49

A Prayer about the Futility of Money, Power, and Wisdom without God

[1]Lord, everyone in the world should know this; I want everyone to pay attention to what I say. [2]Everyone—upper class and lower class, rich and poor—want to understand one thing. What is the secret to life? Yet everyone should know how simple the answer is. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [3]I have heard many proverbs try to explain it {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [4]and I've heard many write poems about it.

[5]Because God is the answer, I am not afraid when troubles come, nor when my enemies attack me. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [6]Some think the secret is to have a lot of money so they are confident their money will solve their problems. [7]Yet they can't redeem themselves from death; their money can't get God to ransom their soul. [8]Redemption does not come that way; [9]no one has enough money to buy their way into heaven where they will live forever with God. {280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17}

[10]The wise person must also die just like the dumb and ignorant; they all leave their money to someone else. Everyone thinks they will live forever {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [11]and that their family name will endure forever so they attach their name to something special. [12]But even the respected person will die just like all animals eventually die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[13]Those who think they'll never die are not smart, but they will be remembered as a fool. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} Selah! [14]They are like sheep that will eventually be killed; death shall feed on them in the grave. The godly will ultimately rule them; they will lose their beauty in death. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [15]But, Lord, You will redeem me in the day of my death; You will keep me from corruption. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} Selah!

[16]So it doesn't bother me when wicked people get rich, nor do I care that they live in big expensive houses [17]because they can't take it with them when they die. Their money can't help them in the grave. [18]They spent their money on themselves when they were alive; they did everything to enhance their reputation. [19]They will die just like everyone else, but they shall not see the light of Your presence. [20]These people who wrap themselves in money will die

just like all the animals. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, teach me to use every day for Your glory. While some days seem to drag, life is a race to the end that always seems to come sooner than we expect. I don't pray for You to prepare me for the grave, but rather prepare me to live a full life for You; then death will take care of itself. Amen.

Psalm 50

A Prayer-Recognizing That God Will Judge Everyone by His Heart Attitude

[1]O Lord, my mighty God, You have spoken; You have called everyone from one end of the earth to the other. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [2]Out of beautiful Mount Zion where You live Your glorious radiance is shining. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [3]You are not silent about what's coming; a fire will burn away everything that is hidden.

[4]Heaven and earth will really see how everything comes out as You judge Your people. Selah! {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [5]You will gather everyone in Your presence, even those who made a covenant to worship You. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [6]Then the heavens will testify if they were obedient, then You will reveal everything in their hearts. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31}

[7]O Lord, You call Your people to listen as You bring charges against them; You are the Lord, their God. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [8]Lord, You know Your people have sacrificed; they continually brought burnt offerings to You. [9]But You don't need their animals [10]because all the cattle on a thousand hills are Yours. [11]You know all the birds of the air; all living creatures in the earth belong to You. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}

[12]If You needed meat for satisfaction, You wouldn't need people to bring it to You. [13]Because the earth is Yours and everything in it, You don't need the animals that Your people sacrifice and You don't need the blood offerings they bring. [14]What You want is the gratitude of thankful hearts; You want Your people to do what they promised You. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [15]You want them to trust You in the day of trouble; You want them to glorify You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[16]But You tell the disobedient, "Don't pretend You obey me by reciting My laws." [17]Because they refuse to love Your ways, they never pay attention to what You want. [18]When they saw a thief, they helped him, and they got involved in adultery. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [19]They repeated all the evil things they heard and they lied when confronted with their actions. [20]They accused others of the evil they did; they even lied about their brothers. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [21]Lord, You kept silent while they did these things and they thought You didn't care. Now You are calling them to account for their actions;

now You are looking at their crimes. {329 Obstinate-Prayer, 2 Cor. 11:4}
[22]They must realize they have ignored You; they must realize You can tear them into pieces and no one will be able to help them. [23]You are pleased with grateful hearts that accompany sacrifices; {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} You accept those who worship You honestly. These are the ones You save. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

Lord, because You created the universe, all things belong to You and are accountable to You. One day You will judge all people to determine if they honored You and if they have brought a proper sacrifice for their sins. My sins are covered by the blood of Jesus, so I look forward to living with You for all eternity. Amen.

Psalm 51

A Prayer Seeking Restoration to Fellowship with God after You Sin

[1]Lord, have mercy on me according to Your loving nature; because of Your mercy blot out my transgressions. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [2]Wash me completely from my sin so I will be clean of my guilt. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
[3]For I acknowledge my terrible deed, I cannot get it out of my mind. [4]Against You and no one else have I sinned in doing what was evil in Your sight. You are absolutely right to convict me and Your punishment is just. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[5]I was born a sinner and I have sinned since the beginning. [6]But You want us to be inwardly truthful because that is where You communicate with us. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}
[7]Cleanse me from my sins so I can be clean; wash me so I can be whiter than snow. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [8]I want to be happy like I was before; I want my broken spirit to rejoice again. [9]Hide my sin from Your face; cleanse my guilty conscience from guilt.
[10]O God, create in me a clean heart and renew a right spirit in me. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [11]Don't kick me out of Your presence and don't take Your Holy Spirit from me.
[12]Restore to me the joy of Your salvation and give me a new spirit to obey You. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}
[13]Then I will tell sinners how to be saved and they will turn to You. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}
[14]Keep me from the death penalty for my sin. You, O Lord, can rescue me and save me then I will rejoice in Your forgiveness.
[15]My lips will sing forth Your mercy. I will praise Your grace. [16]You are not satisfied with outward sacrifices, nor burnt offerings; otherwise I would offer them to You.
[17]You want the inward sacrifice of a broken heart. You will not reject a contrite and repentant heart.
[18]Lord, don't punish Israel for my sin. Help Your people, and protect Jerusalem.
[19]When I offer the right outward sacrifice to You, then You will delight in my inner

repentance and accept the young bulls I sacrifice on Your altar.

Lord, I come to You in tears and brokenness because of my sin. Forgive me! I am no better than David who was king; I am just as great a sinner as David who sinned against You. None of us is worthy of forgiveness. No matter what my sin, I deserve punishment for the things I've done. Forgive my sins. Amen.

Psalm 52

A Prayer That Recognizes God's Judgment on Liars, but His Care for His People

[1]Lord, the wicked boast about their sin, but Your grace, O God, continues to endure. [2]They continue to think up more evil; their deceitful tongue cuts me to the core. [3]They love disobedience more than obedience and they would rather lie than tell the truth. Selah! [4]They get great pleasure out of hurting people with their lies; their tongue naturally lies all the time. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}
[5]But You, O Lord, will destroy lying people; You will separate them from Your presence and they will not receive eternal life. Selah! [6]Your followers will see what You do and they will be astonished at Your actions {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [7]when You judge those who hide behind their sin because they do not obey You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[8]But Lord, I am just a small plant growing in Your house. I trust in Your continuing love that takes care of me forever and ever. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}
[9]I will worship You eternally because of what You have done for me. I will seek the intimacy of Your presence which You give to those who seek You. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}

Lord, there are many evil people in the world who have done evil things. I know You judge all evil, but I pray for their salvation. I don't rejoice in Your judgment. I rejoice in Your mercy and grace to me. Amen.

Psalm 53

A Prayer Thanking God for Delivering His People and Judging Sinners

[1]Lord, only fools say You don't exist; they say that because of their corruption {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} there is none who does good.
[2]Lord, You look down from heaven to see if anyone has spiritual understanding, to see if anyone is seeking You. {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} [3]But no one is turning from sin to You; sin has corrupted their thinking, there is none that does good.
[4]Lord, don't sinners understand their sin? They never call on You. [5]You will terrorize them like never before when You judge them for their sin because they have despised You.
[6]Lord, send salvation to rescue Your people Israel; bring them back to Jerusalem

from captivity. Then they will shout for joy. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}

Lord, protect me from those who want to hurt me, whether by gossip, by theft, or by physical attack. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} Lord, protect me when I can't protect myself. Protect me from dangers I know and from threats I don't know about. Amen.

Psalm 54

A Prayer of Deliverance from Your Enemies and God's Judgment on Them

[1]Lord, I need You to come deliver me and vindicate me by Your power. [2]Listen to my petitions and give me the things I ask. [3]Because strangers are out to get me, they are trying to destroy me; they don't care about Your rule. Selah! {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[4]Lord, You have delivered me in the past by helping those who helped me. [5]Let my enemies suffer the evil things they plan for me; judge them by Your Word. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[6]Then I will freely sacrifice to You; I will praise You for Your goodness to me [7]because You will deliver me from trouble and I will see my enemies defeated. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Lord, I'm in danger; come help me now. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} I'm so scared I can't control my thinking or reaction to things. Listen to me and save me from danger. Restore my trust in You and give me confidence. I need You now. Amen.

Psalm 55

A Prayer for God to Destroy an Enemy Who Used to Be a Friend

[1]Lord, hear my prayer that I speak to You; don't hide Yourself from my supplication. [2]Come hear the request I make; I am agonizing over this matter. [3]My enemy has spoken against me; he is putting immense pressure on me by accusing me of committing sin. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[4]My heart aches over this matter and I am scared to death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [5]I tremble all over out of fear because I feel like I'm going to die. [6]O Lord, I wish I had wings like a bird; I would fly away from this problem [7]and would flee away into the forest. [8]I would quickly get away from this trouble; there I would rest from this storm. Selah! {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

[9]O Lord, destroy my enemy because of what he's saying; he's stirring up hatred and violence around me. [10]Day and night he goes about spreading rumors, stirring up strife everywhere he goes. [11]He is motivated by his sin then he covers it up with lies and deceit. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[12]If my trouble came from an outside enemy, I could deal with it better. {387

Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [13]But it didn't come from someone who hated me because then I could have handled the issue. [14]But my trouble comes from an insider, a person that I thought was my friend. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} I had opened up my heart to this friend; we went together to worship You.

[15]Lord, I pray that he dies and is quickly buried out of my sight so he won't stir up any more trouble. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[16]As for me, I will call upon You, O Lord, because I know You will save me. [17]I will pray to You evening, morning and noon, because I know You will hear me. [18]You have given me peace about this trouble, even though there are many against me. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [19]Lord, I have a specific request to make. Make my enemy suffer the affliction I've had. Selah! He doesn't fear You or Your punishment because he hasn't been convicted of his sin.

[20]My enemy attacks Your people who have treated him kindly; he has violated every law of decency. [21]The words of my enemy were as smooth as butter, but he planned in his heart to kill me. His words were as silky as oil yet he planned to knife me in the back. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[22]Lord, I cast my burdens on You because I know You will sustain me; You will never permit the righteous to be destroyed.

[23]Lord, destroy my enemy and kill him; don't let him live out his life. I will trust You to carry out this request. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6}

Psalm 56

A Prayer for Protection from a Particular Enemy

[1]O Lord, be merciful to me in danger because my enemy would destroy me. He daily oppresses me. [2]My enemy is constantly trying to kill me. There are those who oppose me, O Lord Most High. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[3]When I am most afraid, I will trust in Your protection. [4]I will exalt Your Word because that will protect me. I will not be afraid of what my enemy can do. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [5]Every day he twists my words, using everything against me. [6]My enemy gets others to help him; he sneaks around behind my back looking for ways to destroy me. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [7]Lord, don't let him get away with his sin; judge him by Your wrath. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

[8]Lord, You know I meditate on You; don't forget my tears over this matter. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [9]When I cried to You, my enemies were stopped; [10]therefore I know You are for me. [11]I have trusted You for protection; I will not be afraid of what they can do to me. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

[12]O Lord, this is what I promise to do: I will praise You for safety. [13]Because You have protected me from destruction, You kept the evil one from me. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} You helped me walk before You in this life.

Lord, help me because there is someone who would destroy me. He daily oppresses me and terrorizes me. He twists my words and spreads lies about me. Because I trust You, I will not be afraid of what my enemy can do to me. I will praise You for past safety until this hour. I will praise You for Your future watch care. I will not be afraid of what my enemy can do to me. Amen.

Psalm 57

A Prayer to Glorify God When Enemies Attack

[1]Have mercy on me, O Lord, have mercy;
I trust You to protect me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} I'll hide in the
shadow of Your wing until my troubles
pass by.
[2]I cry unto You, O God, Most High,
because You fulfill Your plan for me. {533
Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [3]You sent
help from heaven to save me from my
enemy that would destroy me. Selah! You
showed me Your love and faithfulness.
{292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
[4]I am surrounded by hungry lions and lie
among a dangerous enemy. Their teeth
are piercing like spears; their tongues are
sharp as a sword. {164 Fear-Motivated
Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [5]O God, You are exalted
above the heavens; Your glory shines over
all the earth. {366 Praise-Worship of God,
Gal. 1:5} [6]My enemy prepared a trap for
me and I am discouraged by this pressure.
He dug a hole for me to fall in, but he has
fallen into it himself. Selah!
[7]I will be faithful to You, O God; {154
Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} I will
faithfully praise and worship You. [8]I will
wake up early to praise You; I will praise
You with harp and song.
[9]I will praise You among the unsaved; I will
praise You among the believers. [10]Because
Your love reaches to the heavens, Your
faithfulness extends to the clouds.
[11]I exalt You, O God, above the heavens.
{366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} Let
Your glory flow over all the earth.

Lord, I'll hide under Your wings for protection in the hour of an attack. I'll trust in You until danger passes by. May my enemy fall into the hole he's dug for me. Save me in my point of crisis. Amen. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}

Psalm 58

A Prayer Recognizing Evil in the World

[1]Lord, the rulers are silent, they're not protecting me; they're not doing their jobs.
{387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [2]In
their hearts they plan evil against me; they
arrange danger against me. {374 Praying
against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
[3]All sinful people sin from their birth;
they lie as sure as they are born. [4]Their
words are like a serpent's venom; they stop
up their ears to any plea. [5]They won't hear

the passion of a snake charmer no matter how charming he plays.
6Lord, break the teeth of my enemies; shatter the fangs of these snakes. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 7May they disappear like water that drains away; may his arrows miss their mark. 8May they die slowly like a snail; may they never see the light like a baby that is stillborn. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
9Blow them away with a windstorm before they are prepared to eat. 10Lord, the righteous will see Your vengeance; {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} wash their feet in the blood of their enemies. 11Then men will say, "Yes, the Lord rewards the righteous"; after all there is a God who does right. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, there are so many evil people in the world. It seems nothing can change their evil ways; nothing can change their evil intent. Stop their wicked intent on me; stop their wicked influences in the world. Amen.

Psalm 59

A Prayer to Defeat Your Enemies and Praise When God Does It

1Deliver me from my enemies, O God; protect me from those who attack me. 2Deliver me from those who rebel against You and save me from murderers. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
3They are planning to ambush me; these violent men are waiting for me even though I've done nothing to them. 4I am innocent, yet they seek to kill me, come see my dilemma and help me.
5O Lord God Almighty, God of Israel, rise up to punish the lawless. Don't show them any mercy. Selah! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
6They come prowling around at evening, snarling like hungry dogs. 7They belch out threatening words of harm and they think no one can hurt them.
8But You laugh at them, Lord, You scoff at the godless pagan. 9I wait for You because You are my strength; O God, You are my defense. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
10O Loving God, come to help me; let me triumph over my enemies 11but don't kill them instantly, O Lord; scatter them from Your presence and punish them slowly, O Lord my shield. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 12Because they say filthy things, they curse and lie with their mouth. Let their words condemn them. 13Destroy them in Your anger; consume them completely so that everyone will realize You rule in Israel. Selah!
14My enemies come prowling around at evening, snarling like hungry dogs. 15Let them scavenge for something to eat and bark when they go hungry. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
16But I will sing of Your power; every morning I will sing of Your love. You have defended me from my enemies; You protect me in time of trouble. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 17I sing to You, O my Strength; You protect me, O my loving God. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

How should we pray when someone is watching to find faults in us, or he is spying on us to destroy us? We must (1) pray for protection; (2) pray for God to help us do the right thing; (3) pray for their salvation; (4) pray for God to thwart their evil purpose. Lord, they are watching me to destroy me. Help me do the right thing in the right way. Deliver me from the evil one and protect me. Amen.

Psalm 60

A Prayer for God to Return and Help Fight Your Enemies

[1]O God, why have You not helped me? Why have You let my enemy defeat me? Are You angry with something I have done? Come back to me and help me. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [2]You have shaken the ground under my feet; now come give me a solid place to stand on. [3]You have given me a hard time; You have made me drink bitter water. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}

[4]But we who fear You can rally to Your banner; it is displayed because of Your truth. Selah! [5]Save me with Your strong right hand that I may be delivered.

[6]You have spoken from Your sanctuary; I will rejoice in Your decisions. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [7]You have divided to Your people the inheritance that is appropriate for them: Shechem, the valley of Succoth, Gilead, and Manasseh, Ephraim, and Judah. [8]You rejected Moab as dirty water; Edom and Philistia You stepped upon.

[9]Lord, I need someone to bring me into Your fortified city of Jerusalem {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} to help me defeat Your enemies. [10]O God, will You again be my Helper, even though You rejected me in the past? Even though You stopped fighting for me? [11]Please help me defeat my enemies because the help of man is not enough. [12]Only through You will I be victorious, O God, for You can trample down my enemies. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, come dwell among us, and raise Your banner over us. As we prepare to fight, go before us to confuse the enemy and defeat them. Whether the victory comes from our efforts or Your sovereignty, we will praise You for battles won. Amen. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Psalm 61

A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies and Blessings on Your Leader

[1]O God, hear me when I cry to You; listen to me when I pray. [2]I will cry to You from the ends of the earth for my heart is heavily burdened. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

[3]Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I because You won't let my enemies reach me there. [4]I want to live forever in Your tabernacle; Your wings will protect me from

danger. Selah! {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
5You have listened to my vows; You have given me an inheritance, the same one you give to all who fear Your name. 6Give a long life to the king; {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} may his reign reach across generations. 7Bless Your people through his rule and watch over him in Your love and faithfulness.
8Then I will sing praises unto Your name and I will perform my vows each day. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

Lord, protect me when I can't protect myself. Lead me to a rock that is higher than I, and let me hide there. Be my shelter and strong fortress. Amen.

Psalm 62

A Prayer for God to Protect You When Your Enemies Have the Upper Hand

1Lord, I wait for You to give me rest; my salvation comes from You. 2Only you are my Rock and Salvation; You are my Fortress when I am shaken. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
3I have so many enemies; they are all trying to destroy me. They think I'm a sagging fence that's about to fall down. 4They intend to knock me down; they tell lies about me. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} They bless me to my face, but in their hearts they curse me. Selah!
5O God, I find my rest in You; my hope is only in You. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} 6You alone are my rock and salvation; Only you are my fortress where I am secure. 7My salvation and hope come from You; hide me in a rock where I will be safe.
8Lord, I trust in You at all times; {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} I pour out my heart to You because You are my refuge. Selah!
9Lord, I know lower-class people are just steam and higher-class people only put on a show. When I weigh them in the balance, all people are nothing more than a breath.
10I will not trust in money from extortion, nor in security I can get by stealing from people. Even though everyone else is getting rich, money will not be the purpose of my life. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
11I have heard You speak once to me; You don't have to tell me again that You have all power. 12O Lord, You never stop loving me; You will reward all people according to what they deserve. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, You are my hope and salvation. Hide me in a rock where I will be safe. I pour out my heart to You, so I know You hear me and You will protect me. Amen.

Psalm 63

A Prayer of Rejoicing because You Have Worshiped God

1O God, You are my God; early each morning I will search for You because

my soul thirsts for You. Everything in me yearns for You as someone searching for water in a desert where there is none. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [2]I have seen You in the sanctuary; I felt Your power and glory.
[3]I continually praise You because of Your love to me. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [4]I will bless You as long as I live, lifting up my hands to You in worship. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} [5]You satisfy me more than money or food; I will praise You from a joyful heart.
[6]I will meditate on You lying in my bed and think about You all night long. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [7]Because You have helped me in many ways, I rejoice in the shadow of Your wings. [8]I will walk close beside You; Your strong right hand will steady me. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
[9]But those who scheme to destroy me will die and be buried. [10]They will die by the sword and scavengers will eat their remains. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [11]But the king shall rejoice in God and those who are loyal to Him will rejoice while liars will be gagged.

The greatest yearning of a person is for God. The problem is that many are hungry and thirsty, but they don't know what will satisfy them. Yearning for God involves (1) searching for God in the Word and in prayer; (2) emptying our hearts of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; (3) seeking intimate fellowship with Christ; and (4) resting in His presence. Lord, I yearn for You, to know You and to enjoy Your presence. Amen.

Psalm 64

A Prayer for Victory against Your Enemies

[1]O God, listen to my request; don't let my enemies terrify me. [2]Don't let their conspiracy succeed; protect me from their rebellion. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [3]They sharpen their tongue like a sword; they aim cutting words at me like an arrow. [4]They shout at the innocent with their accusations, never considering consequences or reprisals. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}
[5]My enemies encourage each other to attack me; they plan together their deceptive snares; they think no one will know. [6]They devise a cunning trap for me using their creative mind and evil heart, thinking it is a perfect plan. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
[7]But You, Lord, will shoot arrows at them; suddenly they shall be wounded. [8]Their lies will be turned against them and all their supporters will abandon them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[9]Everyone will then fear You, my God, because they will realize what You have done.
[10]The righteous will rejoice in You and Your people will praise You. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

Lord, my enemies encourage each other to attack me, thinking no one will know. But God, You know and You will protect me. You will turn their evil ways against them. I will find protection in You. Amen.

Psalm 65

Praise for God's Physical Provision

[1]O Lord, I can't wait till I get to Zion to praise You; {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} I will keep my vows to You. {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [2]Because You have heard our prayers, everyone will come to You. [3]My heart seems overwhelmed with sin, but You continually forgive me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
[4]Those chosen by You are blessed; they come into Your presence. They dwell in Your courts. They shall be satisfied with Your goodness, even living in Your holy temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[5]You have answered our prayers with wonderful things; You are the God of my salvation. You are the source of my confidence; You are the assurance of those far off. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [6]By Your mighty strength You created the mountains; You have clothed Yourself with all power. [7]You silenced the roaring waves of the seas; You quieted the rebellious pagan. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [8]Those who live at the ends of the earth fear You; there is rejoicing at the place where the sun rises and sets.
[9]You send rain to make the earth fertile; the rivers of God will always have water to give us a harvest of grain. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [10]You send rain on our plowed fields; the rows are damp with showers. Every spring You bless us with new growth.
[11]You crown the farming year with good crops; You walk in our fields to give us a harvest. [12]The wilderness grows good things for us; the rolling hills rejoice to give us food. [13]The pastures are filled with flocks of animals; the valleys are covered with corn. All growing things sing for joy. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

In God's sovereign plan, He provides food from the ground for our health and happiness, and He brings rain and sun in the proper seasons to grow our food, while people must plant, cultivate, and harvest our crops; we are laborers together with God for our provision (1 Cor. 3:9). Lord, thank You for sun, rain, and soil that provide our food. I will work hard for my "daily bread." I will eat with thanksgiving and praise to You. Amen.

Psalm 66

Thanksgiving for God's Forgiveness and Provision

[1]O God, I joyfully shout praises to You; I join other people in happy praise. [2]I sing loudly to honor Your name, making my

praises to You glorious. [3]O God, Your works are powerfully awesome so that Your enemies recognize You. [4]All the earth shall worship You and sing to Your name. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} Selah!

[5]Let everyone come see Your awesome works, that You are doing for the children of mankind. [6]You turned the Red Sea to dry land; Your children walked through it on foot. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} They rejoiced in You every step of the way. [7]You will always rule by Your power; You see everything the nations do. Don't let the rebellious exalt themselves. Selah!

[8]Everyone blesses You, O my God; hear the voice of their praise. [9]Our lives are in Your hands because You keep our feet from straying. [10]You have examined us thoroughly, You have purified us as silver is refined. [11]You have caught us in Your net and made us serve You as prisoners. [12]You allowed the enemy to ride rough shod over us; You allowed us to be tested with fire and water, but You brought us out into a wealthy place. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[13]Now I come into Your presence with sacrifices; I will fulfill all the vows I made to You. [14]Those promises I made publicly to You when I was going through difficulties. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [15]Now I offer to You sacrifices of praise; I will give You everything I have. I will worship You with the best of my life. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} Selah! [16]Let all who fear You, come to hear about Your goodness; I will tell them what You did for me. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [17]I cried to You for help; my cry was really worship to You. [18]If my thoughts were motivated by sin, You would not have heard me. [19]But You did hear me when I cried; You listened to my request. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [20]I praise You for not neglecting my prayer, nor did You quit loving me.

Lord, Your provision for me is wonderful, so I praise You for Your power and wisdom. You have brought us through fire and flood, so I praise You for protection and guidance. Amen.

Psalm 67

A Prayer for the Coming Kingdom of Prosperity

[1]God, be merciful to us and bless us; let Your face shine on us. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Selah! [2]Let Your way be known on earth and Your prosperity known by all people.

[3]Then all people will worship You with praise; yes, all people will worship You. [4]Then all people will be glad and joyfully sing because You will examine everyone correctly and rule them properly. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Selah!

[5]Then all people will worship You with praise; yes, all people will worship You. [6]Then the earth will have a great harvest and You will bless us with Your presence. [7]Yes, You will bless us with Your presence and everyone will reverently trust You. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

Lord, there is coming a time when all ethnic groups will worship and praise You for all You've done. So now, I worship You with the same heartfelt gratitude that I'll have in the future. Amen.

Psalm 68

Praise for God's Final Victory over His Enemies

[1]Arise, O God, scatter Your enemies; chase everyone who hates You. [2]As smoke is driven by the wind, chase Your enemies away. As wax is melted by the fire, let Your presence judge them. [3]May Your children rejoice in Your presence, let them rejoice exceedingly. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [4]I sing praises to You, O God; I magnify You who rides the heavens. I rejoice in Your name, Jehovah.

[5]God, You are a father to the fatherless; You are a protective judge to widows. [6]You give us all a family; You set the captive free, but You punish the rebellious.

[7]O God, when You led us into the wilderness, You marched victoriously before us. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Selah! [8]The earth shook at Your presence; You caused an earthquake on Mount Sinai. [9]You sent a refreshing rain when Your people were weary; You confirmed that they were Your inheritance. [10]Your people lived by Your goodness; You took care of the poor who couldn't care for themselves.

[11]You gave us Your Word; Your people were eager to tell others what You said. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [12]Kings of armies ran from You; there was plenty of spoil for the families. [13]Though Your people were poor and hungry, You gave them birds to eat; they were satisfied as if they had silver and gold. [14]When You came scattering manna for them to eat, the ground was as white as snow.

[15]The hill in which You have chosen to dwell is exalted above all mountains. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [16]You have chosen to dwell on earth forever. All the hills will leap for joy.

[17]You are surrounded by unnumbered chariots and angels as You were surrounded by glory on Mount Sinai. [18]You ascended to Your eternal home on high; You led a parade of captives. You received gifts from Your people and from those who rebelled against You; now You will live among us. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[19]We bless You, our Lord of salvation, because You daily load us with good things. Selah! [20]You are the God of salvation; You rescue me from death.

[21]You will shatter the heads of Your enemies, wounding them because of their continual trespasses. [22]You will gather them into judgment; You will bring them from the depths of the sea [23]that You may punish them completely. And those who belong to You will taste victory. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[24]We will see Your victory parade; You will march triumphantly into Your sanctuary. [25]The singers will go before You, followed by musicians with young girls playing tambourines. [26]Praise to You from Your people; {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11}

praises to You in Your sanctuary. [27]The small tribe of Benjamin enters with its leaders, followed by the leaders of Judah, Zebulon, and Naphtali. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
[28]God, summon Your power to display Your strength just as You did it in the past. [29]Kings will bring gifts to You to Your presence in the temple of Jerusalem. [30]Find Your enemies who hide from You, those who flee to the farthest places on earth, that they may recognize Your authority over them. [31]Leaders from Egypt will bow to You; the leaders for Ethiopia will recognize You. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[32]The kingdoms of the earth will sing to You. Selah! They will sing praises to You. [33]To You, who rides on the highest heaven, to You, who thunders with Your voice. [34]All proclaim Your power, O God; all recognize Your majesty over Israel and Your strength in the skies. [35]You are awesome in Your sanctuary; You give power and strength to Your people. Praise to You, O God. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, I praise You for every victory You've given me in my life. I praise You for Your future victory over all evil and every foe that opposes Your rule of their life. I rejoice in Your prediction of victory, and I worship You for Your coming triumph as though it has already happened. Amen.

Psalm 69

A Prayer for God to Save from Trouble

[1]Save me, O God, from the waters of trouble; they are about to flow over my head. [2]I am sinking in the mud of problems; there is no solid ground to stand on. I have fallen into dangerous water and I am about to drown. [3]I am exhausted from yelling for help; my voice is gone and my eyes are swollen from crying. I'm waiting for You to save me. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[4]I have more enemies than hairs on my head; the enemies don't have any reason to destroy me. They make me give back what I didn't steal.
[5]Lord, You know my weaknesses; I can't hide my sins from You. [6]May Your children not be embarrassed by me. O Lord, You are God of the fighting angels; may I not be a hindrance to those seeking You. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [7]I put up with sarcasm for Your sake and have lost my self-esteem. [8]My friends don't even claim to know me and my relatives turn their backs on me. [9]My greatest desire is to be in Your house {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and those who would insult You, insult me instead. [10]They laugh at me when I fast to seek You; {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [11]they make fun of me when I prepare for prayer. [12]The leaders continually ridicule my faith and the drunks make me the butt of their jokes. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[13]But, I continue to pray to You, O Lord, knowing You will eventually listen to me. In Your great mercy hear me and save me

from all my troubles. [14]Deliver me from being stuck in the mud; do not let me sink any further. Deliver me from those who hate me and from the deep waters of trouble. [15]Don't let circumstances overwhelm me nor allow death to swallow me up. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

[16]Answer my cry to You, O Lord, according to the goodness of Your love. [17]Don't turn Your face from me; quickly come help me with my troubles. [18]Come help me through these difficulties; deliver me from my enemies. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1}

[19]You know the insults I endure, You know what my enemies have said. [20]Their accusations have insulted me and broken my spirit. I looked for someone to help me, but no one seemed to care. [21]Instead, I got more sarcasm and they continued to criticize me. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

[22]May their food turn sour in their stomach and let them feel the anguish they heap on me. [23]May they be blinded by their sin and may they be too weak to do anything. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [24]Pour Your anger on them and punish them for what they've done. [25]Let their homes be like a mortuary and may no one live with them. [26]Because they mock those You are correcting, they add pain to those You discipline. [27]Search carefully to find every one of their sins; don't let them enjoy Your forgiveness, [28]blot their families out of the book of life and do not list them with Your followers. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[29]I am suffering from much pain; deliver me to solid ground. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [30]I will sing praises to Your name; I will magnify You with Thanksgiving. [31]May the results of my suffering please You more than the sacrifice of an animal. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [32]The humble will recognize what You are doing; those who seek You will live better lives. [33]Because You hear those who seek You, You do not despise Your followers. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[34]Lord, be praised by the heavens and earth; be magnified by the seas, and their inhabitants. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [35]God save Mount Zion, and rebuild the cities of Judah; Your people will live securely in Your land. [36]The children of Your followers will inherit it and those who love You will live there forever. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Lord, I'm sinking into the waters of trouble that flow over me. The waters are deep and threatening, and I'm exhausted from yelling for help. I need You to save me now. Amen.

Psalm 70

A Prayer for God to Come Quickly to Help You

[1]Come quickly, Lord, save me; I need Your help now.

[2]Confuse and embarrass those who want to destroy me; reverse their plots against me. [3]Give them what they plan for me because they laugh and sneer at me. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

[4]Let those who seek Your protection find joy in Your presence. Let those who love Your salvation continually magnify You. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[5]But I am poor and needy; come quickly, O God, help me. You are my Deliverer, O Lord; don't tarry along the way. Amen. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

Lord, sometimes my problems come slow and worrisome. But today I need help right away. I need You now. Amen.

Psalm 71

A Prayer for Continued Protection in Old Age When You Can't Protect Yourself

[1]Lord, I put my trust in You; don't let me be embarrassed. [2]Do the right thing by delivering me from my enemies; hear me and save me. [3]Let me hide in You where I can always find protection. Give the order to save me because You are my Rock and Defense.{219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
[4]O God, deliver me from the evil one, from the grasp of evil persecutors. [5]Lord God, You are my hope; I've trusted You since childhood. [6]You have protected me from birth, since I came from my mother's womb; therefore I've always praised You. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[7]I've become a role model to many because You have been my strength and defense. [8]I tell everyone of Your splendid grace; I praise You all the time. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[9]Don't turn Your back on me when I'm old; don't forsake me when my energy is gone. [10]I have enemies who conspire against me; they want to destroy me. [11]My enemies think You're finished with me so they are coming to get me, thinking no one will help me.
[12]O God, come help me now; I need You right away. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [13]Embarrass my enemies because of their treachery; let them suffer what they plan for me. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
[14]I will always trust You; I will praise You more and more. [15]I will always have hope; I will praise You as long as I live. I will talk all day of Your righteousness. It is more than I can measure. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [16]I will go on in Your strength, O Lord God; I will testify only about You and Your righteousness.
[17]You have been my teacher since I was a youth; to this day I tell everyone of Your marvelous works. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [18]Do not forsake me now that I'm old and gray-headed; let me tell the next generation about Your power so those growing up know Your miracles. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[19]Your righteousness is superb, O God;
You have done wonderful things that others couldn't do. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [20]You have allowed me to suffer many ways, but You will resurrect me from the grave; You will restore my life to me. [21]You will again honor me in the future and comfort me with Your kindness. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

[22]I will praise You with my harp because of Your faithfulness. I will sing praises to You with my harp because You are the Holy One of Israel. [23]I will shout loudly and sing for joy because You have redeemed me. [24]I will tell everyone of Your righteousness because You confounded my enemies. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

Lord, in my old age I want to be a role model to Your grace and mercy. May others see Your goodness in my life. Just as You used my youthful strength to testify of Your help, now use my old age to testify of Your wisdom. Amen.

Psalm 72

A Prayer for the Millennial Kingdom to Come and for Jesus to Rule the Earth

[1]O God, give Your wisdom to King David; give Your righteousness to his son, Jesus. [2]He will rightly rule Your people, He will make right decisions concerning them. [3]The mountains will enjoy peace; the people will enjoy righteousness on the hills. [4]He will be favorable to the poor, He will save the children of the needy, He will destroy the enemy.

[5]They will reverence Him from one generation to another {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} as long as the sun and moon endure. [6]He will bless them as rain on the grass, as showers that water the earth. [7]The righteous will flourish under Him; there will be peace as long as the moon endures.

[8]He shall rule from sea to sea, from the Jordan River to the ends of the earth. [9]Those who live in the wilderness will worship Him; {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} His enemies will be defeated. [10]The foreign kings will recognize Him; kings from Africa will give Him presents. [11]All kings will bow in worship before Him; all peoples will serve Him. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[12]He will deliver the needy from trouble and help the poor out of their calamity. [13]He will give to the needy and He will reward the poor. [14]He will save them from death; their life will be precious to Him. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

[15]He will receive gold from Africa. People will pray for Him continually; daily they will praise Him.

[16]In the coming day of prosperity corn shall grow everywhere. Fruit will be available everywhere and the cities will flourish. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[17]His name, Jesus, will endure forever; it will continue as long as the sun. And people will bless Him; all nations will call Him blessed. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

[18]Blessed are You, Lord God of Israel, because You only do wonderful things.

[19]Blessed be the glorious name of Jesus; {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} let the whole earth be filled with His glory; Amen and Amen. [20]This ends the prayers of David, the son of Jesse.

Lord, may Your kingdom come rule the earth today as it rules heaven. I look forward to living with You in Your future kingdom. Amen.

Psalm 73

A Prayer that Recognizes God Will Reward You for Faithfulness and Punish the Ungodly for Their Rebellion

[1]God, You are truly good to Israel, to those whose hearts are pure.
[2]But, I almost gave up my faith; I came close to stumbling. [3]I wanted what selfish people had, especially when I saw their prosperity. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
[4]They don't have the pressures I have; they have strong healthy bodies. [5]They don't let ethics bother them, nor do they have everyday problems. [6]They show off their selfish pride; they will not stop at violence to get their way. [7]They lust for everything; there is no satisfying their evil desires. [8]They scoff at everyone else; they willingly use violence to get their way. [9]They claim to be bigger than heaven; they think everything on earth belongs to them.
[10]They have deceived people to believe everything they say. [11]They say, "God doesn't know everything; the Most High doesn't know what I do." [12]Lord, these are arrogant people who have a life of ease, because of their money. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} [13]But, Lord, was I wrong to stay pure when I denied myself the pleasures of evil? [14]I have had trouble all day long; every morning I face a different trial.
[15]If I have the attitude of the wicked, I would have betrayed Your children. [16]I tried to figure out why the wicked prosper, but I only become more confused. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [17]Then I come into Your presence in the sanctuary, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and I understand their future destiny.
[18]Now I realize they are on a slippery path; they are heading toward eternal destruction. [19]They will die and instantly be punished and will be consumed by terror. [20]One day, Lord, You will arise to punish their selfish desires. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[21]Lord, I acknowledge how bitter I had become; my whole outlook was poisoned by hatred. [22]I was reacting like a dumb animal; I didn't know what I was doing. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [23]Nevertheless I still follow You; You have always held me with Your right hand. [24]You have guided me with Your counsel and one day You will receive me into glory. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[25]I don't have anyone in heaven but You; I desire nothing on earth but You. [26]My flesh will get weak and my heart will fail, but You are the strength of my life. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
[27]Those who will not follow You will perish because You will destroy those who reject You. [28]But it is good for me to be near You; I have made You my shelter. I

will tell everyone of Your works. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}

Lord, there are many liars who bend the truth to get ahead. They will say anything to make money; they will do everything that You prohibit. They lie and steal because they are evil, and they don't care about You, nor do they live by the truth or their conscience. Lord, when I come into Your presence, I realize their lies will be judged by Your truth. Their sins will be judged by Your righteousness. I have no one to help me but You. Amen.

Psalm 74

A Prayer to Recognize the Power of God and to Call on Him to Crush Your Enemies

[1]Lord, why have You rejected us? Why are You angry against the sheep of Your pasture? [2]Remember, we are the people You redeemed; You chose to give us an inheritance, You came to dwell in Mount Zion. [3]Now, walk through the destruction of Jerusalem; see how the enemy has destroyed Your sanctuary. [4]Your enemies claimed victory in the place You met with us, they took over the place where You once dwelt. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [5]They cut down Your holy place with axes like it was a grove of trees. [6]They smashed the beautiful carved fixtures with their axes and battle hammers. [7]They burned Your sanctuary with fire then defiled the place where Your name dwells. [8]They said inwardly, "Let's completely destroy this place." They have destroyed every other place You are worshiped in the land. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}

[9]Lord, where are Your miracles; don't You have any prophets left? We don't know what to do. [10]Lord, how long will the enemy mock You; will You allow them to embarrass You forever? [11]Why are You holding back Your hand of judgment? Why don't You destroy them? {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [12]You, O God, have always been King; You bring salvation to the earth. [13]You divided the Red Sea by Your power; You smashed the sea creatures' heads. [14]You crushed the heads of the Leviathan and let the other animals eat him. [15]You gave Your people water from the rock; You held back the mighty Jordan River. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [16]The day is Yours, as well as the night; You created light and gave us the sun. [17]You established the boundaries of the earth; You make both summer and winter. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

[18]Look at how Your enemy mocks You; these foolish people blaspheme Your name. [19]Do not let innocent doves be devoured by beasts; don't let Your persecuted people be eaten alive. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [20]Remember the covenant You made with Your people because dark times and violence threaten us. [21]Don't let us retreat in shame. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} The poor and needy want to praise Your name.

[22]O God, get up to defend Your cause because these fools are mocking You. [23]You

can't ignore the threats of Your enemies; their defiance is getting louder and louder. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

Asaph fled with David into the wilderness when Saul chased them everywhere to kill David. Asaph prayed deeply because he felt God had rejected them. Lord, when my enemy shouts in victory, I feel rejected. When Your enemy attacks Christianity, and makes fun of the symbols of salvation, I too feel defeated. Why do You hold back Your power to punish my enemies? You've done good miracles in the past; do them again. Amen.

Psalm 75

A Prayer that Recognizes God's Punishment of the Wicked and His Protection of the Humble

[1]I give You thanks, O God; I am thankful that You are near to tell about Your wonderful works.
[2]You will receive the people; You will judge the people correctly. [3]When the earthquakes destroy all human order, You will hold everything together. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} Selah!
[4]You warned the arrogant to stop boasting; You told the wicked to stop sinning. [5]You told the proud to be humble and not stiffen their necks toward You. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[6]Because personal promotion doesn't come from the east or west, nor does it come from the south; [7]but it is You who knows the heart. You bring one person down but exalt another. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [8]In Your hand is a cup of judgment; it is seething with punishment. You pour it out on everyone, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} but the wicked must drink the last terrible dregs.
[9]As for me, I will tell everyone what You have done; I will sing praises to You, O God. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[10]You will cut off the boasting of the wicked, but the godly will be exalted.

Lord, You have promised to punish the evil ones; do it fairly. You have promised to be merciful to those who call on Your name; remember them in mercy. Lord, You are my God. Don't look on my sins; they are covered by Jesus' death. And the righteousness of Jesus is on me. I ask for fairness when You judge me. Amen.

Psalm 76

A Prayer of Praise to God Because He Judges Rebellion

[1]God, Your name is known across Judah; Your name is greatly respected throughout Israel. [2]Your tent is pitched in peace; You live in Mount Zion. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [3]There You stopped the attacks against us; we no longer needed our defense. Selah!
[4]You are more glorious than light; You are more excellent than the mountains. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [5]The strong warriors have been killed; they

sleep their final sleep. Not one can lift his hand in war. [6]At Your rebuke, O God of Jacob, all the dangers of war are stilled. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
[7]You are the only One to be feared; no one can stand before Your anger. [8]You announced the verdict from heaven; the land heard it quietly in awe {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [9]because You arose in judgment to save all those who trusted You. Selah!
[10]Then You will be praised because of men's rebellious anger because Your greater anger against them will be unrestrained.
[11]I will fulfill the vows I make to You, O Lord God; accept the gifts that we all bring to You. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[12]I know You will crush the rebellion of rulers; they will all fear Your terrible judgment. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, You win battles through me; it's not by my strength or wisdom. Do Your will through me, use me as Your servant. But in the end You win the battles. I praise You for victory. Amen.

Psalm 77

A Prayer for Deliverance

[1]I cried to You for help, O God; I begged for You to listen to my prayers.
[2]I sought You, O Lord, in my day of trouble; I couldn't sleep at night and I couldn't be comforted. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [3]When I remembered what You could do, my spirit was overwhelmed with agony. Selah!
[4]I couldn't sleep at night because of my trouble; I was too concerned to pray. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [5]I thought back to the way You did things; how You always helped Your people. [6]I remembered when I sang in the night; how I meditated on Your presence, {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[7]Why have You cast me away? Will You ever come back to me again? [8]Is Your mercy completely exhausted? Will You keep Your promise again? [9]Have You forgotten how to be gracious? Has Your anger shut up Your mercy? Selah! {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[10]Then I concluded that I was getting what I deserved, but I will remember the years Your right hand helped me. [11]I will remember all the miracles You did in the past, {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9}
[12]I will meditate on all Your works. [13]You still live in Your sanctuary, O God; no man-made god is as great as You. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [14]You are the God who does miracles; You have shown Your strength among Your people; [15]You have redeemed Your people, the sons of Jacob and Joseph. Selah! {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
[16]The Red Sea trembled before You, O God; it was ready to obey Your command. [17]The rain clouds poured on our enemies; [18]the thunder roared and the lightning flashed. Your judgment was heard in the whirlwind; You lit up the night with lightning. The ground shook with an earthquake. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [19]You led Your

people through the Red Sea, although no one saw Your footprints. [20]You led Your people like a flock; You led by the hand of Moses and Aaron. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Sometimes I get discouraged, or I'm tempted to give up. Then I remember Your past mercy to me, and I determine not to give up. I think back to Your past miracles, and the times You delivered me from danger. It's then I'm encouraged, it's then I'm ready to fight again, and to sacrifice everything for a victory. Amen.

Psalm 78

A Prayer that Recognizes God's Faithfulness in the Face of Israel's Unfaithfulness

[1]Lord, I want the people to listen to Your teaching so they can hear what You're saying. [2]For You speak to them in parables; You communicate by hidden ways from the past. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [3]What we have heard and known, the lessons our fathers have told me.
[4]We will not hide them from our children; we will tell the generations to come about the praises due to You, O Lord, because of the glorious deeds You have done.
[5]You establish the testimony of Jacob and You decreed the law for Israel. Then You commanded our forefathers to teach it to their children, [6]so the coming generations would know the law, even their children not yet born. So they in turn would tell their children [7]with the result that they would trust You, O God. That coming generations would not forget Your works but keep the commands You have given [8]so they would not be like their forefathers who were a stubborn and rebellious generation who refused to yield their hearts to You;whose spirits did not want to obey You. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[9]The men of Ephraim had superior armament but retreated in the day of battle. [10]They did not keep their covenant with You and refused to walk in Your law. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
[11]They forgot what You had done for them and the miracles by which You delivered them.
[12]You did marvelous things in the presence of their fathers in the land of Egypt and in the land of Zoan. [13]You divided the Red Sea for them to escape; You held the waters back like a wall. [14]You guided them with a cloud by day and a pillar of fire at night. [15]You split the rock in the desert to give them abundant water. [16]You brought a stream of water out of the rock, causing water to run down like a river. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
[17]But our forefathers sinned against You, rebelling in the wilderness against You, the Most High God. [18]The obstinate tested You, demanding meat to satisfy their lust. [19]They asked in unbelief, "Can God spread a table in the wilderness?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
[20]When Moses struck the rock, a stream of water gushed out. But they in unbelief

doubted if You could feed them, doubting if You could supply food.
21You were very angry when You heard them; a consuming fire broke out against them {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 22for they did not believe You could provide for them, nor did they trust You to deliver them. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 23You commanded the skies to open 24and You rained down manna for them to eat; it was the corn of heaven. 25They ate the food of angels; they had all the food they wanted.
26You sent a strong east wind, and then You directed a mighty wind from the south.
27You blew food on them like a sandstorm; flying birds were like sand on a seashore. 28The birds flew in low through their tents; they landed all around their tents. 29Our forefathers ate until they were filled; You gave them all they desired. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 30But even when the food You supplied was in their mouth, they were lusting for more. 31Your wrath was unleashed against them; You put to death the strongest and best. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
32And they still kept on sinning in spite of Your miracles. They wouldn't trust You 33so they died needlessly in the wilderness; they lived in constant terror.
34Whenever You judged some of them, those who were left would eagerly turn to You. 35They remembered that You were their Rock, that the Most High God was their Redeemer. 36They flattered You with their lips, but they were lying in their hearts. 37Because their hearts were rebellious toward You, they did not intend to keep their covenant with You. 38Yet You were merciful toward them, You held back Your anger. 39You remembered that they were just human; they're just a breeze that's quickly gone. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 40They often provoked You in the desert; they grieved You during the 40 years in the wilderness. 41They constantly rebelled against You, continually frustrating You, the Holy One of Israel. 42They forgot what You did for them. They didn't remember how You delivered them 43by the mighty miracles in Egypt {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15} or the wonders against pharaoh in Zoan. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 44You turned Egypt's streams into blood; no one could drink from them. 45You sent swarms of flies among them and frogs that frustrated them. 46You sent grasshoppers to eat their crops and locusts devoured all they grew. 47You sent sleet to destroy their vines and hail to ruin the sycamore figs. 48Also their cattle died in the hail and lightning killed their livestock. 49You released Your anger against them, sending a band of destroying angels among them. 50You made a way to express Your anger; You did not spare them from death. 51You killed the firstborn in every family, the oldest male child of every Egyptian family died. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 52Then You led Your own people out of Egypt, guiding them safely into the desert. 53Your people were safe as You led them, but their enemies were drowned in the Red Sea. 54You brought them to the border of the Promised Land; You gave them the hill country as their own. 55You drove out the pagans

before them and divided the land to them as an inheritance. You settled each tribe into its home. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
56But they refused to obey You, the Most High God; they refused to keep Your commands. 57Like their fathers, they were faithless and rebellious; they were as unreliable as a faulty weapon. 58They made hilltop shrines to worship other gods; they angered You with their man-made idols. 59When You saw this, You were again angry; You completely rejected them. 60You withdrew from the tabernacle in Shiloh, the tent where You had met with Your people. 61You allowed the enemy to defeat Your people; Your glorious warriors were killed. 62 You gave Your people to the sword and allowed them to be captured because You were angry with Your inheritance. 63The fire consumed the young men, and the young women did not marry. 64The priests were killed by the sword and the widows did not grieve for them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
65Then You awoke, as it was from Your sleep, as a man awakens from a deep sleep. 66You routed the enemies and they retreated; You put them away forever.
67You didn't bring the Deliverer from the tent of Joseph, nor did You choose the tent of Ephraim, 68but You chose the tribe of Judah. You chose Mount Zion to be Your home. 69You put Your sanctuary there among the hilltop shrines; You chose that place among all the places on earth. 70You chose David to be Your leader; 71You brought him from leading sheep to be the shepherd of Your people. 72And David will lead Israel with the integrity of his heart and guide them by the skillfulness of his hands. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

Lord, You did many miracles to redeem Your people. Even when You were faithful to them, they were not faithful to You. You were faithful to Your righteousness to punish them, and they cried out in repentance, and You were merciful to them. But even in their repentance, they had no faith in You. Despite Your miracles, they did not believe You (78:32). Lord, remember we are only human (78:39). May I learn Your past mercies and serve You today. May I serve You in the way I pray for children to worship You. Amen.

Psalm 79

A Prayer for God to Punish Those Who Persecute Israel

1O God, the pagan nations have conquered Your inheritance; they have defiled Your holy temple; they have made Jerusalem a trash heap. 2They have left the dead bodies of Your followers for the birds to eat; the scavenger animals are eating them. 3Their blood flowed around Jerusalem and there was none to bury them. 4Our neighbors are making fun of us; Your people are being scorned. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}
5Lord, how long will You be angry with Your people? Will Your jealousy burn forever? 6Pour out Your wrath on the

nations that reject You and on the people who refuse to call on You, [7]for they have devoured Israel and destroyed Your homeland.

[8]Do not hold the sins of our fathers against us; come quickly to deliver us, because we need Your help now. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]Help us, O God our Savior, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and bring glory to Your name. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Forgive us our sins and deliver us for the sake of Your name. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [10]Why should the pagan nations boast, "Where is their God?" Pour out Your vengeance on them because they poured out the blood of Your servants. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

[11]Listen to the groans of the prisoners; save them before they die. [12]Retaliate against our enemies seven times, giving them the misery they have caused us.

[13]We are Your people, the sheep of Your pasture; we will thank and praise You forever. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

Lord, my nation is weak and suffering. Evil has captured many people; multitudes are in the bondage of sin. We, Your people, are laughed at by those who hate You. Deliver us for the glory of Your name. Let evil people know Your power. Deliver us for Your glory, not necessarily for our relief. Amen.

Psalm 80

A Prayer for God to Deliver the Rebellious People of Israel

[1]Listen to us, O Shepherd of Israel; You lead the sons of Joseph like a flock. You are enthroned between the winged creatures; shine forth. [2]Stir up Your strength before Ephraim, Benjamin, and Manasseh; come and save us. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

[3]Turn us around, O God; shine Your face on us to save us.

[4]O Lord God of the angels, how long will You be angry against our prayers? [5]We are eating the bread of anguish and we are drinking tears. [6]We are trouble to our neighbors; our enemies laugh at us. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15}

[7]Turn us around, O God of angels; shine Your face on us to save us.

[8]We were the cutting of a vine; You brought us out of Egypt. [9]You drove the pagan out of the Promised Land; then planted us there. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]You cleared the ground so we could grow; we took root and thrived. The mountains were covered by our cool shade; our branches reached out like gigantic trees. [11]We reached out to the seas; then we extended our rule to the rivers. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

[12]Why did You take away our protective wall so strangers could pick our fruit? [13]Pigs are rooting up our vine; wild animals are eating up our leaves.

[14]Come back to us, O God of the angels; look down from heaven on us. Come

protect this vine. [15]Come back to the vineyard You planted; send the Son who is Your Deliverer. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [16]You have trimmed the vine and thrown it into the fire; Your people are dying under Your punishment. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [17]Send the man who sits on Your right hand, the son of man who is strong to deliver. [18]Then we will not turn away from You; restore us so we can call on Your name.
[19]Turn us around, O Lord God of the angels; shine Your face upon us to save us. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Lord, You gave the Holy Land to Your people, the Jews. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} Because they sinned, You scattered them among the nations. You've promised to bring them back one day (Ezek. 37). Lord, do it in Your time. Complete Your plan for the land of Israel and Jerusalem. Amen.

Psalm 81
A Prayer of Grateful Worship

[1]I sing loudly to You, O God my strength; I shout praises to You, O God of Jacob. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [2]I sing a hymn and play the tambourine; I play praise choruses to You on the guitar. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
[3]I blow the trumpet in celebration and I confess my sin in the solemn assembly. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [4]This is the right way for me to worship; this is the way I fulfill Your law O God. [5]You directed Israel to worship this way when You brought us out of Egypt where we heard a language we didn't understand.
[6]You took the burden from our shoulder; You freed us from their flesh pots. [7]We called out to You in our distress and You answered us from the dark cloud. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Then You tested us at the waters of Meribah. Selah!
[8]You called out to warn us; You wanted us to listen to You. [9]You commanded us not to possess foreign idols, nor should we worship any strange gods. [10]You are the Lord our God who brought us up out of Egypt. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
You promised to fill our lives if we would just open ourselves up to You. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}
[11]But we would not listen to Your voice and we would not yield to Your leadership. [12]So You gave us over to our sinful hearts; You let us make our own decisions.
[13]If we would have just listened to You and obeyed Your principles, [14]You would have defeated our enemies and strengthened our hand against our foes.
[15]Those who hate You would have feared You because You would have punished them. [16]You would have fed us with the best food and satisfied us with honey from the rock. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

Lord, I sing a joyful song of praise to You for deliverance from Egypt. I sing a sad song about Your punishment when Your people

rejected You and turned to idols. I sing a song of expectation that You will restore Your people when they turn again their hearts to You. Amen.

Psalm 82

A Plea for God to Set All Things Right

[1]O God, You stand in heaven's court room;
You can correctly evaluate the gods. [2]How
long will You withhold judgment and let
the wicked continue living? {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Selah! [3]Defend
the poor and the fatherless; protect the
afflicted and needy. [4]Deliver them in their
time of affliction and from the clutches of
the wicked.
[5]They don't know what's happening; they
walk blindly in darkness because the foundation of the earth is out of whack.
[6]I told them, "You all belong to God; You
are all the children of the Most High."
[7]Because they will not listen, they will die
as all others and be buried as are the powerful rulers.
[8]Come, O God, judge all people, because
all people are Your inheritance. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

Lord, You are in charge of all things, and one day You will judge all people. I know You will do right. Many people don't know Your power, but they will know when You judge them. Amen.

Psalm 83

A Prayer for God to Destroy His Enemies and Rule the Earth

[1]O God, do not keep quiet and still. Why
are You so silent? [2]Your enemies are causing trouble; they that hate You are threatening us. [3]They have conspired against
us; they devise evil against Your chosen
ones. [4]They boast that they can destroy
us, that the nation of Israel will not be
remembered.
[5]They all plan together against You; they
join together to destroy Your influence.
[6]The people of Edom, Ishmael, Moab, and
the Hagarites, [7]join with Gebal, Ammon,
Amalek, and Philistia. [8]They have
joined together with Tyre and Assyria to
strengthen the sons of Lot. Selah! {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[9]Defeat them as You did the Midianites, as
You defeated Sisera and Jabin at Kishon.
[10]May they die today as they died at Endor;
they became as fertilizer on the ground.
[11]Make their leaders like Oreb and Zeeb,
as You destroyed Zebah and Zalmunna.
[12]They boasted they would capture Your
Sanctuary as their belongings. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
[13]O God, make Your enemies like weeds,
as chaff which the wind blows away.
[14]Consume them like fire burns wood, like
the forest fires consume the mountains.
[15]So punish them with Your terror; beat
on them with Your storm. [16]Humiliate all
their endeavors so that they will seek Your
name, O Lord. [17]Confuse everything they
do so that they will forever be tormented.
[18]Make them realize that Your name is

Jehovah, that You alone rule as the Most High over the earth. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, You love the Jews; they are Your people. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} Destroy those who hate the Jews, for they hate You in their hearts. Amen.

Psalm 84

A Prayer to Enjoy God's Presence in His House

[1]Lord, I enjoy coming into Your presence in the tabernacle, O Lord of Hosts. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [2]I have such a deep passion for the courts of Your presence that my flesh cries out when I'm not there. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}
[3]Lord, the sparrows are so comfortable in Your presence that they make their nest within sight of Your altar. I also want to rest near Your presence because You are my King and my God. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [4]Lord, bless those who stay in Your house because they worship and praise You. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Selah! [5]Lord, bless those who realize their strength is in You because Your principles are in their heart.
[6]Lord, they come to You through a valley of weeping; they fill pools with their tears. {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6}

Valleys are threatening places where vicious animals and robbers hide to attack us. We lose our way in valleys of life and there are box canyons where we can get lost. There are dangerous cliffs and pits into which we fall. So the psalmist said when "passing through the valley of Baca [weeping] make it a well" (84:6, KJV). We are to dig a well in difficult places for life-giving water. Also, enjoyable water refreshes our spirit and gives us a desire to go on through a treacherous valley. Lord, I will dig a well of water when facing danger or disappointment. I will not give up; I will renew my strength with water from Your presence. I will refresh my discouragement with Your satisfaction. Ah... Your water is invigorating! Amen.

[7]Lord, they continue climbing from strength to strength in their endeavor to find Your peace. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
[8]O LORD God of hosts, hear my prayer, listen when I cry, O God of Jacob. Selah! {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}
[9]Lord God, my desire is to know You and to look into Your face. Selah! {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10}
[10]For one day in the courts of Your presence is better than a thousand days anywhere else. I would rather be a doorkeeper in Your house than live sumptuously in the tents of wickedness. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [11]Lord, You shine warmth on my life like the sun; You protect me like a shield. You will not withhold any good thing from me if I walk uprightly. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}
[12]Blessed are those who trust in You.

But don't forget to leave a well for others who are lost or hurting. Let them get water from the well you've dug. Think and pray for others when digging your well. Your prayer energy may help a thirsty soul. Lord, I will dig a well of water for times when I'm thirsty; but I will also leave behind a well for others. I pray for others who need what I need. I pray that others may find satisfaction in You. Amen.

Psalm 85

A Prayer for Revival

[1]O Lord, You have shown favor to Your land; You brought back Jacob from captivity. [2]You forgave the iniquity of Your people and covered all their sins. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} Selah! [3]You are no longer angry at us; You have turned aside Your wrath.

[4]Turn us to You, O God our Savior, and stop punishing us. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [5]Will You be angry with us forever? Will You always continue punishing us? [6]Revive our spirits, O God, that we may rejoice in You. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} [7]Show us Your mercy, O Lord, and save us from our troubles.

[8]I will listen to what You say, and {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} to Your promises of peace for Your people. Lord, don't let us return to folly. [9]You will surely save those who fear You so Your glory can live in the land. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[10]Then mercy and truth will meet each other; righteousness and peace will kiss. [11]Truth will be found in the earth and righteousness will look down from heaven. [12]You will give us what is good, O Lord; and we will prosper in this land. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [13]Righteousness will go before You to prepare all the ways that You go.

Revival means a return to life, or if someone faints, the return to consciousness. When we lose our first love (Rev. 2:5), we need to be revived. When we lose our awareness of God and spiritual matters, we need to be revived. Lord, revive my heart; I want to be fully alive to spiritual things. Amen.

Psalm 86

A Prayer for Help in the Face of Danger

[1]O Lord, bend down low to hear me for I am poor and needy. [2]Protect my soul, for I am separated from You; save me because I am Your servant. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [3]O God, have mercy on me for I pray to You all the time. [4]Give me joy, O Lord for I lift my soul to You. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [5]You are a forgiving and good Lord; You give mercy to all who call on You.

[6]Listen to my prayer, O Lord, and hear what I am saying to You. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [7]In my day of trouble I call on You because You will

answer and do something for me. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}
[8]There is none like You among the earthly gods; they cannot do the works that You do. [9]You have made all the different ethnic groups of people; they will come before You to worship and bring glory to Your name. [10]For You are great and do awesome works; You alone are God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[11]O Lord, teach me the way I should walk and I will follow Your truth. Give me a focused heart so I will fear Your name. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} [12]I will praise You with my whole heart, O Lord my God; I will glorify Your name forever. [13]For Your mercy is great to me; {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} You have delivered me from the lowest hell.
[14]The boastful are coming to attack me; they are violent men who want to destroy me. They do not honor You. [15]But You, Lord, are a compassionate God; You are patient with abundant love and kindness.
[16]Come to me in mercy and give me strength; save the son of Your handmaid. [17]Show me a sign that You are with me; confuse my enemies then help and comfort me, O Lord. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

When we are in trouble, we can call on God for help because (1) He loves us; (2) He has compassion on those in trouble; (3) Our cry for help demonstrates faith and trust in Him; and (4) God is glorified when we become victorious over problems. Lord, help me when I can't help myself, and even help me when I don't realize I need help. Be glorified when You help me out of problems. Amen.

Psalm 87
Geographical Praying

[1]You established a firm foundation on Your holy mountain. You love the gates of Zion [2]more than all the houses of Judah, O God; [3]glorious things are spoken of Your city. Zion is Your city, O God. Selah! {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}
[4]Those from Rahab and Babylon take notice along with those from Philistia, Tyre, and Cush, that I was born in Jerusalem.
[5]Even in Zion they will recognize that I was born in Jerusalem. Jerusalem is the city of the Most High; He will establish it forever. [6]Even You, Lord, register those people who were born in Zion. Selah! {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}
[7]The singers and musicians praise You, O Lord; all my life is dedicated to You. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

There are many places on this earth that the Lord seems to love, because He manifests His presence there. Jerusalem is specifically mentioned in Psalm 87, but God shows Himself on Mount Sinai, and Jesus often went to the Garden of Gethsemane to pray. Lord, I love to pray where I know Your presence will be

felt. But it's not a feeling I seek, but Your presence and Your intimacy. Amen.

Psalm 88

A Prayer When Punished

[1]I have cried out to You day and night; save me, O Lord God. [2]Receive my prayer into Your presence; listen to the request I am making. [3]I have all kinds of troubles; they are continually trying to kill me. [4]People treat me like I'm already dead, as if I have no strength left. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [5]They abandoned me like a corpse, like someone who is not here and gone out of their sight forever. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[6]Have You put me into this hole, into this dark night? [7]I feel Your anger punishing me, coming one wave of pain after another. Selah! [8]You have taken away my friends; now they all hate me. I'm in a hole and can't get out. [9]I am blinded by my tears; each day I call out to You; I lift my hands pleading for help. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
[10]Will You show the miracles You do for the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} because the dead can rise again to praise You? Selah! [11]Shall Your kindness extend to those in a hole because You are faithful even in punishment? [12]Can You show Your wonders to those in dark places because You never forget those who are forgotten? {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}
[13]I cried to You for help, O Lord; every morning I pray again to You. [14]Why do You not hear me and hide Your face from me? {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [15]I hurt all over and am ready to die. I can't stand Your punishment any longer. [16]Your fierce anger has overwhelmed me, I am cut to the bone. [17]All day long my sin haunts my memory; I am completely overwhelmed with fear. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [18]You have taken away my friends and relatives and darkness is my only companion.

The psalmist is facing death, and cries out to God for deliverance. He doesn't want to die, and he prays for renewed life. We should remember (1) there is a time to die and we should pray for God to deliver us (Luke 23:46); (2) there is a time to die and we should prepare ourselves spiritually for death (Ps. 23:4); and (3) there is a time to fight death and pray for continued life. Lord, I don't like to think about my death. Protect me and keep me alive until it's Your time to bring me home. Amen.

Psalm 89

A Prayer for Claiming God's Promises

[1]Lord, I will continually sing of Your mercies; I will make known Your faithfulness forever. All generations will hear it from my mouth. [2]I will testify that Your mercy stands forever, that Your faithfulness is as

firm as heaven itself. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}
3You made a covenant with Your chosen one; You swore an oath with David Your servant. 4You promised to establish his family lineage forever; You promised to give the throne of Israel to him. Selah! {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
5The heavens praise You, O Lord; Your faithfulness is revealed where angels gather. 6No one in the heavens compares with You, O Lord; none of the mighty angels is likened unto You. 7You are greatly feared among the angelic beings; You are more awesome than all those about Your throne. 8O Lord God of the Angels, who is likened unto You? {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} Your faithfulness is seen in all You do. 9You rule the raging sea; when the storms blow, You still them. 10You destroy the great sea monsters; You scatter Your enemies with a strong arm.
11The heavens are Yours, so is the earth; You established the universe and everything in it. 12You made the north where it is, and the south; Mount Tabor and Hermon praise Your name. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 13You have a powerful arm and a mighty hand; You lift Your right hand in victory. 14Your rule is characterized by righteousness and justice; mercy and truth come from You. 15Lord, bless those who sing joyfully to You; who walk in the light of Your countenance.
16They rejoice in Your name all day long; therefore You accept them. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 17You are their glory and strength and You exalt them with Your anointing. 18For You defend us from the evil one; You are our King, the Holy One of Israel. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 19You spoke in a vision to Your people, telling them Your strength was upon a warrior. You lifted up a young man from among Your people. 20You chose David as Your servant; You anointed him with oil to follow You. 21You promised to strengthen him with Your hand; You established him with Your arm. 22No enemy will make him pay tribute; no wicked one will defeat him. 23You will destroy his enemies before him and punish those who hate him.
24You will faithfully be with him and Your name will be exalted by him. 25You will give him the rule of the sea and his right hand over the rivers. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 26David will call out to You as his God, calling You his Father and the Rock of his salvation. 27You will appoint him as Your first-born, higher than any king on earth. 28You will maintain Your love to him forever; You will always keep the covenant You made with him.
29You have established his genealogy forever; his throne will endure as long as heaven exists. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
30If the children of David forsake Your law and not obey Your commands; 31if they violate Your directions and do not keep Your rules, 32then You will punish their disobedience, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and You will correct their rebellious ways. 33But You will never stop loving them, nor will You turn Your back on them. 34You will not deny the promise You made to them; You will always keep Your

Word. [35]You only had to give Your Word once; You will not lie to David. [36]You will bless his line forever; he will always rule for You. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [37]It will be established forever like the sun and moon, Your faithful witnesses in the sky. Selah!
[38]But You had to reject the covenant You made. Why did You get angry with Your people? [39]You turned Your back on Your covenant; You threw the crown of David to the ground. [40]You had to break down all their defenses; You have destroyed all their strongholds.
[41]The passing armies have plundered Israel; their neighbors laugh at Israel's weaknesses. [42]You strengthened Israel's enemies against her; You have let them become triumphant in battle. [43]You watched as Israel was weakened, then You saw Your people defeated in battle. [44]You let Israel's glory fade and You let her enemies terminate the rule of David's kingdom. [45]You cut short the days of his line; You gave him a robe of shame. Selah! {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[46]How long will You let Your people suffer? Will You continue to hide from us? Will Your anger burn forever? [47]Remember how short is our life, for You have created us with many limitations. [48]None of us can live and not die, {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} none of us can overcome the power of death. Selah!
[49]O Lord, where is Your former patient love that You pledged to David Your servant? [50]Look now, Lord, on the abuse we receive; we carry the insults of all Your enemies. [51]They mock us because they hate You; they reject the rule of David Your anointed.
[52]We bless You forever. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

This psalm expresses God's constant love and loyalty for David. Thus it is a messianic psalm because it expresses love to the Son of David, that is, Jesus Christ. The psalm is an indication of God's constant love and protection of those who are in the Messiah, that is, in Christ Jesus. Lord, I rest in Your love because it gives me confidence and assures me of answers to my prayer. Amen.

Psalm 90

A Prayer to Use the Time Allotted to You

[1]Lord, You have been our dwelling place throughout all the generations. [2]Before You created the mountains, even before You created the earth, even from everlasting to everlasting; You are God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[3]You determined that all people will die; You decreed that we would all return to dust. [4]A thousand years in Your sight is but yesterday that is gone; it's just a watch in the night. [5]You carry away our years like a flood, our life is like sleep after we awake. [6]Our life is like grass that springs up in the morning; we grow throughout the day; in the evening we are cut down, then we wither and die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
[7]Your anger can consume us; Your wrath brings us trouble. [8]You see all of our

disobediences; You shine Your light on our secret sins. 9When You are angry with us, our life passes away quickly. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10Our simple life does not amount to much, like a tale that someone tells. We live approximately threescore and ten years. Some reach the golden age of fourscore years but they have physical difficulties and pain; then their life is cut off and they fly away. 11No one knows when You are angry at them so we must always trust You in fear. 12So teach us to make each day count so that we can live wisely. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

13Return to bless us; don't be angry with us any longer. 14Show us mercy when we are young so we may rejoice all our lives. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} 15May we learn from the years You afflicted us and from the years we sinned against You. 16Help us understand Your works; show Your glory to our children. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 17O Lord God, let Your beauty be upon us; establish the work of our hands, {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12} yes, establish the work of our hands.

This is a prayer that recognizes how frail our life really is, and how delicate is the distance between death and life. We should pray (1) to use our remaining time wisely; (2) to keep ourselves strong; (3) to be ready for death at any moment; (4) yet be willing to live a long useful life; and (5) recognize the eternal God when we serve and give praise to Him for life itself. Lord, thank You for life this day, and thank You for an opportunity to continue serving You. Use me strongly until the day I die, and prepare me for death. Then bring me home to Yourself. Amen.

Psalm 91

A Prayer for Protection from Constant Dangers of Daily Life

1Lord, may I live in the secret place of Your presence. You are the owner of the universe, Most High God; I abide under Your protective shadows. O Almighty God, You are more than enough. 2Lord, I will rejoice in Your presence; {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} You are my protection and fortress; You are my God in whom I trust. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

3I know You will save me from all traps and from deadly diseases. 4You will cover me with Your wings; I will find refuge under Your protection; {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Your promises give me peace and security. 5I will not be afraid of the unseen terror by night, nor of the ever present dangers of the day, 6nor of the lurking plagues that threaten me, nor of the spreading epidemic around me. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

7A thousand may fall at my side and ten thousand may die around me; but these dangers will not come near me. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} 8I will observe with my eyes and will see the punishment of the wicked. 9I will make You, O Most High God, my protective refuge.

[10]And when You are my refuge, O Lord, then no harm can destroy me; and the epidemic plague will not touch me. [11]Because You will command Your angels to guard me in all ways, [12]they will protect me with their hands to keep me from falling. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [13]I can trample down lions and poisonous snakes; I will crush evil threats under my feet.
[14]Because I love You Lord, You will rescue me from danger. Because I know You by name, You will be with me in trouble. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [15]When I call on You for help, You will answer me. You will be with me. You will protect me and my honor. [16]You will give me long life and satisfy me with Your salvation. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}

God knows the dangers that threaten us, and He protects us because the follower of God is invincible until God is finished with him on this earth. Then God will bring His servant home to Himself through death. Therefore, God's servant should live in confident faith in God's protection. Lord, I trusted You for salvation; now I trust You for protection. Keep me safe until You've finished with me then bring me home to Yourself. Amen.

Psalm 92

Praise to God for Giving You Strength

[1]Lord, it is good to praise You; to sing to Your name, O Most High, [2]to show Your loving kindness in the morning and Your faithfulness in the evening, {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} [3]to praise You with stringed instruments by playing music upon the harp. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} [4]Lord, I rejoice in the things You do; I sing for joy because of what You have done.
[5]O Lord, how great are Your works; Your thoughts are very deep. [6]The ignorant people do not know You; the foolish ones cannot understand You. [7]Even though they grow like weeds, and those that rebel against You flourish, they will be forever destroyed.
[8]But You, Lord, are exalted forever. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [9]Surely, O Lord, Your enemies are targeted; surely Your enemies will perish; those who are passionate for evil will be scattered. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
[10]You have exalted my strength like an ox; You have anointed me with fresh oil. [11]Mine eyes have seen the defeat of Your enemies; mine ears have heard their destruction. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[12]The righteous will flourish like a palm tree; they will grow like the cedars of Lebanon. [13]They that are planted in Your house will flourish in Your courts, O Lord. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [14]They will bear fruit in their old age; they will stay fruitful and green. [15]Their life will testify that You are just. You are our Rock; You are always good to Your people. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

The goodness of God is His nature that disposes Him to be protective, kind, and merciful. We should learn what children pray, "God is great, God is good, let us thank Him for our food." God's nature is good and He chooses to act in good ways toward us. Lord, I magnify Your goodness; help me understand how good You really are. Thank You for Your goodness to me; help me see all You do for me. Amen.

Psalm 93

A Prayer to Recognize God's Majesty

[1]O Lord, You reign over all the earth; You are robed in majesty, You are clothed in power. [2]You have established the world and it cannot be moved; {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} You established Your throne from eternity.
[3]The seas have roared, O Lord; the seas have lifted up their voice; their pounding waves crash on the shore. [4]But You, Lord on High, are mightier, more powerful than the flood, more powerful than the waves of the sea.
[5]Your laws cannot be broken; Your rule is holy; {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} You will reign for endless days.

The word "majesty" means regal, lofty, stately or dignified. It also means supreme authority or sovereignty. In one sense God is as intimate as a father holding a child on His lap, yet God is the supreme ruler of the universe of mankind. Lord, I know to recognize Your sovereignty and rulership of all things including my life. Amen.

Psalm 94

A Prayer for Patience until God Judges Your Oppressors

[1]O Lord God, I know You avenge; O God, come and avenge now. [2]Rise up, Thou Judge of the earth, punish the proud as they deserve. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]How long will the wicked get by, O Lord? How long will they gloat over us?
[4]Do You hear them boasting over us? The evil workers brag about their evil. [5]They crush Your people, O Lord, stomping the life out of Your heirs. [6]They kill widows, foreigners, and orphans, saying the Lord does not see and the God of Jacob doesn't care. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}
[8]Lord, make the fools understand, make them understand what You will do. [9]You make the ear; can You not hear? You created eyes; shall You not see? [10]You give us knowledge, do You not know? You judge the nations, will You not punish them?
[11]Lord, You know the thoughts of all people; You know they have no reason for what they do. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[12]O Lord, those You correct are blessed because You teach them Your love. [13]You will give them peace in the day of trouble until the wicked dig a pit and fall into it. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer,

Ps. 94:23} [14]You will not reject Your people, neither will You abandon Your heirs. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [15]When judgment falls on Your righteous people, then the upright in heart will be revealed.

[16]Who will testify for me against the evildoers, who will stand with me against the wicked? [17]Unless You help me, O Lord, I would have no defense in judgment. [18]When I realized my foot was slipping, Your faithfulness helped me up. [19]When I was overwhelmed with anxiety, Your comfort gave me peace and joy. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

[20]Those ungodly oppressors claim You're on their side, but their rule is based on wickedness. [21]They attack those who live by Your laws and kill innocent people who have not hurt them. [22]But You Lord are my defense, {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} You are a mighty rock where I can hide. [23]You will punish them with the death they plan for others; You will destroy them for their sin; O Lord, my God, You will destroy them. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

This is an imprecatory psalm in which the psalmist prays for judgment on the evil of evil people. While the psalmist realizes God is delaying judgment (v. 13), he knows payday is coming some day. Lord, I know You will judge all sinners eventually, but while You tarry, I pray for the salvation of all people before they face You in judgment. Amen.

Psalm 95

A Prayer of Praise to God and Warning to the Wicked

[1]I come singing to You, Lord; I shout joyfully to You, the Rock of my salvation. [2]I come into Your presence giving thanks; I shout the psalms joyfully to You [3]for You are my great God, the great King above earthly gods. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [4]You hold the deep places of the earth in Your hands. You own the tops of the hills. [5]You made the sea and it is Yours and You created all dry ground. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

[6]I come bowing down to worship You; I kneel before You, my Creator. [7]For You are my God and I am like Your sheep; I am like the people of Your pasture. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

[8]Today, those who hear Your voice should not provoke You by hardening their hearts as Israel did when tempted in the wilderness. [9]The leaders of Israel saw Your miracles, but tempted You during their wanderings. [10]For 40 years You were grieved with that generation, because they were rebellious in heart; they did not know Your ways. [11]You determined to judge them, not allowing them to enter the Promised Land. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Psalm 96

A Prayer to Glorify God

[1]I sing a new song to You, Lord; the whole earth is singing to You. [2]I sing to bless Your name and tell Your salvation from day

to day. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 3I declare Your glory to the unsaved and tell them everything You do.
4For You, Lord, are great in the earth, You must be praised greatly, You must be feared more than other gods. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

There are many ways to sing our prayers to God (see your hymn book). There are songs of thanksgiving, gratitude, praise, magnification, and worship. Sometimes music expresses the depth of our hearts when simple words are not enough. Lord, I sing to You from the bottom of my heart. Amen.

5The gods of the unsaved are idols, but You created the heavens. 6Honor and majesty belong to You; strength and beauty are in Your sanctuary.
7All people must give glory to You, Lord; all must give You glory and strength. 8They must give You glory that is due to You and bring sacrifice when they enter Your presence. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 9I worship You, Lord, in the beauty of Your holiness; {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} all the unsaved should fear You.
10I tell the unsaved that You reign; no one can move the earth that You established. You will correctly judge each person.
11The heavens rejoice and the earth is glad; the sea waves roar at Your command. 12The fields give forth Your goodness; the forest rejoices in Your care. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 13You are coming to judge all things; You will correctly judge the world, You will reward people according to truth.

Lord, I glorify You for my salvation. I know the depths of my sin and realize the glorious heights of Your loving-kindness. Amen.

Psalm 97

A Prayer of Rejoicing that Recognizes the Future Reign of the Lord

1O Lord, You reign. Let the earth rejoice; let the distant shores be glad.
2You are surrounded by a cloud of thick darkness; Your throne is built on righteousness and justice. 3Your attributes are a purifying fire to consume everything that opposes You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 4You reveal Yourself like flashes of lightning so everyone can see Your holiness and tremble. 5The mountains melt like wax before You because You are the Lord of the earth. 6The heavens reveal Your righteousness; everyone sees Your glory.
7Those who worship idols will be ashamed; those who glory in their idols will recognize Your majestic glory. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 8Zion will hear and be glad, also the cities of Judah will rejoice because You will judge correctly. 9For You, Lord, are Most High over the earth; You are exalted over all the false gods.
10Lord, may those who love You, hate evil; guard those who are faithful to You, deliver them from the evil one. {387

Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [11]Shine Your light on the godly and Your blessings on those who do right. [12]Lord, may Your people rejoice in You and praise Your holy name.

The psalmist cries out, "For You, LORD, are most high above all the earth" (v. 9, NKJV). What is our response? "Praise!" Lord, I recognize all Your great power manifested in so many ways, and I worship You. Amen.

Psalm 98

Singing a New Song to God

[1]I sing a new song to You, Lord, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} for You have done marvelous things. Your right hand and Your holy arm have saved me. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [2]You have made Your salvation known and shown it to the nations. [3]You have remembered Your mercy and faithfulness to Israel. Everyone in all places of the earth knows about Your salvation.

[4]Everyone joyfully shouts Your praise; {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} they break into worship music to praise You. [5]Everyone sings unto You with the harp; everyone offers praise unto You with singing. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [6]Everyone shouts for joy to You; sound the trumpets and blow the horns.

[7]Let the sea praise You with its roar; let the earth and everyone join together [8]with the rivers to applaud You as the hills join with them in Your praise. [9]For You are coming to judge the earth; You will make everything right. You will judge people fairly. *{93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}*

We shouldn't sing the old songs when God gives us new songs to sing in praise to Him. The old song is what God did yesterday; the new song is what God is doing now. God gives us constant victory (v. 1). God constantly reminds us of His salvation (v. 2). God shows us His faithfulness (v. 3) and He reminds us of His mercy (v. 3). But most of all, God reminds of His faithfulness to us today (v. 3). Lord, I love praising You today for the things You are doing now in my life. I love today, because I've got another day to praise You. Amen.

Psalm 99

Praise for God's Past Faithfulness

[1]Lord, let the nations tremble. You reign in heaven and You sit between the winged creatures; let the earth shake. [2]Lord, You are great in Zion; You are exalted over everyone. [3]Let everyone praise Your great and awesome name, for You are holy. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30}

[4]Mighty King, You love justice; You created fairness. In Jacob You have established justice and righteousness. [5]O God, I exalt You as my Lord; I worship at Your feet, for You are holy. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[6]Moses and Aaron were Your priests; Samuel also interceded to You. They called on Your name, and You answered them. [7]You

spoke to them from the Shekinah glory cloud. They followed Your principles and they kept the laws You gave them. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

[8]O Lord, my God, You answered them and You forgave them when they confessed, but You punished them when they rebelled. [9]O Lord, my God, I exalt You and worship in Your holy mountain O Lord, my God, You are holy. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

This psalm reminds us of God's past faithfulness. God is powerful (v. 2) and He will do right (v. 4). God will answer our prayers (v. 6) and forgive our sins (v. 8). In His faithfulness, God does good things for His people, but because God is faithful to His nature, He is also faithful to punish us when we continue in sin. Lord, great is Your faithfulness; it is as great as Your nature. Amen.

Psalm 100

A Prayer of Gratitude when Entering God's Presence

[1]Lord, I shout with joy to You; {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} everyone from every nation joins me. [2]I worship as I enter Your presence with singing because You, Lord, are my God. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [3]Lord, You made us and we belong to You; we are Your people and the sheep of Your pasture. [4]Lord, I come into Your gates giving thanks; I enter the courts with praise. I bless Your holy name {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} by giving thanks for all You've done for me. [5]Lord, You are good, Your mercy is everlasting and Your truth endures forever. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}

We use many emotions in prayer. We pray reverently, silently, thankfully, and meditatively. But when our heart overflows with excitement, and we can't contain ourselves, we shout for joy. Lord, my joy is spilling over and I can't contain myself so I shout my praise to You as loud as I can with all my heart. Amen.

Psalm 101

A Prayer to Live Blamelessly

[1]I will sing of Your love and justice; I will sing to You, O Lord. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

[2]I will try to live without sin; when will You come help me? {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[3]I will try to live blamelessly with my family and friends. I will not look on evil, nor satisfy myself with it. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [4]I will turn my back on those who secretly slander their friends. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

[5]I will turn my back on those who secretly slander their friends. Those who are selfish and proud, I will have nothing to do

with them. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
6Lord, You see all the faithful who live for You. Those who live blamelessly honor You by their lifestyle. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 7Those who are deceitful will not dwell with You, and those who lie and rebel against You will not stand in Your presence. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 8Every morning You search all hearts to determine those who love wickedness. Then You separate every evildoer from the blessing of Your presence. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

When we realize God knows the intent of our heart and everything we do, we are careful to live an honest life. When we realize and expose lies and untruths, and He judges dishonesty; we quickly conform our lips and life to truth. Lord, You are pure light, and You know all things, see all things, and punish all lies. I can only plead the blood of Christ to forgive me and cleanse me. Amen.

Psalm 102

The Prayer when We Are Alienated

1Hear me when I pray, O Lord; listen to my request for help. 2Do not hide Your face from me when I am in trouble. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} Don't turn away from me but quickly answer me.
3My days disappear like smoke, my bones hurt all the time. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 4My spirit is dying like cut grass and I've lost my appetite to eat anything. 5I groan all the time and I'm just skin and bones. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 6I'm like a lonely owl that is lost in the desert. 7I can't sleep at night; I'm as lonely as a solitary sparrow. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}
8My enemies continually criticize me; they curse me and destroy my reputation. 9My food tastes like dirt and my tears drip into what I drink. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 10Because of Your anger and punishment, You have cast me aside. 11My days are gone like the night shadows; I am withering away like grass. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
12But You, Lord, will live forever; You will be known in every generation. 13You will arise to have compassion on Jerusalem, You will show favor on her when the appointed time comes. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 14You love every stone in Zion's walls; You even love the dust of her streets. 15The nations will tremble before Your name; all the kings will fear Your glory. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 16For You will rebuild Zion, You will appear in Your glory. 17You will finally answer the prayers of the downtrodden; You will no longer turn Your back to their cry. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
18Let this be written for future generations so that a nation not yet born will praise You. 19Let them write that You will look down from heaven 20to hear the groans of Your persecuted people, to redeem and give them freedom. 21Then Your name will be declared in Zion; You will be praised in Jerusalem 22because a multitude of peoples

and kingdoms will come to worship You, O Lord. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12}
[23]You have cut me down in midlife; You have weakened my strength. [24]So I cry to You who lives forever, do not cut me off while I am still young. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [25]In the beginning You laid the foundations of the earth; the heavens are the work of Your hands. [26]They will cease, but You will continue; they will wear out like old clothes. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [27]You will then change to new clothes and throw them away like rags. You remain forever the same and Your years will never end. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [28]Your servants and all their children will live eternally in Your presence. And their children's children will be established before You. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

When we are alienated from God we must still pray in our time of distress. This is a prayer for God to intervene in our suffering and restore our life and joy. Lord, I cry desperately to You in my time of affliction for You to intervene in my trouble, and restore me to the joy of Your fellowship so I can enjoy living for You. Amen.

Psalm 103

A Prayer to Bless the Lord

[1]I bless You, Lord, from the bottom of my soul; with all that is within me, I bless Your holy name. [2]I bless You, Lord, from the bottom of my soul; and I won't forget any of Your benefits. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} [3]You, Lord, forgive my sins; You heal all my diseases. [4]You, Lord, redeem my life from death; {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} You crown my life with Your love and mercy. [5]You, Lord, satisfy me with good things; my life is renewed like an eagle. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
[6]You, Lord, give righteousness and justice to all who are persecuted; {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [7]You, Lord, made known Your principles to Moses; You showed Your works to the people of Israel. [8]You, Lord, are merciful and gracious, slow to anger and full of love. [9]You, Lord, will not continually accuse us, nor will You stay angry forever. [10]You, Lord, will not punish us as we deserve; nor reward us according to our sins. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
[11]For as the heavens are high above the earth, so great is Your love for us. [12]As far as the east is from the west, You have removed our sin from us that far. [13]As a father takes care of his children, so You love those who trust You. [14]You know what we are made of, You remember that we are only dust. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[15]As for us, our days on earth are like grass; we grow like a flower in the field. [16]The wind blows around us and we are gone as though we were never here. [17]But Your love is from everlasting to everlasting on those who love You and upon their children's children. [18]It extends to those who

keep Your covenant, who remember to obey Your principles. {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12}
19You, Lord, made the heavens Your throne; You rule over everything.
20All the angels bless You, and Your mighty ones listen to Your Word.
21All the heavenly armies of angels bless You, Lord, those who serve You and carry out Your will. 22All Your creation blesses You, Lord; everything in Your kingdom {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} joins my soul in blessing You, Lord.

This is a prayer of gratitude because God forgives our sins, restores us to fellowship with Himself, and satisfies us with good things. Because God is good and forgiving, He gives us an abundance of life and we find enjoyable satisfaction in Him. Lord, thank You for forgiving my sin, and allowing me to have fellowship with You. Thank You for protecting me from evil and death. Thank You for all the good things I have in life. Amen.

Psalm 104

Praise to God because of His Creation

1I bless You, Lord, from the bottom of my soul because You, Lord God, are great. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1}
2You are clothed with majesty and splendor, dressed in the garment of light. You stretched out the heavens like a curtain;
3The roof of Your home extends above the rain. You make the clouds Your chariot; You walk on the wings of the wind.
4The angels are Your messengers; the flashes of lightning are Your servants. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
5You placed the earth on its foundation; it can never be moved. 6You covered it with deep water like a garment that covered the tallest mountains. 7At Your command the waters receded; You spoke by the thunder and they withdrew. 8The mountains rose into sight again and the valleys appeared, returning to the places You intended.
9You then set a boundary for the sea; it will never flood the earth again. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
10You pour water into the ravines from the springs; water gushes down the valleys. 11You give drink to the animals of the forest; the wild donkeys quench their thirst. 12The birds make their nests by the streams; they sing in the branches. 13You rain on the mountains from Your heavenly home causing fruit to grow on the earth.
14You make grass to grow for the cattle and vegetables to grow for us, bringing food out of the earth. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 15You bring wine that gladdens our heart, and oil to make our face shine, and bread to strengthen us.
16Your trees are well watered; You cause the cedars of Lebanon to grow. 17The birds make their nests in her branches; the stork makes its home in the pine trees.
18The high mountains are for the goats, the rock badgers hide in the rocky cliffs. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[19]You made the moon to tell us the seasons
and the sun follows a prescribed pattern.
[20]When You bring the night, darkness follows; then all the beasts of the forest prowl.
[21]The hungry lion roars after its prey. It is
You, O Lord, who controls all. [22]The wild
animals hide when the sun rises, and they
retreat to their dens when it is light. [23]But
men go out to work when the day comes;
there he labors until the evening. {484
Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
[24]In Your wisdom You made them all, O
Lord; the earth is full of Your creatures.
[25]There is the wide and spacious sea; in it
are numerous creatures, small and great.
[26]The ships sail on its surface and created
whales play in its depths.
[27]All sea creatures at the proper time are
fed by Your gracious hand. [28]They gather
the food You give to them; they are filled
by Your open hand. [29]They are troubled
when Your provision is gone; when they
have no breath, they die and return to dust.
[30]New life is born when You send Your
Spirit; this way You continually renew the
living of the earth. {366 Praise-Worship of
God, Gal. 1:5}
[31]May Your glory endure forever, may You
rejoice in all You created. [32]You look at
the earth and it trembles; the mountains
smoke when You touch them. [33]They will
always sing praises to You, O Lord; I will
sing praises to You as long as I live. {439
Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [34]Be pleased
with all my thoughts about You because
I rejoice in You, O Lord. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [35]May sinners vanish
from the face of the earth and the wicked
completely disappear. I praise You, Lord,
from the bottom of my soul. Hallelujah.

We worship the greatness of God because we see His power and design in His creation. We are careful not to worship the earth or universe, because we know He is the Creator behind the creation. Lord, You got up one morning and dressed Yourself in light, like a coat. You built Yourself a house above the universe. You made the wind Your vehicle to take You where You wanted to go. When Your garden was dry, You commanded rain and You made rivers to water all the animals. You did everything right, so I worship You. Amen.

Psalm 105

A Prayer to Remember God's Deliverance from Egypt

[1]I give thanks to You, O Lord; I call on
Your name; I tell people what You have
done. [2]I sing to You, O Lord; I sing praises
to You. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} I
tell the world Your wonderful acts. [3]I glory
in Your holy name, my heart rejoices as I
seek You. [4]I seek Your strength, O Lord; I
will always seek Your face. {426 Searching
for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [5]I remember
Your wonderful miracles, the marvelous
things You have done. [6]I want the seed of
Abraham to remember Your chosen children of Jacob.
[7]That You are the Lord our God. Your
decisions are seen everywhere in the earth.
{303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [8]You

remember the covenant You made; Your
Word will continue for a thousand gener-
ations. [9]You made a covenant with Abra-
ham and then You swore it to Isaac. [10]You
next confirmed it to Jacob that You would
keep it with Israel forever. [11]You promised
to give them the land of Israel as their por-
tion for an inheritance. {521 Vow-Prayer,
Rev. 10:6} [12]This was when they were few
in number and they were strangers in the
land. [13]They were wandering from one
nation to another, from one kingdom to
another. [14]You allowed no one to oppose
them or to protect them. You rebuked
kings. [15]You told them, "Touch not Mine
anointed and do not harm My prophets."
{362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
[16]You sent a famine on the land to destroy
all Your people's supply of food. [17]You sent
a man to save them, even Joseph whom
they sold as a servant. [18]His feet were
bruised in shackles, his neck was put in
irons. [19]Then Joseph foretold what was to
come to pass and the word he heard from
the Lord was true. [20]The king sent and
released Joseph; the rulers of the people
set him free. [21]Joseph was made manager
of the king's house and administrator of
the food of the land. [22]He commanded the
princes what to do; he shared his wisdom
with the elders.
[23]His father Jacob was brought to Egypt
and he stayed there until he died. {363
Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [24]You
made Your people grow in number and
they became too numerous for the Egyp-
tians. [25]You turned the hearts of the Egyp-
tians against Israel; they put Your people
in slavery.
[26]You raised up Moses as their leader and
Aaron was chosen to serve with him.
[27]They did miracles for the Egyptians and
showed Your wonders to all the people.
[28]You sent darkness, making the land night
because they had rebelled against Your
Word. [29]You turned their water into blood
and all the fish died. [30]You sent frogs into
every place in Egypt; they even ended up
in the rulers' bedrooms. [31]Then You spoke
and flies appeared everywhere; then gnats
covered the land. [32]You made the hail come
down like rain and the lightning flashed
throughout the land. [33]The hail stripped
the vines of their leaves and destroyed
their fruit crop and the trees. [34]You spoke
and the locusts came; the grasshoppers
couldn't be counted. [35]They ate all the
leaves that were left and devoured all the
crops. [36]You struck down the firstborn in
every family, the heir in each family. {517
Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[37]You brought Your people out of Egypt;
they were given silver and gold and not
one of Your people was sick. [38]Egypt was
glad to see Israel leave because they were
afraid of what might happen. [39]You spread
out a cloud to lead them by day and You
gave fire to lead them by night. [40]You gave
them quail when they asked for food and
You fed them with bread from heaven.
[41]You opened the rock for water to gush
out; it flowed like a river in the desert.
[42]You remembered Your holy promise that
You had made to Your servant Abraham.
[43]You brought Your people out of Egypt
with rejoicing and shouts of joy. [44]You gave
them the land that had been occupied by
the pagan and our people inherited what

others built [45]so that they might keep Your laws and observe Your commands; I praise You, Lord. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

If God had not looked out for us, we would not have life today. We would not enjoy the blessings we have, even though we live in a world of danger, sorrow, and difficulties. Lord, I sing praises for all the good things I have. Just as You delivered Israel from Egypt, You have delivered me from bondage to sin and You've given me life in Christ. Thank You for past protection and deliverance. Thank You for present joys. Amen.

Psalm 106

A Prayer to Remember God's Faithfulness

[1]O Lord, I praise You; I give thanks to You, O Lord, for You are good, Your mercy endureth forever.
[2]No one can fully proclaim Your mighty acts; no one can fully give You praise. [3]Lord, You bless those who live justly and those who do rightly at all times. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
[4]Remember me when You show favor to Your people; visit me when You come to save them. [5]I want to enjoy the goodness of Your chosen ones, I want to share in the joy of Your people; I want to join with Your inheritance to praise You. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}
[6]We have sinned just as did our fathers; we have done wrong and committed transgressions. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [7]Our fathers did not understand Your miracles in Egypt; they did not remember Your mercy to them and they doubted You could open the Red Sea.
[8]But You delivered them for Your name's sake and You made Your power known. [9]You spoke to the Red Sea and it retreated; You led them across on sandy ground. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [10]You saved them from the attack of Pharaoh and redeemed them from their enemy. [11]The waters covered the Egyptians; not one of them survived. [12]Then Your people believed Your promise and they sang praises to You. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
[13]But Your people soon forgot what You did for them; they did not obey Your orders. [14]They lusted to fill their fleshly appetites; in the desert they tempted You. [15]You gave them what they asked for, but sent leanness to the soul. {398 Reluctant Answers to Prayer, Gen. 6:6}
[16]They complained about Moses' leadership and about Aaron who was consecrated by You. [17]The earth opened up to swallow Dathan; it also buried Abiram. [18]Fire swept through their camp burning up the rebels with them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[19]They made a golden calf at Mount Horeb and worshiped it as an idol. [20]They quit worshiping Your glory and began worshiping the image of a bull that eats grass. [21]They forgot that You were their God who had done miracles for them in Egypt [22]and had delivered them through the Red Sea. [23]So You decided to destroy them.

{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But Moses stood in the breech as an intercessor, so You would not consume them. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}
[24]Then they despised the land You gave them; they doubted Your promises to them. [25]They murmured in their tents and would not obey Your voice. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [26]So you swore that they would die in the desert [27]and be scattered throughout the lands.
[28]They joined themselves to Baal and ate sacrifices to the lifeless idol. [29]They provoked You to anger by their sin and a plague spread throughout their camp. [30]Then Phinehas acted righteously to intervene and the plague was stopped. [31]You counted this to him for righteousness so that future generations might take note.
[32]They angered You at the waters of Meribah and Moses paid the consequences for it. [33]For when the people rebelled against You, Moses was judged for speaking ill-advisedly. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[34]They did not destroy the inhabitants of the land as You had commanded them to do. [35]But they mingled with the pagan and began living like them. [36]Then they worshiped the idols of the land which became a snare to them. [37]They sacrificed their sons and daughters to demons, [38]shedding the innocent blood of their children and the nation was corrupted by their idol worship. [39]They defiled themselves by their idolatry and became whores to evil practices. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}
[40]No wonder You were angry with them and were disgusted with Your inheritance. [41]You allowed pagan nations to defeat them and their enemies ruled over them. [42]Their rulers oppressed them and forced Your people to serve them. [43]Many times You delivered them from their enemies but they were determined to rebel and they were destroyed by their sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[44]But You remembered Your covenant with them when they cried out to You.
[45]You saw their distress and showed them mercy; [46]You made their oppressors pity them.
[47]May Israel say, "Save us, O Lord, our God; bring us back from the nations so that we may give thanks to Your name and give glory to You in praise." {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
[48]Lord, I praise You, the God of Israel; from everlasting to everlasting let the people say, "Amen!"

God is love (1 John 4:8), He is the source of all love, and He constantly loves us, even when we disappoint Him. He may punish us when we rebel or sin against Him, but that's because He loves us and wants to turn us from our sinful ways, and transform us to continually do right. God is constantly reforming us because He is constant love. Lord, You love me when I obey and You love me when I disobey. Thank You for Your constant love that doesn't leave me in my sins. Amen.

Psalm 107

A Prayer to Remind You of God's Punishment when You Rebel and His Blessing when You Obey

[1]I give You thanks, O Lord, for You are good. [2]Let the redeemed speak for You, those You have saved from the enemy. [3]You have gathered them from all lands, from the east and the west, from the north and the south. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
[4]They wandered lonely in the deserts not finding a city where they could settle down. [5]They were hungry and thirsty and their soul fainted within them. [6]They cried unto You in their trouble and You delivered them out of their distress. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [7]You led them by their right hand to a city where they could settle down. [8]Oh, that all people would praise You for Your goodness and wonderful works to them because You satisfy the thirsty soul and You fill the hungry with good things. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
[10]Some sat blinded in the shadow of death; they were bound in affliction and sin [11]because they rebelled against Your words and hated Your advice, O Most High. [12]So You left them bound in misery; no one was able to help them out of their bondage. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[13]Then they cried unto You in their trouble and You saved them out of their distress. [14]You brought them out of the shadow of death and freed them from their chains. [15]Now let them give thanks for Your goodness and for the wonderful things You do for people. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [16]For You break the prison doors that enslave them and cut through the iron bars that bind them up. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12}
[17]They became fools by their transgressions and suffered because of their iniquities. [18]They didn't want to eat anything and almost entered the gates of death. [19]Then they cried unto You in their trouble and You saved them out of their distress. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [20]You sent Your Word to heal them; You rescued them from destruction. [21]Oh, that all people would praise You for Your goodness and wonderful works to them [22]and sacrifice thank offerings to You and declare Your works with praise songs. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
[23]Those that go out on the sea in ships and do their work in the great waters, [24]they have seen Your wonderful works and the things You have done in the deep. [25]For You spoke and a mighty storm arose that lifted up the powerful waves. [26]They rode them up high to the heavens, they rode them deep into the heart of the ocean; they are scared to death because of the storm. [27]They reel and stagger like a drunken man; they don't know what to do. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [28]Then Your people cried unto You in their trouble and You saved them out of their distress. [29]You quieted the storm to a gentle breeze so that the roaring waves were stilled. [30]Then they were glad when the wind blew lightly and You led them to their desired port. [31]Oh that all people would praise You for Your

goodness and wonderful works to them. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 32Let them give You thanks in the congregation and praise You in the assembly of the elders.

33You turn rivers into a desert and flowing springs into dry ground. 34Because of the wickedness of those in the land a fruitful place became barren. 35You can also turn the wilderness into wetlands and pour water on dry sandy soil. {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} 36You can bring the hungry to live there so they can build a city to live in. 37They can plant their fields and vineyards that will yield an abundant harvest. 38You can bless them and increase their number and not let their herds diminish. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

39But they can also decrease and become weak when they choose affliction, opposition, and sorrow. 40You can humble the proud rulers; You can let them wander lost in the wilderness. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 41But You establish the humble on high and increase their family like flocks. 42The righteous see what You do and rejoice, but the wicked refuse to acknowledge You.

43Those who are wise observe these things; they understand the loving way You do things. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

Because God has redeemed us and cleansed us from sin, we should be so grateful that we tell everyone, "Let the redeemed of the LORD say so" (v. 2, NKJV). Our outward life should reflect our inward joy, then God will use us as a testimony to others. Lord, I thank You for redeeming me; I tell You now. And I will tell unsaved people so they will come to know You. Amen.

Psalm 108

A Prayer for Divine Help in Battle

1My heart is fixed, O God; I will sing to You with all my heart. 2I will awake early to praise You; I will awaken to the harp and guitar to do it. 3I will praise You among the people, O Lord; I will sing to You among the unsaved {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 4for Your love is great, higher than the heavens and Your faithfulness reaches to the clouds.

5I exalt You, O God, above the skies; let Your glory spread over all the earth. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 6Come and save me with Your right hand; deliver those You love.

7You have spoken in Your sanctuary; You appointed Shechem and the Valley of Succoth. 8Gilead and Manasseh are Yours, Ephraim is Your crown, Judah Your scepter. 9You tossed out Moab, and wiped Your feet on Edom; You conquered Philistia. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

10Who will bring me into a secure city and who will lead me in victory over Moab? 11Will You not do it for us, O Lord, You who rejected us because of our sin, You who no longer fight with our armies? 12Help us in our struggle with the enemy for human help is not enough. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 13With You,

O God, we will do valiantly, for You will stomp on our enemies.

When we face an obstacle or an enemy, we can call on God for help. Just as God has helped us in the past, He will come to our rescue. The nature of who God is and what He does, tells us He will help. Lord, help! I have big problems, and little problems. Help! Amen.

Psalm 109

A Prayer of Judgment on Your Enemies

[1]O God, I praise You; do not keep silent when I need You. [2]The wicked, deceitful enemy attacks me; he is lying about me. [3]He hates everything I do {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} and he opposes me for no reason at all. [4]He returned evil when I gave him my friendship; now I can do nothing but pray about it. [5]He has rewarded my good with evil, he hated the love I showed to him. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [6]Raise up the evil person to oppose him; let satan the accuser stand at his right hand. [7]Judge him and declare him guilty and may his cry for mercy condemn him. [8]Let his days be few and let someone else take his place. [9]Let his children be fatherless and let his wife be a widow.

[10]May his children be wandering street people; drive them desolate from their homes. [11]May the creditors seize all his assets and may looters plunder all he has left. [12]Don't let anyone show him mercy, nor extend help to his children. [13]May his descendants be destroyed and may his family name be terminated.

[14]May the iniquity of his father be remembered before You, Lord; may the sins of his mother never be forgiven. [15]Always remember his sin, O Lord, but don't let anyone on earth remember that he ever lived. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [16]My enemy didn't show mercy to the poor, but tormented continuously the needy and discouraged. [17]He loved to curse, so curse him continuously; he hated to bless, so don't bless him. [18]He covered himself with vile language; he drank it in like water. [19]May his swearing words choke him like a scarf, may his filthy speech squeeze him like a tight belt. [20]Let all this be my adversary's reward because he cursed me as I lived for You. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[21]But You, Lord God, have been good to me. For Your name's sake You have delivered me; {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} You have shown Your goodness and love to me. [22]I am defenseless and needy; all hope in my heart had collapsed. [23]I was fading away like the evening shadows; I was shaken like a grasshopper in the storm. [24]I was weak because of fasting for answers and my body was emaciated and anemic. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [25]Everyone was ridiculing me; they shook their heads in disbelief when they saw me. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

[26]Help me, O Lord, God; save me by Your mercy. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [27]May they see Your hand working in my

life and understand what You have done for me. [28]They may curse me, but You bless me; put them to shame when they attack me but let me rejoice in Your presence. [29]Wrap them in the coats of embarrassment and cover them with disgrace. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[30]I will worship You with my mouth; I will praise You among the congregation {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [31]for You stand at the right hand of this needy person to protect me from the condemnation of my enemy.

The word "imprecate" means to call down punishment or evil on another, that is, to invoke judgment on him for his evil or persecution of you. These psalms are hard to interpret in light of (1) God's forgiveness; (2) the fact that the believer is told to love and pray for his enemies (Luke 6:27-28); (3) the fact that believers are not to recompense evil for evil (Rom. 12:17); and; (4) believers are to live peacefully with everyone (Rom. 12:18-21). How do we explain David praying judgment and punishment on His enemies? Some say God was judgmental in the Old Testament, but after the death of Christ, God looks on people in mercy. But this doesn't seem to be the answer. Also some say this was the cry of David in a moment of weakness and vindication; this was not a godly prayer but the prayer of backslidden David. However, this is not the answer either. Why would God include in the Bible a wrongly phrased prayer for us to pray? Perhaps the answer lies in the context: (1) David is praying, against those who were enemies of God (not just David); (2) David was praying for God to do what God had promised to do to the enemies of God; (3) David was expressing human emotions in the flesh, just as we might express the same emotions; and (4) David was not expressing his anger or revenge, but was praying for his enemies to suffer the same punishment they inflict on others. David wanted his enemies to suffer the wages of their sin. Lord, I pray for my enemies to be saved, and for You to prosper their life. But when they persecute me, I pray for them and bless them. Amen.

Psalm 110
A Prayer for Jesus to Reign

[1]Lord, You said for Jesus to come sit at Your right hand while You put His enemies under Your feet. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [2]Lord, You extended Your powerful scepter out from Zion to rule over all Your enemies.
[3]Your people will serve You in the day of battle. They will be beautifully dressed in holiness to serve You from the dawn of the morning until the dew finishes the day. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [4]Lord, You have vowed and will not change Your mind that Jesus will be a priest forever; He serves according to the order of Melchizedek. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10}
[5]Lord, Jesus will be at Your right hand to crush the kings who oppose Him. [6]Jesus will judge all the nations, those who rebel will die; the rulers of great countries will be

destroyed. 7He will drink from the brook after the task; His head will be exalted in victory. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

When Jesus is given the rulership of all heaven and earth, every tongue (including all the unsaved) will cry out in praise, "Jesus Christ is Lord" (Phil. 2:11, NKJV) and fall on their faces to worship Him. Lord, I want to be there to see this coronation, and I want to join my voice with the total population of all people to praise my Savior. Amen.

Psalm 111

A Prayer of Thanksgiving Because You Understand and Follow God's Principles

1I praise You, Lord; I magnify You with all my heart. I praise You, Lord, in the assembly of true worshipers.
2Great are your works, O Lord; I meditate on them with other worshipers. 3You do things gloriously and majestically, Your righteousness never fails. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 4I cannot forget the wonders You do; You are gracious and merciful to me. 5You give food to those who trust You, who always live by the principles You gave us. 6You have displayed Your great power to us, giving us the land of other people.
7All You do is just and good; I confidently live by all Your principles. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 8Your truth is forever trustworthy; You gave it to us in Your integrity. 9You redeemed Your people; You guaranteed to keep us forever. Holy and revered is Your name; I begin to understand true wisdom.
10All who live by Your principles are rewarded by true wisdom. Praise Your name forever. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

Reverence is an attitude of the heart that demands great respect in relationship to the greatness of the one who deserves our respect. Since God has the greatest power, glory, and wisdom, He must have reverence of all in the universe. Lord, I bow in reverential worship before You. I don't deserve any grace that You've given, so I humbly say thank You for all I have and am. Amen.

Psalm 112

A Prayer for a Godly Testimony

1Lord, I praise You for blessing me when I fear You, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} for blessing me when I delight in Your Word. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}
2You have promised my children will be influential; You will bless them when they do right. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} 3You have promised to bless me with wealth and riches when I continually live righteously. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 4Help me to be upright as a light in darkness and to be gracious and compassionate to all. 5Lord, help me graciously give to the needy and guide my life with truth. 6Then I shall

not be shaken and my righteousness will be remembered forever. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 7Lord, I will not be afraid of bad news; help me to be steadfast in trusting You.
8Help me to be established and not afraid and let me triumph over my enemies.
9Lord, I want to give to the poor; I want my testimony to endure forever. I want You to honor me. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 10Let my wicked enemies see it and be terrified of coming judgment. Let them gnash their teeth in fear to realize they will perish. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Lord, thank You for Your blessing that gives me happiness. My joy comes directly from Your hand. You have blessed me because I followed You wholeheartedly. Amen.

Psalm 113

A Prayer of Praise to God

1Lord, I praise Your holy name; I come with Your servants to praise You. 2Lord, I bless Your name; I bless You both now and forever. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} 3From the rising of the sun until its going down, I praise Your name, O Lord.
4You are exalted above the nations, O Lord; Your glory is above the heavens. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 5Who can be compared to You, our Lord and God; You sit on Your throne. 6You descend to examine the affairs on both heaven and earth. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
7You lift up the poor from the ground and raise the needy from despair. 8You set them among the honored ones, even among the leaders of their people.
9You give a home to the woman without children so she can be a mother. Lord, I praise You. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, I praise You because of Your greatness and for the way You show love to Your people. I praise You for the way You show Your power. Amen.

Psalm 114

A Prayer that Recognizes the Power of God's Presence

1Lord, You dwelt in Israel as Your sanctuary when the nation left Egypt. 2You made the house of Jacob Your dominion {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} when Your people left those speaking a strange language.
3The Red Sea saw You coming and parted for Israel to cross. The Jordan River acknowledged Your presence and the waters rolled back. 4The mountains skipped like happy rams and the hills played like little lambs. 5Why did this happen that the Red Sea parted and that the Jordan backed up? 6Why did the mountains skip like rams and the little hills play like lambs?

[7]Because of Your presence, O Lord, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} let the earth tremble when You come near. [8]You brought pools of water from the Rock of Meribah; water poured out from a solid rock.

Lord, I praise You for Your presence that delivered Israel from Egypt. Thank You for living among Your people. Amen.

Psalm 115

A Life of Praise for God's Blessing

[1]Not to me, O Lord, goes the glory; but I glorify You because of Your name. Not to me goes glory, but to You because of Your mercy and truth. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [2]Why are the pagan asking, "Where is the God of His followers?" [3]For You, O God, are in the heavens; You do whatever You want to do. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [4]Their gods are nothing but silver and gold idols, the workmanship of their hands. [5]They have mouths, but cannot speak; eyes have they, but cannot see. [6]They have ears, but they cannot hear; noses have they, but cannot smell.

[7]They have hands, but they cannot handle; feet have they, but cannot walk; nor can they speak intelligently. [8]Those who create idols make them like themselves and those who trust idols are only worshiping themselves. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

[9]Israel must trust in You, Lord, {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} for You are their help and protection. [10]The priest must trust in You, Lord, for You are their help and protection. [11]All those who acknowledge You, Lord, must trust You for help and protection.

[12]Lord, remember and bless us accordingly; bless the house of Israel and bless the priests who serve You. [13]Bless all those who acknowledge You; bless small and great alike. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [14]Lord, prosper my life with Your blessing, both me and my children. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

[15]May I be blessed by You, O Lord, Maker of Heaven and earth. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}

[16]The highest heaven belongs to You, O Lord, but You have given the earth to us. [17]The dead cannot sing praises to You, O Lord, for they are silent in the grave. [18]We the living bless You, O Lord, from this time into eternity. I praise You, O Lord. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

Lord, the world has its idols, but I reject them. I worship You, the only true God. You are my helper and protection. Amen.

Psalm 116

A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance

[1]I love You, Lord, because You heard and answered my prayer. [2]Because You listened to me, I will pray to You as long as I live.

[3]I was scared to death {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and thought I was

going to die. I was so worried I couldn't think straight. [4]Then I called on You, O Lord, "Please come and save me." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}
[5]Lord, You are gracious and kind. You were merciful to me. [6]Lord, You protect those with simple faith; when I was in trouble, You saved me. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [7]Once again I am peaceful because You have been good to me.
[8]You kept me from dying and I no longer cry. [9]So now I walk in Your presence {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} among the land of the living. [10]Because I believe in You, I told You all my troubles. [11]When I was upset I complained to You that all men are liars.
[12]What can I do for You, Lord, for all You have done for me? [13]All I can do is drink from Your cup of salvation and praise Your name for saving me. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [14]I will keep my promises to You, O Lord, in the presence of Your people. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[15]The ones who are faithful to the end are precious to You when they die. [16]O Lord, I am Your servant, the son of Your handmaid; You have given me freedom in serving You. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [17]I will worship You with the sacrifice of thanksgiving {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} and call on Your name, O Lord.
[18]I will keep my promises to You, O Lord, in the presence of Your people in the heart of Jerusalem. [19]In the courts of Your house, praise Your name, O Lord. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

Lord, I thank You for saving me from sin, and thank You for saving me from physical death, even those times when death was close, and I didn't know it; You saved me. Amen.

Psalm 117
A Prayer of Praise from All People

[1]We praise You, Lord, with the different ethnic groups of the earth; we praise You with all people of the earth
[2]for You love us with unending love; Your faithfulness endures forever. We praise You, Lord. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Psalm 118
A Prayer of Gratitude to God for Victory and Salvation

[1]I give thanks to You, Lord, for You are good and Your love endures forever. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1}
[2]I join all Your people to proclaim Your love endures forever. [3]I join the priests of Aaron to proclaim Your love endures forever. [4]I join all who fear You to proclaim Your love endures forever. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
[5]In my trouble I called on You Lord; You answered me and delivered me. [6]Lord, You are with me, I will not fear; what can anyone do to me? [7]Lord, You are with me, and will help me; I will triumph over my enemies. [8]I know it is better to put my trust in You than to put my confidence in anyone

on earth. [9]I know it is better to put my trust in You than to put my confidence in human leaders. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[10]Though hostile enemies surround me I will defeat them in Your name. [11]Even when my enemies have me hemmed in, I will defeat them in Your name. [12]They may swarm around me like bees; they may circle around me like fire in dead thorn bushes, but I will defeat them in Your name. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [13]I retreated and was almost defeated, but You helped me, O Lord. [14]You are the strength of my battle, O Lord; I sing of You in my victory song.
[15]Shouts of joy and victorious songs of praise are sung among those who have been redeemed. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [16]Your mighty right arm has done glorious things; Your mighty right arm has been exalted. [17]I will not be defeated but I will live and I will tell what You have done for me. [18]You punished me severely for my sin, but You did not deliver me to death. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[19]Open the gates of righteousness for me and I will enter to give thanks to You, O Lord. [20]Open the gates that lead to Your presence and the godly will come in to You. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[21]Thank You for answering my prayers and for saving me from my troubles. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[22]The stone which the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone of the building. [23]You have accomplished this great thing and it is a marvelous thing to see. [24]This is the day that You have made; I will rejoice in it and be glad. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}
[25]And now, O Lord, please save me and please give me success, O Lord. [26]Bless the one who comes in Your name; bless him because of the One standing in Your presence. [27]Lord, You have accepted me into Your light; I bring the sacrifice to Your altar. [28]You are my God, and I offer You thanks; You are my God, and I exalt You.
[29]I give thanks to You Lord, {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} for You are good, and Your love endures forever.

Lord, even though my enemy is fierce, thank You for anticipated victory. Your constant love is with me, even in difficulties. You have prepared this day, so I praise You for all the good things You give. Amen.

Psalm 119

A Prayer for God to Use His Word in Your Life

Aleph A

[1]Lord, You bless those who are blameless who walk according to Your law. [2]You bless those who keep Your statutes and seek You with all their hearts. [3]They do not commit iniquity, but they walk according to Your way. [4]You have commanded us to keep Your precepts. [5]Oh, that I was steadfast in doing it. [6]Then I would not be ashamed, because I respected all Your commands. [7]I will praise You with the integrity of my

heart as I continue learning that Your laws are right. [8]I will obey Your statutes; do not ever leave me. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

Beth B

[9]How can a young man keep clean? By knowing and obeying Your Word.
[10]I seek You with my whole heart; never let me stray from Your commands. [11]Your Word have I hid in my heart that I might not sin against You. [12]I praise You, Lord; help me understand Your Word. [13]My lips repeat the laws You gave to us. [14]I am happy when I follow Your testimonies as one who rejoices in riches. [15]I will meditate on Your precepts and respect the way I'm to live. [16]I delight in Your statutes and will not forget Your Word. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}

Gimel G

[17]Bless me so I may live before You and keep the Word You have given. [18]Open my eyes so I can see wonderful truths in Your law. [19]I am a stranger on earth; do not withhold Your Word from me. [20]My soul is always longing for Your laws. [21]You rebuke the rebellious who are cursed because they wander from Your commands. [22]Take away my scorn and contempt because I follow Your testimonies. [23]Although rulers agree to condemn me, I will meditate on Your statutes. [24]Your testimonies are my delight; they guide me in the way I should live. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Daleth D

[25]When I am crushed into the dust, revive me with Your Word. [26]You heard how I testified about Your way; teach me more of Your Word to do it again. [27]Make me understand what Your precepts mean so I can tell others of Your wonderful way. [28]My soul is burdened down with worry; lift me up with Your Word. [29]Keep me from being deceitful and help me keep Your law. [30]I have chosen to tell the truth; Your judgments will be my standard. [31]I will hold on to the expectations of Your law; Lord, don't let me change my commitment. [32]I run to keep Your commands for You have given me a new heart to do it. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6}

He H

[33]Teach me, O Lord, to follow Your statutes and I will always obey them. [34]Help me understand Your law and I will wholeheartedly observe it. [35]Make me follow Your commands and I will find delight in them. [36]Incline my heart toward Your testimonies so I won't be selfishly greedy. [37]Turn my eyes away from looking at vain attractions, renew my life with Your words. [38]Fulfill Your Scriptures to me so that I may worship You in awe. [39]Take away the things I fear and give me Your good judgments. [40]Because I long to know Your precepts, revive my desire to be righteous. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6}

Waw W

[41]Show me Your daily mercies, O Lord; save me according to the promises of Your

Word. [42]Then I can answer the one criticizing me for I trust the answers in Your Word. [43]Do not take Your truth out of my life for I put my trust in it. [44]I will always obey Your law [45]and will enjoy the freedom it gives me. [46]I will testify of Your truth before kings, I will not be intimidated by them. [47]I will constantly delight in Your commands because I love them. [48]I will lift up Your commands with my hand and will meditate on them constantly. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Zayin Z

[49]Remember the Word You have given to me because I have put my trust in it. [50]I take comfort in what You have said because Your Word gives me hope. [51]My enemies mock me for trusting You, but I have not turned away from Your love. [52]I remember the laws You originally gave and I still trust in them.

[53]I am angry at the wicked because they have forsaken Your law. [54]I can't help singing about Your words; they are my theme song wherever I live. [55]In the night I meditate on Your name, O Lord, because it helps me keep Your commands. [56]My practice through the years has been to obey all the precepts of Your law. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11}

Heth J

[57]You are my portion, O Lord; I promise to obey Your law. [58]I have sought Your face with all my strength; mercifully answer me according to Your promise. [59]When I examined my ways, I began walking according to Your statutes. [60]So I will act on Your commands quickly and not delay my obedience. [61]Even when my enemies tie me up and rob me, I will always respond according to Your law. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [62]At midnight I wake up to give You thanks for Your laws make me live right. [63]I will be a friend to all who fear You and who follow Your precepts. [64]The earth is filled with Your love; teach me to live by Your expectations. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Teth T

[65]Lord, You have done good things to me just as You promised in Your Word. [66]Teach me good judgment and knowledge for I believe wisdom is found in Your commands. [67]Before You disciplined me, I strayed from You, but now I know to keep Your Word. [68]You are good and You only do good things; teach me Your principles to live by. [69]My enemies have told lies about me, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} but I keep Your precepts in my heart. [70]Their heart is blind and disobedient to the truth that I keep. [71]It was good for me to be in trouble {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} because I learned Your statutes. [72]The law spoken by You is better than thousands of gold and silver coins.

Yodh Y

[73]You made me with Your hands, now give me discernment to learn Your commands. [74]May all who fear You rejoice when they see me because I too have put my trust in You. [75]I know that Your decisions are fair {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

and You punished me because I deserved it. [76]Now comfort me with Your merciful kindness as You promised to do in Your Word. [77]Cover me with Your tender mercies so that I may live, for I find happiness in Your law. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [78]May my enemies be embarrassed for telling lies about me, but I will meditate on Your commands. [79]I want to be reconciled with those who fear You and those who know Your testimonies. [80]May I blamelessly keep Your commands; then I'll never be embarrassed. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Kaph K

[81]I thought I wasn't going to be saved, but my trust in Your Word strengthened me. [82]I had difficulty seeing Your Word; when will You encourage me? [83]I was empty like a bottle of smoke so I hung on to Your promises. [84]I don't know how long I will live so I want You to judge my persecutors. [85]My enemies have tried to trip me up; they don't live by Your laws. [86]All the promises You gave me will work so help me respond properly to my enemies. [87]They have almost overcome me, but I still hung on to Your Word. [88]Give me new life through Your Word {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} and I will obey Your commands.

Lamedh L

[89]Lord, Your Word is forever settled in heaven; [90]You are faithful to all generations; You established the abiding earth. [91]Your promises continue to this day and are applied to all Your followers. [92]Without the encouragement of Your law, I would have given in to my affliction. [93]I will never forsake Your Word for it gives me life and hope. [94]I am Your servant and belong to You; I will always seek and follow Your Scripture. [95]The wicked are waiting to destroy me, but I will still look for Your precepts. [96]I have seen every perfect thing cease, but Your commands will reach everywhere. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Mem M

[97]O Lord, I love Your law; I meditate on it all day long. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [98]Your commands make me wiser than my enemies for they are my constant guide. [99]I get more understanding from Your law than from my teachers, because I constantly think about Your commands. [100]I am even wiser than my elders because I obey Your precepts. [101]I have refused to follow evil paths because they disagree with Your Word. [102]I have not neglected Your standards for they have profited my life. [103]Your words are sweet to my taste, sweeter than my favorite dessert. [104]I gain understanding from Your commands; therefore, I hate everything that takes me away from You. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Nun N

[105]Your Word is a light for my feet, and You help me see the path in the dark. [106]I have taken an oath to obey the wonderful commands You gave me. [107]Because I've suffered much, revive me because You promised to do it, O Lord. [108]I give You

an offering of praise so teach me how to do it better. [109]I bring my soul in my hands to You, just as You teach me to do in Your law. [110]My enemies have tried to trip me up, but I will not depart from Your standards. [111]The stories of Your exploits are my heritage; I get excited when I read about them. [112]My heart is committed to keeping Your law to the very end of my life. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Samekh S

[113]I hate those who claim to love You but disobey You; {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} but as for me, I love Your Word. [114]You are my Defender and Shield, therefore, I trust what You tell me. [115]I don't want evildoers anywhere near me because I keep Your commands, O God. [116]Hold me steadily by Your Word that I may live for You. [117]Keep me safe because I put my trust in You. [118]You reject all who have rejected Your statutes because they deceive themselves. [119]But I cling to Your loving ways; I would be afraid not to obey You [120]because I fear Your judgments. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Ayin Y

[121]I have done the right thing in the right way; do not leave me to my enemies. [122]Guarantee my spiritual wealth and blessing; don't let the oppressor tear me down. [123]My eyes strain to see Your salvation; I'm looking for Your righteous Word. [124]Deal with me by Your mercy and teach me the meaning of Your statutes. [125]Give me discernment for I am Your servant, then I will understand Your will. [126]Lord, now is the time for You to act; they are breaking Your law. [127]You know I love Your commands better than gold; I love them more than pure gold. [128]And because I know all Your precepts are right, I hate everything that is false. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Pe P

[129]Your statutes are wonderful, therefore I love to obey them. [130]I get understanding when I read Your Word; even average people get insight from it. [131]I open my mouth to receive Your Scriptures because I long to know what You say. [132]Come show me Your love and faithfulness as You do to those who love Your name. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [133]Guide me by Your words and don't let sin control me. [134]Deliver me from my oppressing enemy so I can obey Your commands. [135]Shine the presence of Your face on me {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and teach me how to live by Your law. [136]I can't help the tears running down my face because people disobey Your law. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

Tsadhe X

[137]You are always doing the right thing, O Lord, and Your decisions are right. [138]Your directions are the right thing for us and I can fully trust them with my soul. [139]I am overcome with anger because my enemies won't obey Your commands. [140]Your words are absolutely honest; therefore I love everything about them. [141]Though I am insignificant and despised, I have not forgotten Your precepts. [142]Your

righteousness is as eternal as You are and Your law is absolutely true. [143]When trouble and anxiety overwhelm me, Your commands get me through problems. [144]Your testimonies are always right; help me to understand them and live. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

Qoph Q

[145]Answer me when I call to You with all my heart; I will continue obeying Your laws. [146]I again call out for You to save me; I will continue obeying Your statutes. [147]I get up early in the morning to cry for help; I will continue to put my trust in Your Word. {80 Conditional-Praying, Matt. 8:2} [148]I remain awake through the different hours of the night meditating on the promises of Your Word. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [149]Hear my request because You promised to do it; renew my life by Your Word. [150]Those who plan to attack me are nearby but I know they live far from You. [151]Yet You are near to me {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and I can depend on the truthfulness of Your commands. [152]I learned when I was very young that You established Your commands to last forever. {40 Bible-Comforting Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:18}

Resh R

[153]Look on my pain and deliver me for I have not forgotten Your Word. [154]Come help me and defend me; deliver me as You have promised. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [155]The wicked are far from being saved; they will not seek Your Word. [156]Your mercy is great, O Lord; revive me according to Your laws. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} [157]I have many enemies and oppressors but I have not rejected Your promises. [158]I am grieved when I see them hate You because they reject Your Word. [159]Look how I love Your promises; revive me according to Your Word. [160]All Your words are true from the beginning because Your laws are right, they will forever stand. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Shin S

[161]Even when rulers persecute me without a cause, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} my heart still respects Your Word. [162]I rejoice in Your Scriptures like someone finding a great treasure. [163]I hate those who lie but I love Your law. [164]Seven times a day I praise You for giving me right laws by which to live. [165]They who love Your Scripture will have great peace and {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} nothing shall offend them. [166]I have put my hope in Your salvation and have obeyed Your laws. [167]I have obeyed Your commands and love them with all my heart. [168]I have obeyed Your statutes; You know it because You know everything. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Taw T

[169]Listen to my prayer, O Lord; help me to understand what is in Your Word. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [170]Listen to my prayer; deliver me according to Your promise. [171]My lips pour out praise to You because You taught me Your Word. [172]My tongue sings about Your

promises for they help me live right. 173Let Your hand help me because I have chosen to follow Your precepts. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 174O Lord, I long for Your salvation; Your law gives me happiness. 175Let me live so I can praise You and may Your Scriptures sustain me. 176I have strayed like a lost sheep; come find me {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} for I have not forgotten Your commands.

Lord, I will follow the principles of Your Word when I pray, so I will pray rightly. I will pray for the things You promise in Scripture so my prayers will be answered. I will praise You for the truths taught in Scripture so I will worship properly. My heart will assume the attitude of Scripture so my attitude will be accepted by You. I will pray the actual words of Scripture so my heart will be in tune with Your heart. Amen.

Psalm 120

A Prayer for Peace

1I called to You, Lord, when I was in trouble; You heard me when I prayed. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 2Save me, O Lord, from liars and from deceitful people.
3God, what will You do to the liars {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} and how much will You punish them? 4Inflict them with the pain of sharp arrows and with the torment of burning coals.
5I am suffering because I live in Meshech and stay in the tents of Kedar. 6I have lived too long {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} among those who hate peace. 7I am a lover of peace but they are all men of war.

Lord, I pray with the psalmist, "I want peace, but... they want war" (Ps. 120:7). Lord, send peace in my time. Amen.

Psalm 121

A Prayer of Geographical Renewal

1I life up my eyes to the hills {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} but does my help come from there? 2No! My help comes from You, Lord; You made the heavens and the earth.
3Your foot will not stumble; 4indeed You who watch over Israel will not get tired, nor will You sleep.
5Lord, watch over me to keep me; {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} stand at my right hand to protect me. 6The sun will not harm me during the day nor will the moon at night. 7Lord, deliver me from all evil; preserve my soul. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 8Lord, watch over me as I come and go, both now in this present age and forever more.

The psalmist got strength from praying to God in the mountains. Perhaps he was drawn to the mountains where he grew up, as though the strength and endurance of the mountains were an extension of his life, and he needed renewal from them. (I grew up near the ocean in Savannah, Georgia. The deep waters that threatened to drown me

became an extension of my life as I learned the skill of swimming. Now, I get strength watching waves rhythmically rise and fall. Just walking the beach to pray to God renews my spiritual strenght.) Where do you find spiritual renewal? Lord, it's not a location, but it's You who draws me to certain places. I go there for worship and fellowship. I return to a church building where I was pointed to Christ. I return to a college campus where I learned to pray. It's You who draws me to some places. Amen.

Psalm 122

A Prayer for Peace in Jerusalem

[1]I was glad when they said to me let us go into Your house, O Lord. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [2]Now I am standing inside Your gate; I'm standing in Your city of Jerusalem.
[3]Jerusalem is the eternal city, it is tightly built together. [4]This is where the people of Israel come; they come here to praise You as the commands instruct; {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} they come to worship Your name. [5]You have put the seat of government here, the throne of David rules from this city.
[6]Lord, I pray for the peace of Jerusalem; may all prosper who love You. {73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2} [7]May there be peace within these walls and prosperity within the palaces. [8]For the sake of my relatives and friends, I pray for peace within this city. [9]For the sake of Your house, O God, {369 Prayer-Journey Prayer, Ps. 126:5-6} I pray for prosperity in Jerusalem.

Lord, You love Your people, the Jews, and You love Your city, Jerusalem. I pray for peace in Jerusalem. Amen.

Psalm 123

A Prayer for Acceptance by God

[1]I look up to You, O God, as You sit on Your throne in heaven. [2]I lift up my eyes to You, O God, as the servant looks to the hand of his master, as the maid looks to the hand of her mistress.
[3]I look to You, O Lord, my God, that You would show me mercy. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} Be gracious to me, O Lord; be gracious for I can't stand rejection. [4]I have been criticized by the proud and I have been rejected by the arrogant.

Lord, come sit on the throne of my heart; I look to You for everything. Amen.

Psalm 124

A Prayer of Gratitude for Deliverance

[1]If You had not been on my side— Lord, I tell everyone who will listen. [2]If You had not been on my side when my enemies attacked me, [3]they would have swallowed me alive because their anger was so hot against me. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [4]The waters would

have drowned me, the torrent would have flooded my soul. 5The angry waters from the storm would have overwhelmed my life. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
6I bless You, Lord, for Your protection because You did not let them devour me. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1}
7I have escaped like a bird out of the trap of the hunter; I am free because the trap was broken. 8You are my Defender, O Lord; {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} You are the Creator of the heavens and the earth.

Lord, thank You for saving me when I was in trouble. I praise You for the many times You've delivered me when I've almost been overwhelmed. Amen.

Psalm 125
A Prayer for Peace for the Godly

1Because I trust in You, Lord, I am as secure as Mount Zion. I will not be shaken, but will abide forever. 2Just as the mountains surround Jerusalem to give it protection, so You, Lord, surround and protect Your people. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
3The wicked will not rule the godly lest they make the godly do evil. 4O Lord, do good to those who are good, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} to those whose hearts are upright.
5But to those who follow crooked ways, expel them with the evil ones. Give peace to Israel.

Lord, surround Your people with protection, just as mountains surround Jerusalem. Don't let evil people rule over Your people in an evil way. Amen.

Psalm 126
A Prayer for Renewal

1Lord, when You returned the exiles to Jerusalem, it was like I was dreaming. 2I laughed with joy and I sang a happy song. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} The Gentiles were amazed, saying the Lord has done great things for them. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 3Yes, You, Lord, have done great things for us all; overflowing our hearts with joy.
4O Lord, restore our lives {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} as the streams restore the desert.
5Those who plant with tears will sing heartily during the harvest. 6He who goes out weeping to plant, carrying his seed to sow, {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} will come from the work singing for joy, carrying his sheaves with him.

Lord, give me spiritual prosperity on this earth, and prosper me after death when I live with You. Amen.

Psalm 127
A Prayer of Gratitude for Your Family

1Except You build the family, Lord, {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} the work of the workers is useless. Unless

You watch over the city, Lord, the watch of the watchman is in vain. [2]It is useless to toil and work, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} getting up early and staying up late, worrying about getting enough food to eat because You supply the needs of those You love.

[3]Lord, You give children as a gift; {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} the fruit of the womb is Your reward. [4]Like weapons in the hands of a warrior are children born to a wise family. [5]Blessed is the man whose quiver is full {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} because his children defend him against his accuser.

Lord, grow my family, and protect them from evil. Bless my family with spiritual prosperity and be glorified in all we do. Amen.

Psalm 128

A Prayer of Blessing upon the Home

[1]Lord, You prosper those who fear You. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} You bless those who follow Your ways.

[2]They enjoy the fruit of their labors; You give them happiness and prosperity. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [3]Their wives will be like a fruitful vine, flourishing within their home. They will have many children sitting around the table; {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [4]that is one of the ways You bless those who fear You.

[5]May You bless them from Zion all the days of their lives. May they see the prosperity of Jerusalem as long as they live. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [6]May they live to see their children's children; Lord, I pray peace on Your people. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

Lord, I will take care of my children, and pray for them as they take care of me. Bless my children's children, and then bless their children's children. May they all live for You. Amen.

Psalm 129

A Prayer against Your Enemies

[1]Lord, my enemies have tormented me ever since I was young. [2]They have oppressed me as I was growing up but they have not been victorious. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [3]Like a plow on my back, they have made deep furrows. [4]But Lord, You have been good to me; {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} You have freed me from their bondage.

[5]May those who hate Your people be defeated and embarrassed. [6]May they be like grass without roots that withers because it can't grow. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [7]May reapers reject them at harvest because they are not good for anything. [8]May no one passing by bless my enemies, nor say, "The blessing of the Lord's name upon them." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

Lord, my enemies are attacking me; don't let them defeat me. Let those who hate You and Your work be turned back in shame. Amen.

Psalm 130

A Prayer for Forgiveness and Acceptance

[1]Out of my depths of trouble {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} I call to you, O Lord; [2]please listen to my cry for help.
[3]If You kept a record of our sin, no one could stand before You. [4]But there is forgiveness with You so that we fear You. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
[5]I wait for You, Lord, and I put my trust in Your Word. [6]I wait for You, Lord, {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} more than the watchmen wait for the morning.
[7]Let us all put our hope in You, Lord, for there is lovingkindness with You, and there is redemption in You. [8]For You will redeem us all {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} from all our iniquities.

Lord, help me in my trouble; for if You don't save me, I'll lose everything. I wait for Your help as surely as I wait for dawn. Amen.

Psalm 131

A Prayer of Communion with God

[1]Lord, I am not egotistical over who I am, nor am I proud of what I do. I am not concerned about these self-serving ambitions, nor am I concerned about other things. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
[2]But I come quietly to You, just as a little child comes quietly to its mother; my soul is like a quiet baby before You. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3}
[3]May Your children put their hope in You both now and forever.

Lord, I trust in You like a baby sleeps peacefully in its mother's arms. Why isn't everyone this comfortable with You? Amen.

Psalm 132

A Prayer for the Messiah to Come

[1]Lord, I remember the passion of David who in spite of all his afflictions [2]made a vow to You, O Lord, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [3]promising that he would not enter Your tent, nor would he rest in his bed, [4]nor would he close his eyes in sleep [5]until he found a place for You, O Lord, and until he built a house for You to dwell in. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
[6]I have heard about this vow in Ephratah; it was repeated in the woods and fields [7]that we must come to Your tabernacle {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and we must worship at Your feet. [8]Arise, O Lord, from Your rest; {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} let the ark of Your presence shine.
[9]Let the priest's clothes reflect Your salvation; let Thy saints shout for joy. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}

[10]For David's sake don't turn away; shine Your face on Your anointed. [11]You have made a promise to David that the fruit of his loins will sit on his throne. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} [12]That if his children will obey Your commands that You will teach them, they also will sit on David's throne.
[13]For You, Lord, have chosen Zion to be the place of Your habitation. [14]This is where You will rest in eternity; this is where You want to live. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [15]You have abundantly blessed this land; You have given bread to the poor. [16]You will spread salvation through the priests and Your people will shout for joy. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [17]You will once again raise up one from David's line; the Messiah will hold forth the light! [18]Your enemies will be humiliated, but the Messiah will be crowned in prosperity. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

Lord, You blessed David because he was a man after Your heart. You made him king of Israel. May Your Kingdom come on earth and may his Son rule in Jerusalem in the millennium. Amen.

Psalm 133

A Prayer for Unity among Believers

[1]Lord, I know it is good for Your people to live together in unity. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
[2]It is like the oil that is anointed on the head of Your servants; even that which trickled down Aaron's beard and dripped on his skirts. [3]It is like the dew on Mount Hermon and like the dew on all the mountains of Zion. Because in unity You direct Your blessings, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28} even life forevermore.

Lord, I will live in peace with Your people, I pray for them to live in peace with me. Amen.

Psalm 134

A Prayer to Bless the Lord

[1]Lord, I bless You with all Your servants {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} who stand in Your house to bless You. [2]They lift up their hands in the sanctuary; {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} they bless You, most Holy Lord. [3]Lord, You who made heaven and earth; bless them from Your home in Zion. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134}

When David brought the sacred chest to Jerusalem, he put it on Mount Zion, that is, the back of his palace. At night, David could see people coming to worship God, lifting holy hands in worship. Lord, I will lift my hands in worship to You at all times of the day or night. I will worship You at all places. Amen.

Psalm 135

A Prayer of Praise that Surveys All God Has Done for His People

[1]Lord, I praise You; {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} I join with all Your servants to praise Your name. [2]With all those who stand in Your house, I praise You. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} With all those who stand in Your courts, I praise You. [3]I praise You, Lord, for You are good; it is pleasant to sing praises to You. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [4]Lord, You chose Jacob for Yourself; You chose Israel as your peculiar treasure. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [5]I know that You, Lord, are great; that You, Lord, are above all gods. [6]You created what You wanted in the heavens, and in the earth and in the sea. [7]You created all the fog and the mist, You created the lightning with the rain; You brought us wind and the storm. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

[8]You sent the death angel to strike the first born, both among people and animals in Egypt. [9]You sent miracles and signs to Egypt, both on Pharaoh and his servants. [10]You smote the great nations on earth and killed their mighty kings. [11]This included Sihon, king of the Amorites, plus Og, king of Bashan, and the other nations. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [12]You gave their land to Your people to Israel for an everlasting heritage.

[13]Your name will continue forever; people will remember You throughout generations. [14]But You will judge Your people when they sin and forgive them when they repent. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

[15]The idols of the pagan are made of silver and gold; they are the creation of man's hands. [16]Idols have mouths, but they do not speak; they have eyes, but they do not see. [17]Idols have ears, but they do not hear; neither is there any breath in them. [18]Those who create the idols, are like them; those who worship them are also like them. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

[19]But I join with all Israel to bless You; I bless You, Lord, with the priests. [20]I bless You, Lord, who comes to Zion; [21]I praise You, Lord, who dwells in Jerusalem.

Lord, do whatever You wish, I yield my life into Your hands. You have all power to do anything You wish, at anytime, anywhere. You are without limits. Amen.

Psalm 136

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Provision in the Past

[1]Lord, I give thanks to You {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} for You are good; for Your mercy endures forever. [2]I give thanks to You, the God over false gods, for Your mercy endures forever. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [3]I give thanks to You, the Lord over lords, for Your mercy endures forever.

[4]You alone can do great miracles, for Your mercy endures forever. [5]You have made the heavens, for Your mercy endures forever. [6]You stretched out the earth and the

seas, for Your mercy endures forever. [7]You created the sun and stars, for Your mercy endures forever. [8]You made the sun to rule our days, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} for Your mercy endures forever. [9]You made the moon and stars to rule our night, for Your mercy endures forever. [10]You sent the death angel on the first born of Egypt, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} for Your mercy endures forever. [11]You brought Israel out of Egypt, for Your mercy endures forever. [12]You stretched out Your strong arm against the gods of Egypt, for Your mercy endures forever. [13]You divided the Red Sea, for Your mercy endures forever. [14]You brought Israel through on dry land, for Your mercy endures forever. [15]You drowned Pharaoh and his armies in the Red Sea, for Your mercy endures forever. [16]You led Your people through the wilderness, for Your mercy endures forever. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [17]You defeated great kings who oppose Israel, for Your mercy endures forever.

[18]You executed famous kings, for Your mercy endures forever. [19]Sihon, king of the Amorites, was eliminated, for Your mercy endures forever. [20]Also Og, king of Bashan, was eliminated, for Your mercy endures forever. [21]You gave their land to Your people, for Your mercy endures forever. [22]Now the land is the heritage of Israel, for Your mercy endures forever.

[23]You remember us in our weakness, for Your mercy endures forever. [24]You redeemed us from our enemies, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} for Your mercy endures forever. [25]You give everyone food to eat, for Your mercy endures forever. {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14}

[26]I give thanks to You, the God of Heaven, for Your mercy endures forever.

Lord, the greatest acknowledgment ever used to describe You is "Your constant love continues forever." Amen.

Psalm 137

A Prayer to Remember God

[1]Your people sat by the rivers of Babylon and wept when they remembered Zion. [2]They refused to sing joyfully, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} hanging their harps on willow trees. [3]Their captors demanded that they sing; those who imprisoned them wanted entertainment asking, "Sing us a song of Zion."

[4]Your people couldn't sing {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} while being held captive in a strange land. [5]Your people said they couldn't forget Jerusalem, {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} just as their right hand couldn't forget its movement. {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} [6]Your people said their tongue would stick in their mouth if we do not remember You, O Lord.

[7]O Lord, don't forget what Edom did to Your people when Jerusalem was being attacked. Edom was yelling for the city to be destroyed and its foundation be destroyed.

[8]O Lord, I know You will destroy Babylon; someone will be happy to do it. [9]They will enjoy destroying the children of Babylon, {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} just as Babylon destroyed Your children.

Lord, just as the captive Jews in Babylon couldn't sing a happy song because of their captivity, so I will not be completely happy on this earth as long as I'm held captive in this limited human body. When I see You face to face, {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} I'll be absolutely happy. Amen.

Psalm 138

A Prayer for God's Deliverance from Trouble

[1]O Lord, I offer praise to You {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} with all my heart. I sing praise to You and not to idols. [2]I will worship You in the temple {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and praise You for Your love and faithfulness because You exalted Your name and kept Your Word. [3]When I called to You in trouble, {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} You answered by encouraging me with Your strength.

[4]All the rulers of the earth shall praise You when they hear the words You speak. [5]They shall sing about Your ways {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} and Your glory shall be great. [6]Even though You are high and lofty, You look kindly to the lowly; but You know those who are proud in heart. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

[7]When I have a lot of trouble, You help me through it. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} You stretch out Your hand against my enemies; Your right hand shall deliver me. [8]You will fulfill Your plan for my life; Your love endures forever. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} Don't quit protecting me.

Lord, I know You hear the humble and reject the proud. I know You made everything and that You are supreme. I am nothing in myself and I need You all the time. Your constant love continues to amaze me. Amen.

Psalm 139

A Prayer of Thanksgiving for God's Oversight of Your Life

[1]Lord, You have searched me {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and You know me thoroughly. [2]You know when I sit and when I rise; You understand my thoughts from afar. [3]You know my journeys and my rest; You are familiar with everywhere I go. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [4]Before my tongue speaks a word, O Lord, You know what I'm going to say. [5]You are all about me, in front and behind and You have laid Your hand on me. [6]Being known by You is a wonderful thing; You have greater knowledge than anyone. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[7]It is impossible to escape from Your Spirit; I can never get away from Your presence.

{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
8If I could go to heaven, You are there; if
I make my bed in hell, You are there. 9If I
could fly away on the wings of a new day
and fly across the sea, 10even there I would
find Your hand guiding me {207 Guid-
ance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} and Your right
hand holding me. 11If I say that the darkness
will surely hide me, even the night covers
everything about me. 12But I cannot hide
from You in the darkness because the night
shines like the day to You. Both darkness
and light are the same to You. {364 Praise
for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
13You made the inner parts of my body;
You created me in my mother's womb.
14I praise You for reverently and wonder-
fully forming me; I recognize Your mar-
velous creative works.
15You saw me being conceived in the pro-
tection of the womb and I came together
under Your watch care. {191 God-Pleasing
Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 16All the days of my life
were preordained for me; You wrote them
in a book before they happened.
17O God, Your thoughts about me are pre-
cious; I can't begin to number the times
You think about me. {303 Memory-Pray-
ing, Ps. 77:11} 18If I could count all of
them, Your thoughts of me are more than
the grains of the sand. When I wake each
morning, You are still right beside me.
{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
19If only You would destroy the wicked
{235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
and get rid of all who are trying to kill me.
20My enemies blaspheme You, {374 Pray-
ing against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps.
31:18} they misquote You and take Your
name in vain. 21Lord, I hate those who
hate You and will have nothing to do with
those who oppose You. 22Yes, Lord, I hate
Your enemies as I should. Your enemies are
my enemies. {234 Impatient-Judgmental
Prayer, Rev. 6:10}
23Search me, O God, to know the intent of
my heart; {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John
1:9} try me to know my thoughts. 24Point
out any wicked inclination in me {174
Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke
11:4} and lead me in the way of eternal life.

God is everywhere possible, knows everything possible, and can do everything possible. Lord, You know everything about my past and future, You know my thoughts before I think them. You know everything about everyone. Lord, You are equally present at every place possible and You stay there forever. You can do everything that is possible to do or anything You want to do. So examine me to know my heart, try me to understand my ways and lead me in the way I should go. Amen.

Psalm 140

A Prayer to Punish Those Who Attack the Godly

1O Lord, deliver me from evil people; {109
Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} protect me
from those who would hurt me. {387 Pro-
tection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 2They think up
evil plans in their heart; they want to fight
me every day. 3They sharpen their tongue
like a serpent; their words against me are
poison. Selah!

[4]Deliver me from the hands of the wicked; protect me from violent people who plan to destroy me. [5]They arrogantly set a trap for me; {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} they plan to trip me up and catch me in their deceit. Selah!
[6]O Lord, You are my God; hear my cry to You for help. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [7]O Lord, You are the strength of my salvation; protect me in the heat of battle. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [8]Do not let the wicked do what they desire; don't let them become proud before You. Selah!
[9]Let my enemies be destroyed {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} with the destruction they plan for me. [10]May burning coals be thrown upon them and throw them into the pit never to escape. [11]Don't let liars prosper on this earth; may they be hunted down and destroyed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[12]I know You will do the right thing to the poor and protect the rights of the needy. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [13]Then the godly will praise Your name and they will live in Your presence forever.

Lord, You know when evil is planned for me by wicked men. Protect me. I pray for their salvation. Amen.

Psalm 141

A Prayer for Deliverance from Evil People

[1]O Lord, I cry out to You; {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} I need You now. Please listen when I call You. [2]Let my prayers be the first thing You hear and my lifted hands be the first thing that pleases You. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
[3]Guard the words that I say and keep my mouth from speaking. [4]Don't let me lust for evil, {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} nor get involved in wicked acts, nor satisfy myself with transgressors.
[5]Let godly people remind me when I stray, and let them rebuke me when I'm stubborn, and make me listen to them. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} So I will pray constantly {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} against evil and those who do it.
[6]When rebellious people fall, the sinners will understand why I live godly. [7]They will say that as the farmer breaks rocks, even in death our bones are broken and scattered.
[8]But, O Lord, I look to You for help; {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} You are my refuge, do not let me die. [9]Don't let me walk into the trap of my enemy, nor get caught by those who do evil. [10]Let the wicked fall into their own trap while I walk by safely. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, I'm in a dangerous position. Keep me from all evil influence; keep me from doing evil. Protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

Psalm 142

A Prayer for Deliverance from Trouble

[1]O Lord, I cried out loudly to You; listen when I ask for help. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [2]I poured out my troubles to You and told You all my difficulties.
[3]When my spirit is about to faint,{133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} You alone know what I should do. Everywhere I go in life my enemy lays a trap for me. [4]I look on my right hand for help, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} but there is no one who cares.
[5]I cried out to You, O Lord; in this land of the living, You are the only One who will protect me. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [6]Listen to my cry, for I am discouraged. Deliver me from my persecutions for they are too strong for me. [7]Deliver me from my prison so I may praise You. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} Then the godly will gather around me as You show me Your goodness.

Lord, evil is close by. Protect me in the hour of trial, temptation, and bondage. Put righteous people around me to guard me from evil. Amen.

Psalm 143

A Prayer for Deliverance from Your Enemies

[1]O Lord, listen to my prayer; answer me because You are righteous and faithful. [2]Do not judge my failures {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} because no one is perfect compared to You.
[3]My enemy is chasing me, he has knocked me to the ground; I hide in darkness like a dead person. [4]My spirit is crushed {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and I have no hope in my heart.
[5]I remember the good old days; I think about Your works {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and I meditate on what You did for me. [6]Again I stretch out my hands to You; I need You as parched ground thirsts for water. Selah! {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4}
[7]Answer me quickly, O Lord, for I am discouraged. Don't hide Your face from me or I might as well be dead. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [8]In the morning remind me of Your faithfulness because I am trusting You. Show me how to live a godly life because that's my heart's desire. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[9]Save me from my enemies, O Lord, because I hide in You. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} Teach me to do Your will because You are my God. [10]Lead me into Your perfect plan for my life because You are good. Deliver me from trouble because You are righteous. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[11]Protect me from now on for Your name's sake. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [12]Cut off all my enemies; destroy them {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} for I am Your servant.

Lord, my first prayer is for Your protection; keep me safe in the presence of danger. My second prayer is against evil people who would do evil to me. Thwart their desires and may they suffer the evil they desire for me. Amen.

Psalm 144

A Prayer for Protection and Prosperity

1 Lord, I praise You for being my Rock
because You give me strength and You
give me skill. {482 Thanksgiving for God's
Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}
2 Lord, You are good and You are strong;
You protect me and You deliver me. I take
refuge in Your protection; {387 Protec-
tion-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} You defeat the
enemies who fight me.
3 O Lord, what is a mortal person {81 Con-
fession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} that You will
be concerned for him, or the son of man
that You think of him? 4 A person is like a
breath and his days like a passing shadow.
5 Split heaven wide open and come to earth;
touch the mountains so they smoke. 6 Strike
the enemy with lightning; destroy those
who oppose You. 7 Reach down Your hand
from heaven to rid me from dangerous
floods and from the hands of my enemy
8 who lies about me and constantly deceives
me. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
9 I sing a new song to You, O God, {439
Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} on musical
instruments I will praise You. 10 For You
give victory to Your leaders; {517 Victo-
ry-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} You delivered Your
servant David.
11 Rescue me from the attack of my enemies
and from the power of my oppressors. They
tell lies on me all the time, {374 Praying
against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
and they plot deceitfully to destroy me.
12 May my sons prosper in their youth and
grow like well-nurtured plants. May my
daughters be like beautiful pillars that dec-
orate a magnificent palace. {206 Guarding
Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} 13 May
our barns be filled with every kind of crops
and may our flocks multiply and grow
14 and our work animals carry heavy loads.
May our walls be safe against the enemy
{386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}
and may none of us be carried into captiv-
ity. 15 Lord, we will be happy with life like
this; we will be blessed because You are our
Lord. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

Lord, You have protected our nation and kept us safe. May our nation always obey and praise You so that we always enjoy the blessings of peace. Thank You for peace within our hearts; thank You for peace on the streets. Amen.

Psalm 145

A Prayer to Magnify God because of His Faithfulness

1 O God, I magnify You, O my King; I will
bless Your name forever. {46 Blessing the
Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} 2 Every day I will

lift up Your name; I will praise Your name forever and ever. 3Because You are great, {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} I will praise Your name greatly; I can never fully understand Your greatness.
4Each new generation will praise Your works, telling the next generation of Your mighty power. 5I will tell them of Your glory and majesty and of Your wonderful acts. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 6Others will also tell of Your abundant goodness 7and loudly sing of Your faithfulness. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}
8You are gracious and compassionate, slow to anger and filled with love. 9You are good to all people and show Your mercy to all You created. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}
10All Your Creation will praise You, O Lord; all Your saints will bless You. 11They will tell of Your glorious rule and tell of Your great power. 12As a result, all will know of Your mighty acts and the majestic glory of Your rule. 13You will rule forever in an everlasting kingdom; You will rule from generation to generation. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
14You help all those who fall and lift up all those who are down. 15The eyes of all look to You for help; {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} You supply their needs in due season. 16You open Your hand to us; You satisfy the desires of all people.
17You are righteous in everything You do and holy in all Your acts. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 18You are near to those who call on You, to those who sincerely seek Your presence. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 19You satisfy the desires of those who fear You; You will hear their cry and save them. 20You care for all who love You but the wicked You will destroy. 21I will magnify You, O my Lord; {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} let everyone on earth bless Your holy name from generation to generation and forever and ever.

Lord, David praised You for all that You are and for all that You do. Thank You for Your continual loving kindness to me. I join David in offering praise to You. Amen.

Psalm 146

A Prayer to Praise God for His Watch Care

1Hallelujah, Lord! {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} I praise You from the bottom of my soul. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} 2I praise You with all my life; I will praise You, Lord, so long as I live.
3I will not put my trust in human leaders nor will I trust those who cannot help me. 4When they die, they are buried; at that time they are gone.
5I am blessed because I trust in You, O God; {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} You are my hope, O Lord, God of Jacob. 6You are the Creator of the heavens, earth, and the seas and You created everything in them. You remain faithful forever; {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 7You protect

those who are oppressed. You give food to the hungry; You set the prisoners free.
[8]You give sight to the blind; You lift up the oppressed and You love those who live righteously. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [9]O Lord, You preserve the strangers and watch over the orphans and widows; {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} You confuse the way of the wicked.
[10]O Lord, You reign forever and ever; You will always be the God of Israel, Hallelujah, Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Lord, I praise You for the greatness of Your protection. Amen.

Psalm 147

A Prayer to Praise God for the Blessings of Life

[1]Hallelujah, Lord; {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} praising You is exciting and fulfilling.
[2]You are rebuilding Jerusalem {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} and bringing the exiles back to the land. [3]You heal the brokenhearted; You bind up the wounds of the hurting. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [4]You know the exact number of stars; You call each of them by their name. [5]You are great, Lord, and have great power; Your understanding is infinite. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[6]You encourage the humble but throw the wicked to the ground.
[7]I give thanks to You with singing, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} I sing praise to You with my harp. [8]You cover heaven with the clouds, You send rain on the earth; You make grass grow upon the mountain. [9]You provide food for the wild animals and for the young ravens when they call.
[10]You are not impressed by the strength of horses nor with the legs of a man. [11]You take pleasure in those who fear You {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and in those who put their hope in Your mercy.
[12]I join with Jerusalem in praising You; I join with Zion in praising You {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [13]for You fortify the protection of the gates; You bless those within Your care. [14]You send peace to Your people; {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} You provide the finest food for them.
[15]Your commands go out to the earth; the influence of Your words spreads quickly. [16]You send the snow to spread over us; You scatter the frost on the ground like ashes. [17]You cover the ground with ice like pebbles; You hurl down hail as a man throwing stones. [18]Then they are melted according to Your plan; You send the wind to thaw the ice. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
[19]You give Your Word to Jacob, You reveal Your laws and principles to Israel. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} [20]You have not done this with other nations; they do not understand Your laws. Hallelujah, Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Lord, I praise You for Your provision for me and Your people. Amen.

Psalm 148

A Prayer of Worship and Praise

[1]Hallelujah, Lord; {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} the heavens praise You; the heights praise You. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [2]The angels praise You; the hosts praise You. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [3]The sun and moon praise You; the stars of light praise You. [4]The heavens where You live praise You; the waters above the heavens praise You.

[5]They all praise Your name, O Lord, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} for You commanded them to be created. [6]You have set them in an eternal place; You have determined they will never pass away.

[7]The earth praises You; the great sea creatures in the oceans' depths praise You. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [8]Lightning and hail, snow, and clouds, and stormy winds obey Your word. [9]Mountains and hills, fruit trees, and cedars, [10]wild animals and cattle, small animals and birds, [11]kings of all people, princes, and all people, and all the judges praise Your name; {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [12]young men and young women, old men and children, [13]all praise Your name, O Lord. Your name is exalted; Your glory is exalted above the heaven and earth. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [14]You have raised up a people to praise You; all Your saints praise You. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} The children of Israel near Your heart all praise You. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} Hallelujah, O Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Lord, I praise You for all gifts You give to people, and for everything You've given me. Amen.

Psalm 149

Praising the Lord with Singing

[1]Hallelujah, Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} I will sing to You a new song; {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} I will praise You in the assembly of saints.

[2]May Israel rejoice in You God, their Creator; may the children of Zion be glad in Your rule. [3]May they praise You in dance; may they sing Your praise with musical instruments. [4]Because You take pleasure in Your people, You make the humble beautiful with salvation. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

[5]May Your saints rejoice in Your glory; let them sing Your praises at night. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [6]May they praise You with their mouth and be alert with a sword in their hand [7]to carry out judgment on their enemies and punishment upon Your foes, [8]to put their rulers in prison and their staff into chains. [9]All Your saints have legal privileges to

execute judgment according to the law. Hallelujah, Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Lord, many have praised You in the past and many will praise You in the future. They praise You with all of their faculties, and with all of their being. They praise You every way possible. I join them wholeheartedly in praising You. Amen.

Psalm 150

A Prayer of Praising the Lord in the Assembly

[1]Hallelujah, Lord. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1} Praise You in Your sanctuary; praise You in Your vast heavens.
[2]I praise You, Lord, {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} praise You for Your mighty works; praise You for Your infinite greatness. [3]I praise You, Lord, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} with the blast of trumpets, with guitars and bass. [4]I praise You, Lord, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} with my whole body, with the stringed instruments and flutes. [5]I praise You, Lord, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} with the playing of cymbals and the echoes of more cymbals.
[6]Everyone joins me in praising You. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} Hallelujah, Lord! {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Lord, we praise You with all musical instruments. I join my praise with them. Hallelujah! Amen.

Proverbs

Ch 1: A Father Teaches—Be Wise 873
Ch 2: Good Decisions Will Treat You Right 875
Ch 3: Learning from Correction 876
Ch 4: Listening to Parents' Advice 878
Ch 5: Beware of the Trollop 879
Ch 6: Work Hard and Watch Out for Loose Women 880
Ch 7: A Description of One Who Despises Wisdom 881
Ch 8: A Defense of Right Thinking 882
Ch 9: Foolish Thinking Leads to Destruction 883
Ch 10: Right Believing Leads to Success 884
Ch 11: Wrong Thinking Leads to Failure 886
Ch 12: The Contrast between Right Believing and Wrong Thinking 887
Ch 13: How to Live Right 889
Ch 14: The Fear of the Lord Leads to Right Living 890
Ch 15: A Cheerful Heart Leads to Right Believing 892
Ch 16: The Lord's Providential Care 894
Ch 17: A Fool Doesn't Think Right 895
Ch 18: A Contrast between Perils and Blessings

.....896
Ch 19: Build Character by Wise Believing.....898
Ch 20: Build a Life of Integrity.....899
Ch 21: Build a Life Plan.....901
Ch 22: What to Avoid in Life.....903
Ch 23: Don't Lust for the Things that Evil People Get by Doing Evil.....904
Ch 24: Learn the Right Values in Life.....906
Ch 25: Nothing Can Compare to Right-Belieiving.....908
Ch 26: Watch Out for Fools and Scoundrels....910
Ch 27: Right Believing Leads to Good Relationships.....911
Ch 28: Use Common Sense When Being Religious.....912
Ch 29: Right-Beliving Will Make You a Good Citizen.....914
Ch 30: The Knowledge God Would Have You Know.....915
Ch 31: What Is a Godly Woman?.....917

PROVERBS

Key Word: Wisdom (occurs 54 times) in Proverbs (Proverbs 1:2)

Key Verse: "Happy *is* the man *who* finds wisdom, and the man *who* gains understanding" (3:13, NKJV).

Theme: A proverb usually expresses familiar truth in a popularly known way and is expressed in simple metaphorical truth so that people may apply or honor its teaching. The thrust of Proverbs is "apply your heart to wisdom, that you may gain understanding." This is another way of saying learn to think what is right, so you'll do what is right.

God didn't include a lot of things in Proverbs. There is no plan of salvation, doctrine, and messianic predictions. You'll get these topics in other books of the Bible. Also there are no plots or storyline and no individuals identified by name in Proverbs, except Solomon, Bathsheba, Ithiel, and Ucal. Proverbs gets its points across by brief, one or two-line declarations of truth to illustrate proper living. Personalities are described but are not involved in parables or conversations with each other, nor do they refer to actual persons. They are descriptions of actions or attitudes that we should follow or reject to have a good life.

You're holding in your hands a book that could change your life. If you will honestly pray the Proverbs, you will gain wisdom; it will help you live better. And wisdom is truth applied to daily life. *Lord, give me wisdom so I will know the right way to live, then give me strength to live rightly. Amen.*

Proverbs 1

A Father Teaches—Be Wise

[1]Lord, help me learn and obey Your requirements [2]so I will always know what to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [3]Give me all the wisdom I need so I will always be fair and impartial. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [4]Help me teach those who don't know all they need to know and do. [5]Help me carefully listen and learn and become more understanding so I will always do the right thing. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [6]Help me gain much counsel from the wise so I can become a smart person, and learn to understand things that are difficult. {456

Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

[7]Lord, I know all wisdom is in You. Help me understand Your ways and not be rebellious to despise Your direction. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[8]Help me listen to You as a father and obey You as a mother.

[9]May others see Your principles guiding my life and may they glorify Your beauty. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[10]Lord, help me resist the temptation of sinners and not give in to them. [11]When sinners want me to make illegal money and take advantage of innocent people, may I resist their temptation. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

[12]Because when I destroy the lives of other people, I am really condemning my own life, [13]even when sinners promise me exorbitant riches and a wealthy home and furnishings [14]and they promise to share their wealth with me. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [15]Lord, I remember You said, "Stay away from them. Don't be like them or obligate yourself to them" [16]for they really intend to break every law and suck the life out of innocent people. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [17]Every plan they make to catch someone snares them into their own addiction. [18]And the happiness they plan to steal from others destroys any chance of enjoying it in their greed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[19]Lord, I see the eyes of honesty weeping over the crimes she sees in life.

[20]Honesty cries for crimes to be punished. [21]And I hear the voice of honesty crying in the empty courts of justice; [22]"How long will evil run rampant?" Honesty cries. "How long will skeptics be skeptical? How long will rebels hate God's ways?" {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} [23]Lord, You call us to return to You; {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} You promise to pour Your Spirit on us; {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} You promise to teach us Your ways. [24]Lord, when You call to the rebel, You also stretch out Your hand to him; [25]but the rebel not only rejects Your ways, he is also determined to do the exact opposite and completely rejects all You stand for. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [26]Therefore You will turn Your back when he is punished. You will say, "You got what you wanted." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[27]Then the rebel will be scared to death and the consequences of his sin rip him apart when he cries out in anguish.

[28]He'll cry out for mercy but he'll not get it; he'll seek You but You'll not be found. There is no second chance in hell [29]because the rebel hated Your way of life and would not listen and learn from You. He rejected Your plans for his life [30]and refused to do what You wanted him to do. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

A fool is a man or woman who refuses to follow common sense, who refuses to obey the rules, and who refuses to do the things we call wise. The fool has rejected God; "The fool has said in his heart, 'There is no God'" (Ps. 14:1). "They hated knowledge and did not choose the fear of the LORD'" (Prov. 1:29). Rather than doing the right thing,

the fool would rather do selfish things, or do what makes him happy, or what satisfies the flesh. Because the fool marches to his own drumbeat, he hates rules and laws. The fool wants to do things that transgress the law (Prov. 10:23; 13:19; 29:27). Lord, I want to honor You in all I do. Keep me from doing foolish things. I say "no" to selfish desires, and I say "yes" to Your plan for my life. Amen.

31 Therefore he shall bear the consequences
of his sin. He shall suffer the misery he
gives others; his vile trespass shall be his
own punishment. 32 Lord, because Your
children turn to You this shall be proof
that the wicked could have repented. {399
Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Lord,
Your prosperity on the righteous should
have warned the wicked to change. {187
God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21,
23} 33 But Lord, those who listen and learn
from Your instructions shall be safe in
Your presence, and shall be delivered from
evil.

Lord, help me learn and obey Your requirements, so I will always know what to do. Give me all the wisdom I need so I will always be fair and impartial. Help me teach those who don't know all they need to know and do. Help me carefully listen and learn, and become more understanding so I will always do the right thing. Help me gain much counsel from the wise so I can become wise, and learn to understand things that are difficult. Amen.

Proverbs 2

Good Decisions Will Treat You Right

1 Lord, I receive Your Word as a child
receives instruction from a parent. I hide
Your instructions deep within my heart.
{535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} 2 I will
open my ears to hear and understand Your
wisdom. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer,
Col. 1:9} 3 I will passionately seek to know
You and tell others what I understand. 4 I
want Your knowledge more than money
and more than a hidden pot of gold. {451
Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}
5 Lord, teach me to reverence Your ways
and know how You want me to live. {406
Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} So give
me wisdom to know You and obey what
You tell me to do. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom
Prayer, Col. 1:9} 6 Lord, I know there is
abundant wisdom for those who seek to
live the right way; 7 and You protect those
who know You, who attempt to walk the
right way. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa.
43:2, 3} You show the right paths to those
who make right decisions. {207 Guid-
ance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 8 Lord, when I
honestly seek to do the right thing, Your
Spirit helps me to know what to do, and
He guides me in good paths. 9 When I
experience Your wisdom, I direct my life
correctly and I enjoy fellowship with You.
{166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
10 When I experience Your wisdom, I don't
make bad decisions and I don't make mis-
takes. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col.
1:9} 11 Then evil people don't take advan-
tage of me 12 nor do they talk me into

making bad decisions. [13]Evil people reject Your ways of thinking and refuse to live by Your principles. [14]Evil people also love to think evil and do evil [15]and brag about it to everyone. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}

[16]Lord, deliver me from a flirtatious trollop who tries to flatter me with her words. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [17]She had rejected the right way about sex and turned her back on Your rules of purity. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [18]A man is heading toward a disastrous death when he has sex with her. [19]No one who goes to bed with her can be blameless in his own eyes; he is headed toward hell. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

The loose woman described in Proverbs is a trollop which Webster defines as "A slovenly, dirty woman, a sexually promiscuous woman, a prostitute."[1] The word trollop comes from troll, which is pulling a lure used to catch fish. Contemporary synonyms for trollop are slut, hussy, adulteress, fornicator. American high schoolers would call another girl a "ho" who acts like a harlot. A trollop never thinks about her own spiritual condition, nor the fate of what will happen to her body or soul (5:6; 9:13). Nor does she tell the men whom she seduces that they are being led inevitably to destruction (2:18, 19; 6:26; 7:22, 23; 9:18).

[20]But when I obey Your wisdom, O Lord, I am headed toward eternal life. I am on the right path, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [21]because those who follow Your principles will enter into fellowship with You {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} and stay there so long as they obey You. [22]But the rebellious will eventually die and not enjoy fellowship with You. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Proverbs 3

Learning from Correction

[1]Lord, I will not forget Your principles, but I will live the way You direct. [2]I know that Your principles will give me satisfaction and help me live a long time. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}

[3]Don't let Your mercy and truth forsake me. I will post Your laws where I will constantly see them and will meditate on them continually. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} [4]I know when Your principles control my thought processes; You'll add value to my life and others will respect my commitment to truth. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

[5]Lord, I will trust in You with all my heart. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [6]I will not lean on the old way of doing things nor will I make decisions apart from You. In all my actions I will acknowledge You, and You will direct my paths. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[7]I will not do things my own way nor prize my opinions over Yours. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} I will reverence You in all I do and separate myself from all appearances of evil. [8]Your paths shall make me wise and healthy; Your ways shall make

me strong. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
9Lord, I give You all that I have; I will bring a tithe of everything to You. 10You promise that my checking account will have enough; You will meet all my needs as they come. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
11Lord, I will not complain when You punish me because I know You correct wrong actions. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 12I know You're my heavenly Father who loves and cares for me, and You correct me when I disobey, just as an earthly father corrects his child. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2}
13I'll rejoice when I find Your principles and know how to direct my life. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 14Your correction is a valuable gift, better than a gift of money. 15Your correction is better than expensive jewelry; nothing can compare to Your care of me. When I do the things You teach me, {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} 16I'll live longer than those who reject Your way and I'll be more satisfied than a rich person. I'll be more honored than a famous person. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 17And I'll have a pleasant life; I'll live in peace. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 18Your principles can give everyone a good life; everyone can enjoy Your happiness. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
19Lord, You created natural laws to rule the earth. Your principles guide the universe. 20You had a reason for creating the seas, and You directed rain to fall on the earth.
21Since You have the power and wisdom to create all things, I won't neglect Your laws for me; I will live by Your principles. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
22Lord, I know Your laws will enrich my life; they help me do all I should do. 23Your principles guide my daily life; they keep me from making terrible mistakes. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 24When I lie down to go to sleep at night, my conscience won't keep me awake. 25And I will trust You when the wicked come, bringing sudden terror and destruction. 26Because I have yielded to Your paths, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} You will not let anything happen to me that is not within Your plan.
27Lord, I will not withhold good from anyone who is entitled to it, when I am able to give it. 28I will not tell the needy to go away and come back tomorrow, if I can give them help immediately. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} 29I will not plan to hurt my neighbor who lives peaceably with me. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 30I will not fuss needlessly with anyone when there is no reason to disagree.
31I will not look up to oppressive people nor follow their example 32because I know they are an abomination to You and You have cursed them. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 33Lord, You have told me inwardly how to live and You bless the home of those who live right.
34I know You scorn the scorner and You give grace to the humble. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 35You give honor to those who honor You while You neglect

those who neglect You. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, You have told me inwardly how to live and You bless the home of those who live right. I know You scorn the scorner and You give grace to the humble. You give honor to those who honor You while You neglect those who neglect You. Amen.

Proverbs 4

Listening to Parents' Advice

[1]Lord, I will listen to the instructions of my father in order to gain understanding, [2]because I know I have a good life when I don't go against his advice. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} [3]My father was once a child to his father, and my mother loved me tenderly. [4]He wanted me to respect his advice so I could have a happy and prosperous life. [5]My father told me to acquire as much education as I could master, and not go against the things I learned. [6]He told me to guard the way I think and it would guard my life. {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} [7]Lord, the first thing I want to get is wisdom and make sure I apply it to my life. [8]When I make understanding first in my life, it will make me first in the lives of others. [9]My understanding will make me honorable, when I honor the pursuit of wisdom. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

[10]Lord, I will learn wisdom from my father so I will live a long life. [11]My father endeavored to teach me the right things so I could live the right way. [12]Then when I walk, my steps won't stumble; and when I run, I'll not fall down. [13]I'll learn from my father's discipline and not forget how he directed me, for it is the essence of my life's purpose. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

[14]Lord, I'll not follow wicked people, nor will I do things evil people do. [15]I'll avoid what they do and go the opposite way [16]for they can't rest well unless they have rebelled against the law and have caused others to do the same thing. [17]Their whole passion is doing their own thing and causing others to rebel against Your ways. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[18]Lord, I know the path of people who do right gets brighter every day and leads toward the shining light. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} [19]But the path of those who do wicked things gets darker all the time, and eventually they stumble in their night. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[20]Lord, I will pay attention to what my father says and listen to his wise advice. [21]I will not turn away from his counsel nor will I refuse to listen to his direction, [22]because his instructions will make things easier and will enrich all I do in life. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

[23]Lord, I will focus my heart on You because my heart guides all that I do. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [24]Lord, I will guard my mouth from evil speaking and will always tell the truth. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

[25]I will also guard my eyes, so that I will not look on evil to lust after it. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [26]I'll always follow the right paths according to where my heart directs me. [27]I'll not turn to the left or right and I'll always turn away from evil. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

Lord, above everything else I do, I will guard my heart, for it directs all I do in life. I'll always tell the truth according to what I know in my heart. I'll always follow the right paths according to where my heart directs me. I'll not turn to the left or right and I'll always turn away from evil. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} ***Amen.***

Proverbs 5

Beware of the Trollop

[1]Lord, help me listen to wise advice and understand helpful counsel [2]that I may learn life-improving principles and not forget beneficial truth. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [3]Lord, I know a tempting woman tells lies; sweet little tales to get her way. Slithering words make her happy. [4]She will make my life bitter. Her mouth will cut me up and down, [5]her feet will lead to my death; she will guide me straight to hell. [6]I will go the opposite way and seek the path of life; this woman's path is slippery, no one knows where she leads. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [7]Lord, You said to listen to You and to follow Your direction. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [8]You said to get away from that woman and stay away from her house [9]lest I sacrifice my good honor [10]and destroy my faithful years. [11]Then will I grieve in old age because my lust consumed my life. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [12]Lord, the man who chases skirts hates Your advice and despises Your reproof of his sin. [13]He refuses to listen to those who point out his stupidity and turns his back on those who warn him. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [14]Lord, evil almost got me and I was a good church member.

[15]I realize I must drink from my own well [16]and not sacrifice my life to the lust of the flesh. [17]I must preserve my own self-esteem and not give it away. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [18]Then You will bless my decisions and I will rejoice with my spouse. [19]She shall give me comfort and strength and I will be happy with her, and we will be happy with each other. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [20]Lord, I will not be ravished with a whorish woman nor find my love with a trollop. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

[21]Every one of my actions is always seen by You and You know everything I do. [22]Those who sin against you, shall be a prisoner to their iniquity; their lust shall become their punishment. [23]They shall die without knowing anything better; and the greatest consequence of their sin is that it drives them away from You. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I will not be ravished with a whorish woman nor find my love with a trollop.

Every one of my actions is always seen by You, and You know everything I do. Those who sin against You will be a prisoner to their iniquity; their lust shall become their punishment. They shall die without knowing anything better; and the greatest consequence of their sin is that it drives them away from You. Amen.

Proverbs 6

Work Hard and Watch Out for Loose Women

[1]Lord, I will not co-sign a friend's loan, nor will I shake hands on a bad deal [2]because my agreement will become a trap and my words will come back to haunt me. [3]I will get out of every bad arrangement; then I won't lose my friends when they try to take advantage of me. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [4]Lord, I will be responsible for my livelihood; I won't sleep when I should work. [5]I won't get caught in a bad deal when the swindler tries to trap me.

[6]I will learn from the industrious ants who have learned to work diligently, [7]even when no one makes them work. [8]They work continually in the summer so they'll have food after the harvest is over. [9]I will not be a lazy sluggard, but will awaken to carry out my responsibilities. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [10]The sluggard closes his eyes to his job; he folds his hands instead of working. [11]He shall be poor because of his procrastination as though a thief has stolen everything he possessed. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

[12]Lord, I will not be a wicked man who makes promises he doesn't plan to keep, [13]who winks his eye at evil, yet sins with his hands and feet. [14]I will not plan evil to get ahead, nor will I entertain myself with sin. [15]I know the evil man will be judged suddenly; his punishment will break him in two. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[16]Lord, I know You hate six things, and the seventh is an abomination to You. [17]First, is an arrogant attitude {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} and second, a lying tongue. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} Third, You hate hands that shed innocent blood, [18]and fourth, You hate a heart that thinks evil. The fifth are feet that lead to trouble, [19]and sixth, is a false witness who tells lies. The seventh is the worst of all, the gossip who continually stirs up trouble among brethren. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}

[20]Lord, I will keep my father's rules, and will not displease my mother. [21]I will memorize them carefully [22]and repeat them daily as I try to live right.

I want them to lead me to success, and keep me when I sleep and refresh me when I awake. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

[23]Lord, Your commands are a light to my feet and light to my path. Your commands correct me when I stray, and will renew my life. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

[24]Lord, let Your commands keep me from a trollop who will flatter to seduce me. [25]I will not lust after her beauty, nor will her fluttering eyelids tempt me. [26]A man will

not be worth two cents who falls to the temptation of a whorish woman because the adulteress woman will snare his life. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

[27]Can I put fire inside my shirt without burning my clothes? [28]Can I walk on flaming hot coals without burning my feet? [29]Neither can I have sex with another woman without searing my conscience and reputation. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[30]Lord, people do not hate a thief who steals because he is hungry. [31]But when a thief is caught, he must repay sevenfold for his crime. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [32]He who has sex outside his marriage must pay restitution like the thief; he may have to sacrifice all the wealth he has accumulated. He who commits adultery is a fool; he destroys himself.

[33]He will get nothing but punishment and embarrassment and he will never forget his escapade. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [34]Because jealousy boils over into rage, the offended man will not show mercy when he takes revenge. [35]He will not accept your apology, nor any other way you try to appease him. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2}

Lord, let Your commands keep me from a trollop who will flatter to seduce me. I will not lust after her beauty, nor will her fluttering eyelids tempt me. A man will be worth nothing if he falls to the temptation of a whorish woman, because she will snare his life. Can I put fire inside my shirt without burning my clothes? Can I walk on flaming hot coals without burning my feet? Neither can I have sex with another woman without searing my conscience and reputation. Amen.

Proverbs 7

A Description of One Who Despises Wisdom

[1]Lord, I will obey the directions of my father and not forget what he expects of me. [2]I will obey the commands in every area of life and will not shut my eyes to any directive. [3]Like a string tied on my finger, my heart will never forget them; [4]and wisdom will talk to me like an older sister, so I will please my whole family. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [5]Lord, Your wisdom will keep me from the seductive trollop who will tempt me with her flattery. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

[6]I was looking out the window of my home [7]and saw a naive youth who lacked common sense. [8]He was hanging around a dressed-up trollop and was stupid enough to keep talking to her; he wasn't wise enough to flee danger. He accepted her invitation to go to her place. [9]It was dark so he thought no one would see him; but evening twilight always turns dark, and he was blinded by the blackness of evil. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20}

[10]The woman was dressed in sexually revealing clothes, [11]but she was not beautiful; rather, she was a "ho," just cheap

trailer trash. 12She did not value her home or reputation but prowled the bars to pick up men. 13She flirted with the naive youth and blew him a kiss, then winked at him. 14"We're made for each other," she coaxed him; then she said, "Where have you been all my life? 15I've been looking for someone like you," she continued, "now I'm not going to let you get away! 16You'll love my apartment," as she invited him to her place. "It's here a man can really feel happy. 17Let's spend the night together," she tempted him. 18"We will experience more exciting love than we've had with anyone else." {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 19She told the gullible youth, "My man is gone and won't return until next week. 20He's got a lot to do in another town and no one will ever know." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

21Because the trollop knows the weaknesses of men, the naïve youth helplessly gives into her offer. 22He follows her like a fatted animal to its slaughter or like a convicted felon to the electric chair. 23He takes a bullet in his gut, and like a fish swallowing a lure, he never realizes she leads to death. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

24Lord, I will seek out wise advice and do exactly as I am told. 25I will not reject good counsel, nor will I turn my back on godly advisers. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 26I know the trollop has wounded many gullible men; she's even destroyed strong men. 27Her bed is not heaven, but hell; it leads straight to death. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Proverbs 8

A Defense of Right Thinking

1Lord, I know I should think my thoughts after You; Your principles call to me. 2I see Your principles in the ways of life and when I face the crossroads of decisions. 3I think of Your principles when I leave to go out, and when I return home. 4And to everyone else Your principles are self-evident but many refuse to obey Your logic. 5Why don't the untaught learn from You, why don't the fools pay attention? 6Everyone should listen to Your noble principles and do what is right 7because Your principles are the right way to live, and they are the opposite of evil. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 8Lord, all Your principles are right; no one will go astray who obeys Your words. 9Those with understanding know Your words are true, and those who discover them find right knowledge. 10I will choose Your instruction instead of silver; I want Your knowledge more than gold.

11Because Your wisdom is better than jewels, nothing can be compared to true knowledge. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

12Wisdom will lead me to do the appropriate thing, and will help me solve problems, and be creative. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 13Lord, I reject pride, breaking Your law, and telling lies, I will always put You first in my life. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

Lord, I will always put You first in my life. You love those who follow Your principles and I will love wisdom to become smarter. I want godly character, inner peace, and Your happiness. Amen.

14Then I will have a basis for making good
decisions and will live with confidence.
{207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
15Good managers must follow true prin-
ciples, and they must always choose to
do right. 16Managers-in-training must
develop good principles if they will prop-
erly administer their task. 17Good princi-
ples will bless those who seek them, so I
will seek God's wisdom to become wiser.
{456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph.
3:18} 18Then I will become richer and wiser
because I have inner strength that is greater
than money. 19I will receive more than tan-
gible goods and more than wages, stock
options, and retirement benefits. 20I will be
guided by inner character and will do things
right. 21Then I'll have an inheritance for
those who love me and will bless their lives.
{337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22}
22Lord, You were eternally wise long
before You created everything. 23You were
directed by Your wisdom when You set
up everything in the beginning. 24Before
there were ocean depths, and artesian
springs, You did everything by the princi-
ples of Your wisdom. 25Before mountains
were brought forth, and hills created, You
followed Your wisdom in doing things.
26Before You created the earth and the
fields, before You made the dust of the
earth, 27You established heaven as Your
home and determined the constant direc-
tion of the compass. {392 Recognizing
God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}
28You established the laws of nature by
Your wisdom, and from it came the rain on
the earth. 29You established the boundary
of creation so the seas don't come over the
dry land. 30You drew the blueprint of the
universe by Your wisdom and the earth is
controlled by Your principles. 31Now You
rejoice in Your inhabited world and You
delight in the children of mankind. {93
Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
32And now You bless all who live by Your
principles and listen to the wisdom of
Your decisions. 33Now You want everyone
to seek Your wisdom and live in harmony
with Your principles. {286 Listen-Prayer,
Matt. 18:19} 34You have promised to bless
those who listen to You and seek to do
Your will daily, 35because those who fol-
low Your principles find life and enjoy You
forever. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer,
Gen. 49:28} 36And those who ignore Your
principles hurt themselves, and those who
hate Your wisdom love death. {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Proverbs 9

Foolish Thinking Leads to Destruction

1Lord, I know that everything worth-
while in life is built on Your wise princi-
ples. 2Those who live wisely have plenty
of meat to eat and plenty to drink and a
table full of delicious desserts. 3Those who

live wisely give good advice to others; they freely share what they have learned. [4]Those who are gullible should learn from their wisdom; so should those who want to improve themselves. [5]They should desire to learn as much as they hunger for a meal and seek wisdom as much as they thirst for water. [6]Those who are foolish should repent of their stubborn ways and embrace Your wisdom. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [7]Lord, I know when I reprove scorners, they will hate my advice. [8]When I instruct a wise man, I know he will listen to what I tell him [9]because the wise man wants to learn from others so he can improve himself, his family, and his business. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

[10]Lord, it is wise to put You at the center of my life and I'll become holy as I follow Your principles. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [11]When I live wisely, I'll live longer and I'll enjoy the days You give me {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [12]for Your wisdom will make me a better person, but the negative person makes his life more bitter. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

[13]Lord, I know when a woman is a foolish busybody; [14]the more she listens to gossip, the dumber she becomes. [15]She always runs to hear more gossip; yet she is both foolish and uneducated. [16]Only naïve people listen to her. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} She delights to hear about those who are having an affair [17]because she thinks stolen waters are sweet and bread eaten in secret is pleasurable. [18]She doesn't realize she's enjoying gossiping about those who rebel against God and about those going to hell. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I will be wise and put You at the center of my life. I'll become holy as I follow Your principles. When I live wisely, I'll live longer; and I'll enjoy my life. Your wisdom will make me a better person, while the negative person makes his life more bitter. Amen.

Proverbs 10

Right Believing Leads to Success

[1]Lord, I know wise sons please their fathers, but a foolish son weighs heavily on his mother.

[2]All the wealth of wickedness can't give inner happiness, but those who live right have peace the world can't enjoy. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [3]Lord, I know You give a full life to those who live right, but the rebel will never find happiness.

[4]The lazy man will eventually be poor, but the diligent will become prosperous. [5]Smart young men work hard in the growing season, but foolish young men play during the harvest. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

[6]Lord, You add value to those who live by right principles, but those who rebel against Your laws suffer the consequences of their broken laws. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]I like to remember those who do their duty, but the memory of the rebel stinks.

[8]Those who are wise will try to do Your commands, but a bragging fool will fail to do right. [9]Those who live uprightly will have confidence, but those who undermine the steps of others will eventually fail at all they do.

[10]Those who overlook the sins of others and their mistakes will eventually suffer for their oversight.

[11]Those who speak the right things will help others and those who condone breaking Your principles will eventually suffer the violence of those broken laws. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[12]Those who love, overlook the faults of others, but those who hate, stir up strife. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

[13]Lord, I find wise thinking in wise men, but the fool who rejects good advice deserves the punishment he receives.

[14]Wise men want to learn more wise things, but fools don't care about learning anything; they are destroying any chance of a good life.

[15]A wise man has many kinds of treasures; they protect him in many ways, but the fool has only his poverty which cannot protect him from destruction.

[16]The life work of those who do right gives them the life they want to live. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} The sin of a fool is simply doing nothing, and the laziness of a fool gives him nothing. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

[17]Lord, those who follow Your unchangeable principles are walking in the way of eternal life. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

[18]A fool lies to hide his hatred and slanders those who oppose his way of life. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} The wise are able to discipline their words.

[19]The more some people try to explain away their failure, the more I know they are lying. [20]The works of people who do right are worth lots of money, but the heart of an evil man is not worth much. [21]The speech of people who do right helps many, but people die who listen to the words of a fool. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

[22]Lord, Your blessings make me rich, and You don't add sorrow to it. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}

[23]The fool has fun breaking Your laws, but those who give themselves to wisdom know better. [24]The wicked usually experience the thing he fears, and those who desire to do right usually get what they want in life. [25]The death of the wicked comes like a blowing wind; they are gone and nothing remains. Those who do right also die, but they leave a lasting influence on other people.

[26]Those who are lazy sluggards are like a vile taste to the tongue, like smoke that irritates the eyes. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

[27]Lord, You lengthen the years of those who do right, but shorten the lives of the wicked. [28]The dreams of those who do right bring joy, {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} but the expectations of the wicked pass away. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [29]Lord, doing Your will gives me strength, {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

but the strength of those who rebel against You will be gone.
30Those who do right will speak right things, but the tongue of the wicked is worthless. 31Those who do right will know what to say, but those who do evil never have the right words. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 32Those who do right will live forever, but those who do wickedness will not inhabit the earth.

Lord, doing Your will gives me strength, and helps me speak the right things. I will do right so I will know what to say at the right time. Amen.

Proverbs 11

Wrong Thinking Leads to Failure

1Lord, I know You hate false advertisements, but You delight when I tell the truth.
2When I follow Your principles, I have true self-understanding, but those driven by their egos end up embarrassing themselves. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
3Lord, I want to be guided by integrity, because the lies of rebels shall destroy them. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}
4Lord, I want Your deliverance when I live right, because money will not help when You judge the wicked. 5You deliver me when I live right, but the dreams of rebels will never happen, and the plans of lawbreakers perish with them. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 6Lord, You deliver me when I want to know the truth, but You allow liars to be destroyed by their lies.
7When the wicked are destroyed, their expectations on this earth are destroyed; so is their hope after death. 8But those who seek to be righteous will be saved, while the wicked will be destroyed. 9The lies of a hypocrite destroy his neighbor, but I will be delivered when I know the truth. 10The city rejoices when its inhabitants do right and they shout when rebels are punished.
11A city is blessed when its people obey Your laws, but it is overthrown when they listen to the evil speech of the rebels. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
12Lord, I will not tell everything I know, but those who hate their neighbor are not smart.
13They spread the dirt of gossip about them. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
14Lord, I know faithful friends don't embarrass others. Those who seek wisdom get safe advice.
15But those who listen to fools will be tripped up. I know I'll end up paying what is owed if I sign a note for someone I don't know. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
16Lord, a gracious woman is loved, but hateful people are hated by others. A strong man is respected, 17and a merciful man gets mercy. {453 Spiritual-Stability Prayer, Eph. 5:6} 18An evil person really gains nothing from what he earns. But a good person will surely be rewarded. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 19The person who is truly good will live. But the one who chases after evil will die.

{279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [20]Lord, those who do right are Your delight, but those who lie are an abomination to You. [21]Those who do right plant good seeds, and one wicked person can't keep another from being punished.
[22]A beautiful woman who acts like a fool is like a beautiful jewel in a pig's nose. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[23]Lord, those who do right dream of being good, but the rebel can only expect wrath.
[24]Those who give away goods eventually get them back, and those who withhold their goods end up in poverty. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}
[25]Lord, You bless the generous soul, and those who add value to others will have value added to them. [26]People bless those who provide for them, but curse those who will not sell them food. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
[27]Those who diligently seek good will find it and those who seek evil will be found by it, because what goes around comes back around.
[28]Those who think their money will get them ahead will always fall behind. Those who always do the right thing will flourish like a fruitful farm.
[29]Those who make trouble for their family will inherit a whirlwind. And the fool will always be a slave to the wise who does the right thing.
[30]The fruit of those who do the right thing grows on the tree of the wise.
[31]Those who do right will be rewarded with right things and the wicked will be rewarded with wickedness. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

Lord, I want to be guided by integrity, I want Your deliverance when I live right, because money will not help when You judge people. You deliver me when I live right, and the plans of the lawbreakers perish with them. Amen.

Proverbs 12

The Contrast between Right Believing and Wrong Thinking

[1]Lord, I love to learn the good principles of life; I don't want to be stubborn like those who hate to be corrected.
[2]I will do good things to obtain Your favor; I won't think evil because it leads to judgment.
[3]I shall not be established by doing wicked things, but I will be grounded in living right. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[4]A woman who lives wisely is a crown to her husband. A woman who embarrasses her husband is like cancer in the bones. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[5]Lord, I will think about doing right, and will do right; those who listen to wicked counsel deceive themselves. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [6]Lord, I will do right and help other people; I will do right and build my family on a solid rock. Wicked people hurt other people.
[7]The wicked always fail and their names will be forgotten. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[8]Lord, I want to be known as one who lives by Your principles because those who hate and criticize are despised.
[9]Yet even those who are hated but who work for their food are better than lazy people who puff themselves up and don't have anything to eat. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}
[10]Lord, I am kind to my animals, and I get my work done with them. It's better than those who speak kind words to them and yet treat them cruelly.
[11]When I plow and plant my ground, I will have bread to eat after the harvest. But the lazy man won't do anything and will not have food to eat. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}
[12]Lord, I want the fruit from doing right; I don't want to follow the schemes of deceivers. [13]I will walk around the trouble I see, but an evil-speaking man will be tripped up by his words. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [14]I will be satisfied with the money I agree to work for and I will live by the things I get from my work. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}
[15]Lord, the fool thinks he always does the right thing, but the person who listens to wise counsel gets ahead. [16]Everyone knows when a fool loses his temper, but a wise man doesn't show his anger.
[17]He says the right words slowly and quietly. [18]The words of a fool pierce like a knife, but the counsel of the wise gives health. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [19]The lies of a fool will eventually be revealed, but no one can correct the words of a wise man. [20]The fool deceives people because he continually plans evil. But those who listen to the truth will be happy.
[21]The wicked will continually plan to do wicked things, but the wise will continually plan to do right. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [22]Lord, I know You hate lips that lie,and You love those who tell the truth.
[23]The fool always talks about foolish things and the wise man thinks about what is right. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[24]Lord, I will always work diligently because it will make me successful; but the lazy will not be successful.
[25]I will always speak good words because it will make life easier and happy; but discouraging words will make an old man out of me. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[26]Lord, when I continually live by the right principles, I am a testimony to my neighbors. The lazy man tries to get everyone to live at his level of incompetence and inactivity.
[27]The lazy man won't take advantage of his opportunities, but the diligent turns them into money.
[28]Those who do right, follow the path of eternal life; the path of the procrastinator leads to death. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

Lord, I love to learn the good principles of life; I don't want to be stubborn like those who hate to be corrected. I will do good things to obtain Your favor; I won't do evil because it leads to judgment. I won't be

established by doing wicked things, but I will be grounded in living right. Amen.

Proverbs 13

How to Live Right

[1]Lord, I will listen to my father's wise instruction, but a sarcastic son won't take any advice. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}
[2]Lord, I will speak good words so I will prosper, but the rebel will eventually get violence. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} [3]Lord, I will control my speech to properly discipline my life, but they are destroyed who don't care what they say. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[4]Lord, I will work diligently so I will prosper, but the lazy have nothing even though they want everything. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[5]Lord, I will live right and speak the truth, but the wicked will eventually be caught in his lies. [6]Right thinking keeps me doing the right things, but the evil desires of the wicked always trip him up. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[7]Lord, some people dream of riches but have nothing, but the poor man who works diligently can improve his bank account. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[8]Lord, people who live right enjoy the life You've given them, but the wicked are tripped up by their wicked thoughts.
[9]The right-thinking person lives in the light, but the evil one lives in darkness.
[10]Lord, proud people get everyone irritated at them, but I can learn to live right by listening to wise people, [11]and I'll increase my bank account by diligent work. But the arrogant will lose his money when he won't take advice. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[12]Lord, I sometimes get discouraged when I don't reach my goals that are too lofty. But when I accomplish the plans I make, my life feels complete and fulfilled. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}
[13]Lord, those who despise Your Word will be destroyed; I shall be rewarded when I live by Your principles. [14]Right living leads me to an abundant life and I shall not come into eternal punishment.
[15]Right thinking helps me focus on others, but those who break Your law will have a hard time. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} [16]Lord, help me understand the way You think and not be like the fool who opens himself to folly. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[17]Lord, help me be a faithful witness to my friends and not like the wicked who deceive others.
[18]I will learn from the counsel of the wise, but those who reject correction will be embarrassed by their failure and poverty. {432 Service-Response Prayer, Heb. 5:4}
[19]Lord, I'm happy when I reach my goals in life, but fools are never happy in their sin. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
[20]Lord, I'll make friends with people who think right so they'll influence me to live right. Those whose friends are fools will suffer the same consequences as fools. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

[21]Those who live right will be rewarded by righteousness, but evil will chase down a rebel and beat him to death. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[22]A good man's inheritance will extend to his grandchildren, but the inheritance of evil men will go to those who live right.
[23]The poor who live right have enough to eat, but wrong-thinking people eventually lose everything. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[24]Lord, I will correct my children so their decision-making won't be corrupted and I demonstrate my love to them by making them do right. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}
[25]Those who live right have satisfying lives, but the desires of evil are never satisfied. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

Lord, I will listen to my parents' wise instruction; I will not be like a sarcastic child who won't take any advice. I will speak good words to prosper because I know the rebel will eventually get punished. I will control my speech to properly discipline my life; and I will work diligently so I will prosper. I will live right and speak the truth, so my right thinking keeps me doing the right things. Amen.

Proverbs 14

The Fear of the Lord Leads to Right Living

[1]Lord, I know wise women strengthen their families, but foolish women tear it down with foolish actions. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[2]Lord, I will live rightly because I fear you, but those who live perversely despise You. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
[3]Lord, the words I speak will keep me out of trouble, but the words of a fool become his punishment. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[4]Lord, I'll keep out of trouble if I don't do anything, but I'll never accomplish anything in life. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[5]Lord, I'll not lie, but a liar will lie with every breath he takes. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
[6]Lord, it's easy to find Your wisdom when I search for it, but scoffers who don't want it can't find it. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [7]Lord, I'll stay away from fools and their influence because I won't hear Your wisdom from them. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [8]Lord, I'll look ahead to see where I'm going, but the fool deceives himself about right paths. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[9]Lord, I'll come to You to acknowledge my guilt, but fools make fun of their sin. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}
[10]Lord, only I know the loneliness of my heart and no one else can enter into my feelings. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
[11]Lord, You will establish the house of the righteous, but the home of the wicked will perish. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

12Lord, each person thinks he chooses the right path, but without You the path leads to death. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
13People laugh to hide their heavy hearts, but their grief remains when the laughter is over. {216 Heavy-Prayer, Matt. 11:28-30}
14Lord, I know you'll reward right living, but backsliders get what they deserve. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}
15Lord, I will be cautious about every step in life, but the simple believes everything he hears. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 16Lord, I will be wise by avoiding danger; the fool recklessly walks too close to the edge. 17He is quick-tempered and makes bad decisions; he is hated for his sin and stupidity. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 18Lord, You reward cautious people with good thinking, but the fool gets grief and failure. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 19Lord, eventually the evil person will recognize my good thinking, but I'll be within the gates of heaven and they'll be in hell. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
20Lord, the rich have many outward friends, while the poor are hated by their neighbors. 21Those who despise others, sin against You, but You bless those who show compassion. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22}
22Lord, You give me grace when I plan to do good, but those who plot evil will go astray.
23Those who work hard get ahead, while those who only talk get nothing.
24I will be rewarded for my hard work, but fools are rewarded with foolishness. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
25Lord, I will help others by telling the truth, but a liar is a traitor to everyone he speaks. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
26Lord, I am secure because I fear You, and my children also enjoy Your refuge. 27I drink the goodness of life from Your fountain and escape the temptations that lead to death. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
28Lord, a wise leader attracts many followers, but a lesser following shows his influence is declining. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
29Lord, I am very wise when I control my anger; those with quick tempers make foolish mistakes.
30Because I keep a tranquil spirit I'll be healthy, but those with envy and hate will rot away. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
31Lord, I will honor You by having mercy on the needy, but You are insulted by those who oppress the poor. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}
32I will be confident when I face my death, but the wicked will be judged by their wrong doings. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59}
33Lord, I will think right to guarantee my success, but the fool will fail because he will not think right. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 34Righteousness makes a nation great, but sin will always be a snare to any people. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
35The leader likes those who think right and act right, but is irritated with those

who make bad decisions. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}

Lord, I will live rightly because I fear You. Let the words I speak keep me out of trouble. I will not lie even though some lie with every breath they take. Lord, it's easy to find Your wisdom when I search for it, but scoffers who don't want it can't find it. I'll stay away from fools and their influence, because I won't hear Your wisdom from them. I'll look ahead to plan where I'm going and base my life on right paths. Amen.

Proverbs 15

A Cheerful Heart Leads to Right Believing

[1]Lord, help me remember that a soft answer turns away anger, but angry words stir up more anger. [2]Help me wisely use all I've learned and not be like the fool who spouts foolishness. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[3]Lord, I know Your eyes are everywhere, seeing both evil and good actions. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[4]Help my words give life and health to others and may they not deceitfully crush the spirit of people. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[5]Help me learn wisdom when I am corrected and not be like the fool who despises his parents' discipline. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
[6]May my house be filled with the treasures of wisdom and not be like rebels who get trouble from their money. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
[7]Lord, help me give good advice to others, because fools do not have wisdom to share with friends. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[8]I know You delight in the prayers of righteous people, but reject good works by wicked people. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [9]I know You love those who pursue right living and who despise the wickedness of the wicked. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[10]Lord, You discipline those who forsake Your straight path and they will die by refusing Your correction. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[11]Because You know what's in death and hell, how much more You know what's in the human heart. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[12]Lord, because a scorner won't listen to correction he won't go to the wise for advice. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[13]Lord, I have a happy face because my heart rejoices, but a scorner breaks the human spirit. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
[14]Give me an inquiring mind so I can become wise; I don't want to be like a fool who feeds on foolishness. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[15]Lord, every day You set a new table before me, but the scorner is daily stressed with affliction. {97 Daily-Prayer, Acts 2:42}
[16]I would rather have little food and fear You than have plenty to eat and a life of trouble. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

17Better a bowl of vegetable soup with someone you love than a sirloin steak with someone you hate. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

18Lord, I will be a peacemaker because quick-tempered people disrupt things.

19I will be diligent so my path will be easy, because the lazy person allows thorns to grow over everything. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

20Lord, I will make my parents proud of me, because the rebellious son shows he hates his parents. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

21I will live sensibly and stay on the right track even when fools find happiness in being foolish. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

22I will need the help of good counselors to make good plans because plans go astray without wise advice. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

23Lord, help me always say the right thing at the right time because people listen to a fitting reply. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

24I will follow the path that leads to life above and avoid the rebellious ways that lead to hell. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

25Lord, You destroy the things of arrogant people who think they've made it by themselves; and You protect the property of widows.

26I hate the thought of taking or giving bribes because wicked money earned by wicked acts troubles the family. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

27Lord, You delight when I speak right words the right way, but You despise the wicked thoughts of the wicked.

28I will think about my answers before speaking because evil people only spew out evil words. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

29Lord, You hear the prayers of right-acting people, but You shut Your ears to the wicked. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

30I'm happy when I see an optimistic glance in the eyes of another person because good news lifts my spirit. {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23}

31I will be comfortable around wise people because I want to learn from their counsel. 32I will grow in understanding when I listen to the wise, but a man hurts himself when he doesn't listen to others. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 33Lord, reverencing You is the first step to successful thinking and I must be humble before I receive honor. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

Lord, help me remember that a soft answer turns away anger, but angry words stir up more anger. Help me wisely use all I've learned and not be like the fool who spouts foolishness. Amen.

Proverbs 16

The Lord's Providential Care

[1]Lord, I will carefully discipline my speech so I trust You to help me give the right answers.
[2]Every man justifies his actions in his mind, but You, Lord, know the real motives of my heart. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[3]Lord, when I will commit myself to think right, my actions will be successful.
[4]You have a purpose for me in all You create and do; You even punish the wicked for a purpose. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
[5]If I think I am better than others, that is an abomination; that attitude will not escape punishment {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} even if rebels band with others who hate You.
[6]You punish by the standards of truth and consistency; I will reverence You to escape punishment. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}
[7]Lord, when my actions please You, my enemies cannot accuse me of anything.
[8]I would rather live right and have little gain than draw a huge salary from sinful acts. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}
[9]Lord, I make plans in the integrity of my heart, but You direct each step I take. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [10]You direct my life through government authorities; it's very difficult to go against their decisions. [11]You want me to be honest in everything I do because You know the correct measure of all things. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} [12]Lord, it is terrible when government authorities do wrong because You established their authority so people can live by laws. [13]Government officials expect everyone to keep the peace, and their job is easier when everyone lives by the law. [14]But government officials punish when they are mad so I will not anger them. [15]I'm fortunate when governmental officials smile at me because they can be as beneficial as an autumn rain. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[16]Lord, I would rather have a good mind than great riches, and I would rather think successfully than get wealth.
[17]I will walk the right way and turn my back on evil to preserve my soul. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[18]Lord, pride will trip me up in many ways and a rebellious spirit will destroy me. [19]I would rather spend my life with humble people than get rich with a lot of haughty rebellious people. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
[20]Lord, I want the good results that come from handling problems wisely because I will be happy doing things Your way. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}
[21]I want to be wise with a reputation for self-discipline, and I want my optimism to motivate others to learn. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[22]I want to think right so I can live successfully, but to fools thinking right is foolishness. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[23]Lord, to think right begins with a choice to be wise and it will show when I speak.

[24]Good words are the source of a happy life and they give life to the whole body. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[25]Lord, each person thinks he chooses the right path, but without You the path leads to death. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[26]Lord, I work because it reflects who I am, but it's also a means to provide my livelihood. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[27]Lord, sinners are always thirsting for more sin, but their lips are burned when they drink it. [28]A deceitful person makes everyone mad, and a gossip drives a wedge between friends. [29]A violent man will challenge his friends to a fight and make them do things they don't want to do.
[30]He shuts his eyes to the truth, and criticizes everything, using his lips to get his evil way. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[31]Lord, I want to glorify You in my old age because I've always thought right to live successfully. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}
[32]When I keep my temper and don't blow my stack, I will be mightier than the mighty. When I conquer my inner spirit, I will be like those who conquer a city. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
[33]Lord, life is like the rolling of the dice, but You determine what will happen to everyone. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

Lord, I want to glorify You in all I do. I will live rightly to live successfully. I will keep my temper and not blow my stack. When I conquer my inner spirit, I will be like those who conquer a city. Amen.

Proverbs 17

A Fool Doesn't Think Right

[1]Lord, I'd rather eat a simple sandwich in peace than have the best banquet where hate is prevalent. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
[2]A wise employee who controls a rebellious son will be rewarded with those who are faithful.
[3]We have standards to test the purity of gold and silver, but only You honestly test the hearts of people. [4]Rebels are influenced by wicked conversation; liars pay attention to gross exaggerations. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[5]Lord, those mocking the poor make fun of You who made all people; those who rejoice at the accident of others will suffer accidents. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[6]Lord, grandchildren are our prize for getting older, and the pride of children is their parents and grandparents. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[7]Fools do not speak properly and lying leaders are even more foolish. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[8]Lord, I will get good will when I give a gift, if I give the gift in good faith. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}
[9]My love to another is strengthened when I overlook his faults; pointing out his problems separates the best of friends.

[10]I will learn even from rebels because I want to succeed, but a fool won't listen if you tell him a hundred times.
[11]Those who break rules are rebellious in their heart; they will only learn from the cruel consequences of their mistakes.
[12]It's safer to meet a bear robbed of its cubs than to deal with a fool in his foolishness.
[13]Lord, those who give evil to people who do them good will have more evil than they can bear; they will never get rid of evil.
[14]Those who start a fight are like those who open the flood gates; it's hard to stop a flood once it gets going, and it's hard to stop quarreling once it gets started.
[15]Lord, You hate those who excuse the rebel and condemn the righteous.
[16]A fool won't pay tuition for a college education, because he doesn't want to learn anything. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[17]Lord, I will love my friends at all times; that is one of my purposes in life. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
[18]Lord, if I guarantee a loan for someone, I am responsible for his debts. [19]Those who enjoy arguing also enjoy sinning; and those who brag about their strengths invite attacks.
[20]Those with twisted ideas do not try to live right and those with twisted tongues end up in trouble.
[21]It is painful to a parent to let their children become fools and a parent has no delight when his child won't think right. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[22]Lord, my rejoicing heart is good medicine, but a broken heart makes me feel bad all over. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}
[23]The rebel will accept illegal bribes to cover a lie or pervert justice. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[24]Lord, help me think right so I can live successfully; I don't want to be distracted by worldly traps.
[25]A foolish child who won't listen to right thinking angers a good father and embitters his mother who gave him birth.
[26]To punish the innocent is wrong; also it is wrong to punish leaders who do right. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
[27]Lord, help me use my knowledge to discipline my speech because wise people control their temper. [28]And a fool is thought wise if he doesn't speak; so others who keep their mouth shut will appear to be wise to everyone. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

Lord, help me think right so I can live successfully; I don't want to be distracted by worldly traps. Help me to use my knowledge to discipline my speech. Amen.

Proverbs 18

A Contrast between Perils and Blessings

[1]Lord, I don't want to be a recluse or a hermit; they selfishly think only of themselves and deny every principle of getting along with people.

[2]A fool never tries to learn from others; he only wants to arrogantly express his advice.
[3]A wicked person brings rebellion into the room, and then disrespect and arguments follow. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[4]Lord, I want my words to give the water of life flowing out to refresh everyone I encounter. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[5]Lord, it's wrong to reward the wicked and condemn those who do the right things.
[6]A fool gets into fights because of what he says, but it's his evil heart that gets him beat up.
[7]The mouth of a fool keeps him in constant trouble; he can't do right because his words continually trip him up.
[8]Gossip is slippery sweet like honey; it'll slip into the belly and make you sick. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[9]Lord, a lazy man who never accomplishes anything is as bad as one who destroys what others accomplish. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}
[10]Lord, Your name is a strong tower; I will run to You for safety.
[11]Lord, wealthy people think their riches are their defense; they think money is their fortification.
[12]Lord, I know proud people will eventually be destroyed; so make me humble so I can be successful.
[13]Help me listen carefully to matters before I answer because it's foolish to give the wrong answers. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
[14]Lord, I can make it through sickness when I think right, but I give up when my spirit is deflated. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
[15]I will be wise because I want to learn and I will learn because I've purposed to think right.
[16]Giving to people is a way to influence them and brings me before influential people.
[17]The first thing I hear usually seems to be right until someone straightens the record with the truth.
[18]Drawing straws can settle arguments because neither person has to give in, yet one person is the winner.
[19]It's harder to win back the friendship of an offended brother than to win a big physical fight, because the offense is taken to heart.
[20]Good food in the mouth satisfies the belly just like good words make the spirit happy. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[21]Lord, teach me to discipline my speech because the tongue can kill or nourish life. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[22]Lord, the man who finds a good wife discovers the greatest treasure to possess and he gets Your blessing in life. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[23]The poor always beg and need some help, but the rich seem to speak straightforwardly.
[24]A man must be friendly to have friends, and You are the friend that is closer than a brother. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, teach me to discipline my speech because the tongue can kill or nourish life. Help me be friendly in order to have friends. But You are the friend that is closer than a brother. Amen.

Proverbs 19

Build Character by Wise Believing

[1]Lord, I'd rather be poor and live morally upright than be a fool and morally dishonest.
[2]It's not wise to act impulsively without knowing what I'm doing; I'd rush ahead without knowing where I'm going.
[3]A fool is ruined by his own foolishness; he angrily blames God for his failure. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[4]Wealthy people seem to have many "friends" while the poor have only a few.
[5]Lies will always add grief to the liar; he will not escape his punishment.
[6]Many people want something from their leaders; they are his friend to get something.
[7]The relatives of a poor man despise him and his friends ignore him. When the poor man needs them and calls to them, they don't respond to his requests. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} Lord, I have enough self-respect to get wisdom.
[8]I will prosper because of right thinking.
[9]Those that put up a false front will be embarrassed and those who tell lies will be punished. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
[10]Lord, it's wrong for a fool to live in the lap of luxury and for jail inmates to tell presidents what to do. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[11]Lord, I'll discipline my anger because I want to be wise and I'll overlook the mistakes of others. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[12]The king's wrath terrifies like the roar of a lion, but his favor is like dew on the grass.
[13]A foolish son will disappoint his father, and a nagging wife irritates her husband like a faucet that keeps dripping. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[14]Lord, a house and wealth are inherited from one's parents, but You give a wife who thinks sensibly. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[15]A lazy person sleeps instead of working, and as a result he goes hungry. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[16]Lord, I live correctly when I obey your commands; those who despise Your way of life will die. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[17]Lord, I'm lending to You when I help the poor; I know You will repay in many ways. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}
[18]I will discipline my children while they can learn so their life won't be ruined. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}
[19]A violent-tempered person will pay for his anger; you can try to stop him from getting mad but you'll have to do it again. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[20]Lord, I will obey good advice and learn from discipline so I'll have a good life for

the rest of my life. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}
[21]Lord, I can make plans in my heart but Your purpose in life will prevail. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
[22]Lord, I will be loyal so I can influence people and I'd rather be poor than get money by lying. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}
[23]Lord, I will reverently trust You for eternal life and evil will not be able to touch me. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}
[24]Some people are so lazy that they will not lift a hand to feed themselves.
[25]When the rebellious person is punished, the simpleton can learn from that example. When the wise are corrected, they learn valuable lessons. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[26]The children who mistreat their father or reject their mother are a disgrace and embarrassment to them. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
[27]Lord, when I stop listening to correction, I have turned my back on common sense.
[28]A lying witness makes a mockery of justice and wicked people drink in evil.
[29]The scorner will be judged for his scorn just as surely as fools will be judged. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Lord, I have enough self-respect to get wisdom and I will prosper because of right-believing. Those who put up a false front will be embarrassed, and those who tell lies will be punished. Amen.

Proverbs 20

Build a Life of Integrity

[1]Lord, wine makes a mockery of wise people, and liquor leads to fights; I will not be led astray by using it. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[2]Lord, the leader's anger is like a lion's roar; those who make him mad risk their lives.
[3]Lord, I will become wise by avoiding quarrels; any fool can fly off the handle in rage. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[4]Lord, those who are too lazy to plow in the spring won't have any food in the harvest. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[5]Lord, my intentions lie deep within my heart, but a wise person can know what I'm thinking. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[6]Lord, many people announce they are my friends, but only the faithful ones stick with me.
[7]Lord, I want to think right and walk in integrity so my children may happily follow my example. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}
[8]Lord, I want to look at all the evidence before I decide if something is good or bad. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[9]Lord, I cannot say I am pure from all sin; no one can cleanse himself from iniquity. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[10]Lord, I know You hate double standards and price fixing; so padding an expense account and lying about taxes are wrong. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

[11]Lord, I want to be innocent and transparent like a child so everyone will know the purity of my heart. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [12]Lord, I want to hear what You made the ears to hear and see what You made the eyes to see. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

[13]Lord, I will not spend my days sleeping; but I will open my eyes to the tasks before me so my needs will be supplied. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[14]Lord, I will not bad mouth a product to get a better price and then go off and brag that I got a bargain. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

[15]Lord, I don't want just gold and jewels; I want to be wise in discernment and decision-making. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

[16]Lord, I will get collateral before making a loan; I will need security when making a loan to a stranger. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[17]Lord, when I steal or lie to get something illegally, it will turn sour in my stomach. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

[18]Lord, I will make good plans to have success in life, and I'll seek advice when attempting something big. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[19]Lord, I know a gossiper goes around telling secrets, so he can't tell anything I don't tell him. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

[20]Lord, the lamp of those who curse their father and mother will be put out and they'll be in darkness. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

[21]Lord, when I get a belonging too soon and too easily, I usually don't appreciate it in the long run. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}

[22]Lord, I won't give a bad deed in return for evil; rather, I'll wait for You to punish the evildoer. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[23]Lord, You hate a double standard that gives some an advantage and You despise double-entry bookkeeping. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

[24]Lord, You order the steps of a good man, so help me know how to walk properly. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

[25]Lord, it is a sin to pledge money to You and then change my mind and not give it. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[26]Lord, help me be a wise leader to determine who is violating the rules; then fire them before they do more damage. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[27]Lord, Your searchlight penetrates my human heart to expose all the reasons for my actions. {176 Frailty-Confession Prayer, Ps. 90:12}

[28]Lord, Your grace and truth put the king on the throne; Your mercy keeps him there. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

[29]Lord, the glory of a youth is his strength; the splendor of the elderly is their experience and wisdom. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[30]Lord, I know physical punishment will deal with disobedience if it deals with the heart, not just the body. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I want to be innocent and transparent like a child; I want to be pure of heart. Lord, I want to hear what You say to me and see what You show me. I will make good plans to have success in life, and I'll seek advice when attempting something big. Amen.

Proverbs 21

Build a Life Plan

[1]Lord, the king's heart is in Your hand like a river; You turn it wherever You please. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
[2]Lord, many think they are doing the right thing, but You know the truth found in each heart. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[3]Lord, You are more pleased when I do the right things than when I give you a gift of sacrifice. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[4]Lord, haughty eyes and an arrogant attitude are just as much sin as all the actions that break Your law. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[5]Lord, I will succeed with good planning and hard work, but I will fail when I goof off and give it my second best. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
[6]And wealth gotten by lying will vanish like the early fog; it is a sedative trap that leads to death.
[7]Also the violence of the wicked will destroy them, because they refuse to do the right thing. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[8]Lord, I know the rebel walks a rebellious path but those who think right will walk right. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
[9]Lord, I'd rather live on a small corner of a roof than share a large house with a nagging wife. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}

A shrew is an ill-tempered, mean woman. A man who will marry a "fussing" woman is condemned to a miserable wife. Pray that such a woman (1) will see the danger of her attitude, (2) will be convicted of her selfishness, (3) will be transformed by Christ, and (4) that her husband will be given wisdom on how to change her. Lord, I pray for a sweet optimistic attitude in life because I know attitudes lead to actions. Amen.

[10]Lord, evil people love to do evil things; they have no consideration for their neighbors. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[11]Lord, when a scoffer is punished, the lazy learns to think right; when the wise is instructed, he learns to live right. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}
[12]Lord, You know what happens in the home of the wicked and eventually You will judge their wickedness.
[13]Those who shut their ears to the requests of the poor will be ignored when their time of need comes.
[14]A personal gift gets favor to the giver, but a bribe under the table will be punished. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[15]Lord, I enjoy right living because I practice right thinking; and righteousness

terrifies the evildoers. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
16Lord, the one who strays from the path of common sense will end up dead like others who violated Your law.
17The ones given to pleasure will end up poor and the ones given to wine will never succeed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
18Lord, sometimes You punish the wicked to save the upright and You judge the treacherous to pressure the godly.
19It is better to live alone in the desert than to live with a complaining, negative wife. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
20Lord, the wise have a nice home and furnishings, but a fool spends his money as soon as he gets it. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
21Lord, when I seek to think right and live right You've promised me life, wisdom, and honor.
22The wise can conquer strong warriors because he uses wisdom to undermine their fortifications. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
23Lord, when I discipline my thinking and words, I will stay out of trouble.
24Those who are guided by overwhelming conceit are arrogant rebels of Your expectations. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

The scoffer is actually a fool, but he expresses his arrogance in criticism, negative responses, mockery, or showing contempt for others. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} The scoffer is proud, and thinks he is always right. The scoffer's problem is pride, arrogance, and self-centeredness. According to the Proverbs, "A proud and haughty man—'Scoffer' is his name; he acts with arrogant pride" (Prov. 21:24). The scoffer criticizes others because he thinks his actions or decisions are better than anyone else's. He is negative because he thinks he is right and everyone else is wrong. The scoffer's problem is not seeing the contribution of others. The scoffer criticizes because he is blinded by his pride, and feels he is better than anyone else. Lord, search my heart to find pride, haughtiness, and a superior attitude toward others. Help me hate my sin as much as You do. Cleanse me from wicked thoughts and evil deeds. I want to stand clean before You. Amen.

25The craving of a lazy man will eat him up because he is too lazy to work for the things he wants. 26He will not pay the price because he is greedy, but the righteous have something to give. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} 27Lord, you hate the good works of rebellious people, especially when they do them with ulterior motives.
28A lying witness will eventually be punished, but those who know the truth will be allowed to speak.
29A wicked man covers up his real feelings, but the upright plans to live right. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
30Lord, no human plans that are made against You will eventually succeed in the long run.

[31]The battle armaments are prepared for war, but You are the One who gives victory. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Proverbs 22

What to Avoid in Life

[1]Lord, I would rather have a good reputation than lots of money; I want respect more than silver or gold.

[2]The rich and the poor have one thing in common; You made them both. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[3]Lord, a wise man sees problems coming and gets out of the way, but problems run over the naïve; then he suffers the consequences. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[4]Lord, when I fear You, I have a proper view of myself and I will be properly equipped to make money. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[5]Lord, stubborn people will run into a lot of difficulties, but those who believe right will be able to avoid them. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

[6]Lord, if I properly train a child to believe and act right, he will live right when he grows up. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

[7]The rich rule over the poor, and the borrower is a slave to the lender.

[8]Lord, those who break the law end up in trouble, and it will do them no good to get angry. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[9]Lord, those who have a generous spirit add value to their lives because they share with the needy. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45}

[10]Lord, kick the sarcastic person out and people will stop fussing; also they will stop giving each other insults. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[11]Lord, those who are conscientious and give compliments will get the attention of the boss. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

[12]Lord, You protect the wise, right believing person and You upset the schemes of schemers. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[13]Lord, the lazy man makes up hypothetical problems, complaining there's a lion in the street all because he's too lazy to do anything. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

[14]Lord, the mouth of the adulteress is a deep hole; those who are angry with You fall into it. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[15]Lord, it's natural for a foolish child to do stupid things; he needs to be corrected to live a wise life. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1}

[16]It's not smart to make money off the poor and you'll lose the money you give to the rich. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

[17]Lord, I will pay attention when the wise instruct me so I can gain knowledge and wisdom.

[18]Because when I have the principles of wise people in my heart, I can explain why I live by God's rules.

[19]I will put my trust in the Lord alone and then I can tell others how to live for You.

{534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[20]Lord, Solomon has given us these worthwhile principles to instruct us how to live and to keep us out of trouble,
[21]So I can live with Your assurance, and tell others how You expect them to live. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
[22]Lord, I will not take advantage of the helpless who cannot help themselves and I won't sue the poor to get my money [23]because You watch out for the poor and withhold blessings from those who oppress them. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}
[24]Lord, I will not hang out with angry people nor become close friends with hotheads, [25]because being around them will make me become like them, and I'll suffer the consequences of their mean-spiritedness. {453 Spiritual-Stability Prayer, Eph. 5:6}
[26]Lord, I won't sign loan papers for those who ask me to guarantee a loan for them, because I'll eventually have to pay for them; [27]and if I don't have the money to pay their loan, my house and furniture will be repossessed. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[28]Lord, I won't move the ancient boundary markers that were set up by my ancestors, because the stability of the past guarantees my future. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}
[29]Lord, I want to be skilled at what I do so I will be recognized and promoted. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

Lord, Solomon has given us these worthwhile principles to instruct us how to live and to keep us out of trouble, so I can live with Your assurance, and tell others how You expect them to live. Amen.

Proverbs 23

Don't Lust for the Things that Evil People Get by Doing Evil

[1]Lord, help me when I sit to eat with leaders to remember who I am with.
[2]Help me not to gorge my stomach with food so that I won't embarrass myself.
[3]Help me not to lust after delicacies; being greedy for dainties reveals my lack of character and is not healthy and nourishing. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[4]Lord, help me not to exhaust myself pursuing money, but to be wise enough to control myself. Help me not to set my eyes on riches for I'll lose sight of everything else in life.
[5]Wealth is an elusive goal that has the wings of a bird; just when you think you have it, off it flies. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
[6]Lord, I'll not eat the food of a stingy man, nor be greedy for the delicacies of his table for he keeps count of all you eat; [7]he says to us, "Eat and drink"; he doesn't mean it. [8]For that which you eat, you have to repay; your compliments for his meal will be wasted. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

9Lord, I'll not quietly correct a fool, for he will despise the common sense I give him.
10Lord, I won't move the ancient boundary stones to encroach on the property of another; 11for You, Lord, are our Redeemer and You may take up the fight against us. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
12Lord, I will discipline my mind to learn knowledge and listen to hear words of wisdom. 13I will not withhold discipline from a child for if I correct him he will not die.
14But with correction he will learn wisdom and live. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
15Lord, I want my children to learn wisdom 16so that I'll be glad when they speak wise words.
17My heroes will not be those who despise Your law. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}
18Lord, I'll follow the example of those who follow You, for a solid future is with those who fear You and I'll not be cut down in the prime of life. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
19I'll listen to wise men and become wise; I'll set my mind on the right kind of life. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
20Lord, I'll not be addicted to guzzling strong drink nor will I eat like a pig; 21for both the drunkard and glutton will become poor and laziness will buy only rags to wear. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
22Lord, I'll listen to my father who gave me life and I'll love my mother all her life. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
23I'll give my money to get as much truth as possible and with it I'll get discipline, understanding, and wisdom. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}
24Lord, the father of a son who lives right will rejoice and a wise son will make him glad.
25So I will make my father and mother rejoice; they will be proud of me as their child. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
26Lord, I give You my heart to control my life; let my eyes see how You want me to live. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
27Lord, I reject the prostitute who is a deep ditch and I refuse the trollop who is a narrow well.
28They lie in wait to catch straying males and like predators, they eat human flesh. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
29Lord, every drunk has misery. They live with sorrow. They get into quarrels and fights. They get beat up and their body is bloodied. They have bloodshot eyes and a hangover.
30Those who can't say "No!" to liquor or beer continually search for a new mixed drink. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
31Lord, You tell us never to look with desire into the glass as it gives off its smell and smooth color. It may slide smoothly down the throat; it may seem like a heavenly taste.
32But liquor bites like a striking serpent; its sip is the venom of a deadly snake, so

I determine never to take my first drink. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

33Lord, the eyes of a drunken man see peculiar things; His mind is hopelessly messed up. He staggers as if he were walking on a rolling ship; 34his head heaves as if he's on the top of a mast.

35People can beat on him when he's drunk and he'll not feel it; but after he gets sober he'll feel like he's been beaten up. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

Lord, the pathetic drunk is addicted because when he gets sober, he asks, "Where can I get another drink?" The book of Proverbs does not allow for social drinking, or drinking in any form. Those who are foolish deserve any consequences they get while drunk. When Proverbs describes alcohol as the poison of a serpent or adder, it is saying one drop of poison will kill; so stay completely away. The drunk may lose control of his consciousness, but more importantly; he loses control of his morals. His speech is confused, and he staggers when he walks. Proverbs says the walk of a drunk is like his walking on a ship in the midst of a raging storm (Prov. 23:33). The drunken person's senses are so blunted that he could be beaten and not remember the pain. "They have struck me, but I was not hurt; they have beaten me, but I did not feel it" (Prov. 23:35). And what is the future of the drunk? He lives for the bottle and the momentary pleasure it gives. Or he lives for the escapism he gets from life's problems. "When shall I awake, that I may seek another drink?" (Prov. 23:35, NKJV). The drunk is addicted to the wine, and its destructive addiction will eventually destroy his life. Lord, I will be sober because I want to think rationally and live rightly. I will stay away from alcohol. I will keep my body pure for You. Amen.

Proverbs 24

Learn the Right Values in Life

1Lord, I won't make evil people my role models and I won't hang out with them; 2because they think of ways to break Your law and they try to talk others into their transgressions. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

3Lord, I will build my home on right-living wisdom and I can make it secure by thinking correctly. 4I will fill the rooms with knowledge and furnish it with the best of furnishings.

5I want to be wise so I can be strong and increase my strength with knowledge.

6For with wise counsel I can conquer my dreams and with many wise counselors, I'll achieve my goals. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4}

7Lord, wisdom is a wonderful belonging; it is too lofty for a fool. The wise man doesn't tell people he's wise, but the important people in the city recognize him. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

8Lord, those who plan to break the law are called schemers, 9and people hate the schemers because they are fools given over to sin. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

[10]Lord, I promise not to faint in the day of conflict; give me strength that is strong enough to endure.
[11]Yes, I'll rescue those about to be killed, and I'll save those being dragged off to death. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
[12]Lord, some say, "We didn't know anything about it!" Won't You, who knows the heart, know it? {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} Lord, won't You who expects everyone to be truthful, repay each one who quits the battle? {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32}
[13]Lord, I should eat honey because it's good for me. The taste of honey is sweet to the tongue.
[14]Therefore I know that I should get wisdom because it is good for me; its taste is sweet to the desires of the soul; when I get it, wisdom will give me what I hope for. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[15]Lord, You warn the thief not to lurk near the home of a righteous man and never steal his belongings.
[16]Though a righteous man falls seven times, he will rise up to bring the thief to judgment; the wicked falls and never gets up.
[17]Lord, I will not rejoice when my enemy falls and I won't be happy when he has stumbled.
[18]Because my evil rejoicing will displease You, You might withdraw Your protection from me and begin protecting my enemy. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}
[19]Lord, I will not let evildoers upset me, nor will I be envious of the actions of the wicked [20]for the person who does evil will not enjoy what he does and his candle will be put out in death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The book of Proverbs observes that the wicked eventually will fail. The person who lives right should not envy the evil man, nor should he follow his example. "Do not fret because of evildoers; don't envy the wicked. For the evil have no future; their light will be snuffed out" (Prov. 24:19, 20, ELT). Lord, give me wisdom so I recognize wicked desires and wicked people. Give me strength against temptation to do wicked things or to have a wicked attitude. I have a passion to please You. Amen.

[21]Lord, I will not get involved with those who fight the government and I will fear You, Lord, and the rulers; [22]for judgment will fall quickly on rebels to God and the rulers; no one knows what will ruin the lives of both. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}
[23]Lord, I know these are Your principles that You prepare for the wise; I will not show partiality to anyone [24]when I am making decisions or judgments. I will not tell guilty people, "You're innocent" because the public will curse me and nations will hate me.
[25]But when I condemn those who should be condemned, the reward of doing right will follow.
[26]When I give an honest answer to those who ask, it's like giving a kiss to those you respect. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

[27]Lord, first I'll prepare myself for honest work and give an honest day's work to my employer. I'll then build or buy a home.
[28]I'll not be a witness against someone if it's not true. I will not use my words to deceive listeners.
[29]I'll not say, "I'll do to my neighbor what he does to me," or "I'll get even when he does me wrong." {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4}
[30]Lord, I walked by a field of a lazy man; [31]it was the garden of a fool. It was overgrown with vines and briars and the ground was covered with weeds. The fence was broken so everyone could wander in or out. [32]The more I observed the lazy man's field the deeper became my conviction about hard work. [33]The lazy enjoys being lazy and resting. He loves folding his hands and sleeping late [34]but poverty follows the lazy man, as surely as night follows day; and he'll want food, clothing, and shelter. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

The title "sluggard" in Proverbs comes from the Hebrew asel, which means to be lazy or sluggish. Many of the modern versions translate this word "lazy"—one who lacks motivation. It reflects the person who is not eager or willing to work. The lazy person needs supervision because he will procrastinate and will not carry out his responsibility. Someone must watch over him to make him work. His hunger pangs won't do it, nor will his poverty (Prov. 13:25; 16:26). The sluggard must change his attitude toward life. The problem with a lazy person is not his work habits or skill, or even his knowledge of what he has to do. The problem with a lazy person is his thinking. The lazy person is self-seeking (Prov. 21:25-26), pleasure-seeking (Prov. 13:4, 21:17), and short-sighted. Therefore to change the sluggard, his way of thinking must be changed. The sluggard must pray, "Lord, I repent of my laziness and I commit myself to working hard. I will learn how to work hard; I will learn skills to be productive, and I will learn all the knowledge I need to know about my job." Amen.

Proverbs 25

Nothing Can Compare to Right-Believing

[1]Lord, Solomon originated these proverbs; years later the scribes of King Hezekiah copied them for us.
[2]I know that God is glorified by concealing things; it is the privilege of kings to search them out.
[3]Just as the heaven is high and the earth is deep so the heart of a ruler is unknowable. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
[4]Lord, when impurities are removed from silver ore, the silver can make a beautiful vessel.
[5]When the wicked are removed from public life, the nation can live in righteousness. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
[6]Lord, I won't elevate myself over those around me and I won't try to sit in a seat of honor [7]because it is better to be elevated to a higher seat than to be sent to the end

of the line. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
[8]Lord, I won't rush in to a dispute between neighbors, especially when I don't know all the facts because I'll be embarrassed when one puts me to shame. [9]I'll discuss the problem with my neighbors, but I won't tell one what the other said to me, [10]because if the first hears that I have told publicly what he said to me privately, then I'll be embarrassed and my reputation will be ruined. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[11]Lord, I know that apples of gold in a setting of silver are like an appropriate word spoken at the right time.
[12]Just as a gold earring and a beautiful gold necklace are attractive so are the words of a counselor to a receptive ear.
[13]Just as a cool breeze in the heat of harvest is helpful, so is one who always tells the truth, refreshing the heart of his employer.
[14]Just as some clouds and wind bring no rain so is the one who promises a gift but disappoints because he never gives one. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[15]Lord, I know that patience can win a stubborn leader and a soft answer can melt a hard heart.
[16]I should eat only as much honey as I need, because I'll throw up if I eat too much.
[17]I should not visit my neighbor too often because he'll get sick of me and hate to see me come. {345 Patience- Prayer, James 5:7-8}
[18]Lord, those who give false testimony against a neighbor hurt them like a club, a sharp sword, or a piercing arrow.
[19]When I rely on an untrustworthy person in a time of trouble, it is like having a toothache or a crippled leg. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
[20]Lord, those who sing sad songs to people in trouble are like taking away their coat in cold weather.
[21]Lord, when someone who hates me is hungry, I'll give him food [22]for then I'll heap hot coals (of shame) on his head and You, Lord, will reward me. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}
[23]Lord, just as a cold north wind brings rain so a backbiting tongue brings an angry stare.
[24]It is better to live in a small corner of the roof than to live in a big house with a nagging wife.
[25]Just as cold water quenches my thirst, so good news from a distant source brings happiness.
[26]Just as a muddy spring pollutes the drinking water, so is a good person who compromises with the wicked. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[27]Lord, I know it's not good to eat too much honey nor is it wise to seek your own glory, for both excesses will make you sick. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}
[28]Lord, a great fortified city with breeched walls is like a person without self-discipline. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

Lord, I know that You are glorified in unseen things; so it's a privilege to search them out in the Word of God. Just as the heaven is high and the earth is deep, so there is an

abundant expanse in Your knowledge and wisdom. Teach me, make me wise. Amen.

Proverbs 26

Watch Out for Fools and Scoundrels

[1]Lord, I know that snow in the summer and rain at harvest are both out of place, much like giving honor to a fool.
[2]A bird struggling to fly will come home to roost; so a person will be punished with the curse he gives to someone who doesn't deserve it; {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[3]I know a whip will make a donkey obey; so correcting is the only way to help a fool.
[4]Lord, I'll not answer a fool according to his foolishness because I'll lower myself to his disgusting level.
[5]But I'll answer a fool according to truth so that he'll know he is not wise.
[6]Letting a fool deliver a message for you is like asking for trouble and pain. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}
[7]A wise saying in the mouth of a fool is about as useless as a limp leg.
[8]Giving honor to a fool is like trying to shoot a gun without bullets.
[9]A wise saying in the mouth of a fool does as much damage as grabbing a thornbush with your hands.
[10]A master craftsman can make a work of art, but employing a fool breaks the laws of common sense.
[11]A fool will always love his foolishness just as a dog will return to his vomit.
[12]Yet there is more hope for a fool than for a conceited man who thinks he knows everything. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[13]Lord, a lazy person makes excuses not to work, saying there's a lion in the street.
[14]Just as a door turns on its hinges so a lazy person continually turns over in his sleep; he refuses to get up and go to work.
[15]A lazy person puts his fork into his food, but he is too lazy to lift it to his mouth.
[16]A lazy person has more excuses for what he does than the reasons of seven wise men. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}
[17]Lord, if I get involved in a fight that's not my own, it's like grabbing a dog by its ears; I'll get bitten. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[18]If a fool plays with matches, he'll get burned [19]like those who deceive their neighbors, and then say, "Just kidding." {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[20]Lord, I know if there's no wood, the fire goes out; if gossip stops, so does contention.
[21]Just as coals are to a fire and burning wood makes heat, so a quarreling person creates strife. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}
[22]Lord, the lies of a slanderer are easily swallowed, but they make everyone sick to their stomach.
[23]Just as a silver lid covers over a clay pot so loving lips cover a hating heart.
[24]So those who hate try to cover it with pleasant words, but they can't eliminate their deceitful heart.

[25]So I won't trust everyone who speaks pleasantly because they may be covering the sins of their heart.
[26]They may try to cover the hatred of their heart; but what's in the well comes up in the bucket. Eventually their hatred will come out. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}
[27]Lord, those who dig a pit will eventually fall into it and what goes around will come around. We will eventually suffer the evil we plan for others. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[28]Lord, those who tell lies eventually hate their victims and a flattering tongue is a sugar-coated lie so I will tell the truth because I love You, Lord, and others. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

Proverbs 27

Right Believing Leads to Good Relationships

[1]Lord, I'll not boast what I will do tomorrow for I don't know what a future day will bring.
[2]I'll let another talk about my accomplishments because no one will believe my boasting; I'll let an objective observer do it.
[3]Stones are heavy to pick up, and so is sand; but a fool's anger outweighs them both. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
[4]Lord, I know that wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous, but the revenge of a jealous person is greater than both.
[5]I would rather have open rebuke to become wise and know where I stand with a person, than have hidden love that I never experience and not realize the love that was mine.
[6]I would rather have wounds from a friend than deceitful kisses from an enemy. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
[7]Lord, when I'm full I have no taste for honey; but when I'm hungry anything bitter tastes sweet. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23}
[8]Lord, a man who foolishly strays from his home is like a bird that abandons its protective nest. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
[9]Lord, just as perfume and sweet-smelling things make us happy, so does good advice from the heart of a friend. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
[10]Lord, I'll not abandon a loyal friend who is also a lifelong friend of my father. I'll not go for help to a relative that is far away; rather, I'll go to a friend who is near.
[11]I want to become wise to make my father glad; then I won't need my father to answer my critics.
[12]I want to be wise to avoid trouble when it comes; fools don't think about the future and they pay the price. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[13]Lord, I'll not sign a note for a stranger so they can't take the coat off my back; they'll probably seize a man's clothing for the trollop. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}
[14]I'll not yell a blessing to my neighbor before dawn for I'll awaken him and he will curse me. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

15Lord, a nagging wife that keeps at it, is like dripping water on a rainy day; it will only irritate and anger.
16The one who can restrain the negative wife can also restrain the wind; of course neither can be done. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
17Just as iron is used to sharpen a knife so I can sharpen the outlook of my friend.
18Those who carefully look after the fig tree get to enjoy its fruit. Those who do what their boss wants done will be honored and promoted.
19Just as I can see my image reflected in water so others can see my heart by looking at my face. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}
20Lord, the greed that motivates my heart to get what it sees is like hell and the grave; they are never satisfied.
21Just as fire tests silver and the crucible tests gold, so my character will be tested by its reaction to praise. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}
22Lord, I can grind a fool in the mill with a grinder just as grain is crushed to powder; yet his foolishness will remain. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
23Lord, I'll take care of the health of my flocks and I'll pay attention to the number in my herds 24because a man's riches are never lost forever, and a business won't stay in the family forever. 25So when the hay has been mown for winter feeding, and the vegetables have been gathered from the garden, 26the wool of my lambs will provide clothing. 27There will be enough goats' milk for all to drink and I can sell my extra goats for some cash. Then I can buy enough food to get my family through the winter and have enough to give a bonus to my employees. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Proverbs 28

Use Common Sense When Being Religious

1Lord, the wicked have terror in their hearts because they can be confident of nothing in life. The righteous have the self-confidence of a lion.
2Because they know You, they feel sure of themselves. Because we live in a world of sin, we need many rulers to make people do right. But there is coming a ruler—a man of understanding; his kingdom will endure. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}
3Lord, when I see one poor man oppressing another poor man, it's like a rainstorm that washes away all food, for the poor don't realize they need each other to survive.
4Those who abandon their principles end up loving sin, but those who obey Your principles oppose those who love sin.
5Evil people don't understand absolute truth and judgment, but they who seek to please You understand all things. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}
6Lord, it's better for me to tell the truth and end up poor than it is to get rich by living a lie.
7I'll be Your wise child who obeys Your truth because those who hang out with fools disappoint their father. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4}

[8]Lord, those who get rich by charging too much create wealth for someone else to give it to the poor.
[9]Those who refuse to obey Your principles will not get their prayers answered.
[10]Those who tempt the righteous to break Your law will suffer the punishment he plans for them. But the upright who does not give into temptation will get the good things You have for him. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
[11]Lord, the rich man thinks everything he does is all right, but the wise poor man can see through his deceit.
[12]When the good man wins, everyone rejoices, but no one wants to see a wicked man win.
[13]Those who hide their sin, will not get away with it, but You will accept those who confess and repent.
[14]Those who fear and obey You are happy, but those who harden their hearts will have a hard life. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
[15]Lord, a hungry roaring lion and a prowling bear are like a wicked leader who eats up the poor.
[16]A rising leader without wisdom is a cruel oppressor, but leaders who hate greed will stay in office. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[17]Lord, the one who kills another deserves to die; don't let anyone get him off the hook.
[18]Those who obey Your principles will be saved, but those who reject Your ways will not live long. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[19]Lord, those who work hard at their job will have food to eat, but those who frolic with lazy people will be poor.
[20]Those trustworthy workers will receive bonuses and raises but those who cut corners will be demoted or fired. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[21]Lord, it's wrong to be partial to any person, because all people are of one blood and were created in Your image. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[22]Lord, the greedy person will sell his soul for money, not knowing his insatiable appetite will ultimately choke him to death; but a starving man will steal for bread. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}
[23]Lord, if I correct my brother to help him, I'll get more gratitude than if I flatter his sin and disobedience. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}
[24]Lord, those who steal from their parents, saying, "I deserve it because I'm their child," are brothers to satan. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[25]Lord, those who grasp after attention create strife and anger in those around him, but those who obey Your principles will prosper and get the right kind of attention.
[26]Those who trust in themselves are fools but the ones living right will prosper.
[27]Those who give to the poor will not lack anything, but those who turn their backs on the poor will be cursed by them.
[28]People run from a wicked person, but they are drawn to a good person. There will be enough goats' milk for all to drink and I can sell my extra goats for a nest egg;

then I can buy enough food to get my family through the winter and have enough to give a bonus to my employees. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Lord, I'll not boast what I'll do tomorrow, for I don't know what a future day will bring. I'll trust You to take care of me and I'll work today to take care of my needs tomorrow. Amen.

Proverbs 29

Right-Believing Will Make You a Good Citizen

[1]Lord, those who harden their necks after being rebuked will be suddenly broken.
[2]When the righteous are our leaders, everyone rejoices because the leaders do right. But when the wicked are over us, everyone moans because evil flourishes. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[3]Lord, when I seek to think the right way, I make my father glad; but those who visit a prostitute waste their money and their life. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}
[4]Rulers give us a stable nation when they do right, but rulers who take bribes destroy a people. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[5]Those who try to get ahead by flattery spread a trap for their own feet.
[6]The crimes of an evil man will eventually catch him but the righteous sing and dance because they have a clean conscience. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}
[7]Lord, the righteous are always concerned about the poor, but the wicked are selfish people; they don't care about anyone but themselves.
[8]A negative critic gets everyone mad, but the words of the wise have a calming effect.
[9]When a wise man argues with a fool, he only gets scorn and ridicule, and angry replies. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[10]Those who want to kill hate those who obey God's principles and will attempt to do away with them.
[11]The fool rattles on about everything he doesn't like but a wise person holds his tongue, and thinks through the situation.
[12]Those leaders who listen and believe lies have counselors around them who are wicked. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
[13]Lord, You have given a conscience of right and wrong to the poor and the oppressor.
[14]When the leader trusts the poor with honesty, he will be in office a long time. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}
[15]Lord, You've given us ways to correct our children, but the child left to himself will disgrace his parents.
[16]When the wicked rule, more people will break the rules, but the righteous will eventually see their downfall.
[17]So discipline your child and he will make you happy; yes, he will do what you expect him to do. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[18]Lord, when I don't have divine direction in my life, I'll shrivel up spiritually; but

I'll be happy when I obey Your law. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
19Lord, it's hard to discipline workers with words; they may understand, but they won't obey.
20Those people who have something to say about everything have as much hope as a fool. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
21If I pamper a child from youth, he will be ungrateful when he grows up.
22Angry people stir up strife and bitterness; people with uncontrollable tempers commit crimes. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}
23Lord, I will be brought low if I am proud, but I will be honored when I humble myself. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
24Lord, he who partners with a thief, hates himself; when he hears people curse the thief he tells nothing that happened. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}
25Lord, being afraid of others can trap me, but those who put their trust in You will be safe.
26Many seek the leaders' favor but they get justice from You, Lord. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}
27Lord, the wicked man is always against the righteous person, and the righteous person is detested by the wicked. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

Lord, those who harden their will after being rebuked will be suddenly broken; when the righteous are our leaders everyone rejoices because they do right; but when the wicked are over us, everyone moans because evil flourishes. Amen.

Proverbs 30

The Knowledge God Would Have You Know

1Lord, Solomon received a message from You to give to Ithiel and Ucal.
2Lord, the one who is more boorish than others is too ignorant to seek to understand God.
3He lacks human understanding and wisdom. He doesn't have enough common sense to know You, the Holy One. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
4Lord, You are the only One who has access to both heaven and earth. You hold the wind in Your cupped hands; You wrap up the oceans in Your cloak. You created the whole earth from one end to the other. Only You know Your name and Your Son's name. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
5Lord, every word that You speak is pure; You protect those who take refuge in You.
6If I add anything to Your words, You will rebuke me and I'll be made to be a liar. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7}
7Lord, I have asked two things from You to help me all my life.
8One, don't let me tell a lie or misrepresent the truth, and two, give me neither poverty nor riches. Just give me the food I need each day. 9If I have too much money, I may deny You and say, "Who is the Lord?"

If I am too poor, I might steal and tarnish Your name, O Lord. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

10Lord, I will never criticize a person to his employer because he will slander me for my interference.

11I know there are those who curse their fathers and don't bless their mothers.

12These people justify their actions and think they never do anything wrong; 13they are haughty and stupid. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

14Lord, there are critics whose teeth are sharp like razors; their tongues are like daggers. They eat up everyone with their criticism and criticize those who need the most help. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

15Lord, the leech sucks the life out of things, always crying, "More! More! More!" There are three things—no, there are four that want more and are never satisfied: 16the grave, a barren womb, the dusty desert, a blazing fire. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

17Lord, the eye that mocks his father
and criticizes the request of his mother
will be pecked out by the birds; and he'll be judged for his rebellion. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

18Lord, there are three things that are wonderful. When I add a fourth, I am amazed: 19the way an eagle floats in the sky, the way a snake slithers on a rock, the way a ship glides under the wind, the way of a man with a woman. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

20Lord, it seems an unfaithful wife excuses herself; she wipes her mouth saying, "I did nothing wrong." {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}

21Lord, three things make the earth quake, add a fourth thing and everything trembles: 22a slave who becomes a king, a fool who gets rich, 23a complaining woman who finally gets a husband, a servant girl who takes the place of her mistress. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14}

24Lord, four things on the earth are very small, but they are wise: 25ants who are not mighty, but they store food for the winter; 26little badgers who make their home in the holes of the rocks;

27locusts that have no leader but they march in ranks;

28spiders that are tiny enough to get into a king's palace. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

29Lord, three things march stately with dignity; no, add a fourth, one that also strides: 30the lion that turns aside for none; 31the swiftest greyhound that can't be caught; the stubborn goat that won't back down; the king leading his army. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

32Lord, I hope all boorish fools are smart enough to keep quiet so people won't see their stupid ways.

33Just as churning milk produces butter, and pressure on the nose produces blood, so the pressure of anger produces strife. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

Lord, I have asked two things from You to help me all my life. Don't let me tell a lie or misrepresent the truth, and give me neither

poverty nor riches. Just give me the food I need each day. Amen. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Proverbs 31

What Is a Godly Woman?

1Lord, I will live by the principles of Solomon, the message that was given him by his mother, Bathsheba.
2It is the biggest vow that could be asked by a mother of her son and I promise to keep this pledge.
3I'll not give my strength to whorish women, to an adulterous life that would destroy me. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18}
4I'll not seek pleasure in strong drink, nor will I ever taste liquor;
5because drinking will distort my understanding of Your law and drunkenness will make me forget my duties. Liquor will not give happiness, but it brings misery;
6and those who are given to strong drink will be destroyed.
7They drink to forget their emptiness and forget about all their problems. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
8Lord, I will speak for those who don't know what to say; I will give Your Word to those who are perishing.
9I will always do the right thing; I will open my heart to the needs of the poor. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

A PRAYER FOR MEN (31:10-31)

10Lord, I will search for a virtuous woman; I know she is worth far more than rubies.
11My heart will safely trust in such a woman and I will find happiness with her.
12A virtuous woman will do me good and not evil all the days of her life.
13She will get the finest cloth for her clothes and dress appropriately at all times. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
14She goes everywhere that is necessary to get the best food for our family.
15She gets up early to prepare food so our family will have nourishing meals.
16She has the business savvy to purchase a field and get it planted so our family will have extra food.
17She has strength to get everything done and more strength to stand for the right.
18She knows that her task in life is good and she continually works at it. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
19She is smart enough to do every task in the home and she has the determination to get them done.
20She has a humanitarian heart for the needy and gives money to help them.
21She prepares for all types of weather; all in our home are comfortably clothed. {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18-19}
22Her outward clothes are as beautiful as her inward loveliness and godliness.
23I will have a good reputation in the community because of her and I will use my influence for what is right. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

[24]She is industrious with her time and is able to earn extra income.
[25]She knows the principles of wisdom
[26]and is able to kindly explain Your law.
[27]She makes sure everyone in our household lives by the principles of wisdom. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[28]Her children quickly credit her for their success and I wouldn't be prosperous without her.
[29]There are many good women in the world but the virtuous woman You gave me exceeds them all.
[30]Beauty deceives some women, and compliments sidetrack others, but she is a woman who puts her trust in You and is worthy of all the compliments she gets.
[31]She deserves all the things she works for and her accomplishments are her praise. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Prayer for a Man
Lord, I will search for a virtuous woman; I know she is worth far more than rubies. My heart will safely trust in such a woman, and I will find happiness with her. Amen.

A PRAYER FOR WOMEN
(31:10-31)

[10]Lord, I want to be a virtuous woman whose price is worth more than rubies.
[11]I want my husband to trust me in his heart and find happiness in me.
[12]I want to do good things for my husband and not tempt him to deny his faith. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9}
[13]I determine to dress appropriately at all times in the best available clothes I have. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[14]I will do whatever is necessary to get the appropriate food for my family.
[15]I will get up early to prepare food so my family will have nourishing meals.
[16]I will use the ability You gave me to buy a field and plant food for my family. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[17]Lord, give me strength to get everything done and moral strength to stand for what's right.
[18]I know my task in life is good; help me do the best job possible. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
[19]Lord, give me wisdom to do everything for my home and the self-discipline to get it done.
[20]Give me a compassionate heart for the needy; I will give money to help them.
[21]I will prepare for all types of weather and make sure that all of my family is comfortably clothed. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}
[22]Lord, I want my outward clothes to reflect the inward beauty that You've given me.
[23]I want my husband to have a good reputation in the community in which we live. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
[24]Lord, help me to use all my time wisely so I can earn extra income for the family.
[25]Help me think properly that leads to success;
[26]and is able to kindly explain Your law.

[27]I want to make sure everyone in my household lives by Your principles.
[28]I want my children to appreciate my godly influence and my husband to tell others how I've helped him. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[29]Lord, there are many good women in the world but I want to be the virtuous woman You described.
[30]I know outward beauty can deceive me and compliments can sidetrack me. I want the inward beauty that comes because I put my trust in You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} May my compliments come from the things I've accomplished.
[31]May my praise be from the family I've raised. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Prayer for a Woman
Lord, there are many good women in the world, but I want to be the virtuous woman You described. I know outward beauty can deceive me and compliments can sidetrack me. I want the inward beauty that comes because I put my trust in You. May my compliments come from the things I've accomplished, and may my praise be from the family I've raised. Amen.

NOTE

1. *Webster's, New World Dictionary of the American Language, 2nd College ed.* (Cleveland, OH: William Collins/ World Publishing Co., 1974).

Ecclesiastes

Ch 1: To Realize the Futility of a Life Without Pupose 923
Ch 2: To Realize the Purpose in Work 924
Ch 3: To Realize God Has Given Us a Time on Earth 926
Ch 4: To Learn the Value of Others 927
Ch 5: To Learn Tolerance 928
Ch 6: To Enjoy What You Have 929
Ch 7: To Have a Good Reputations 930
Ch 8: To Learn to Do What Is Right 931
Ch 9: To Know the Difference between Good and Bad 932
Ch 10: To Learn Not to Make Mistakes 933
Ch 11: To Learn the Inevitable Consequences of Life 934
Ch 12: Fear God and Keep His Commands 935

ECCLESIASTES

Key Words: *Vanity of vanities, found 35 times* (see Ecclesiastes 1:2)

Key Verse: "Vanity of vanities, saith the Preacher, vanity of vanities; all is vanity" (1:2, KJV).

Theme: According to Jewish tradition, Solomon wrote the Song of Solomon with its passionate emphasis on love when he was a young man who walked with God. Solomon's second book, Proverbs, emphasizes practical wisdom he used. Building his kingdom on wisdom and through good leadership principles, he chronicled Proverbs in his middle adult life. The third book, Ecclesiastes, was written by Solomon in his old age after his successes and failures of many marriages, his lack of contentment with luxury, and his boredom with power and authority.

Through the years many people have been perplexed at the negative attitudes of Ecclesiastes. This is Solomon's attempt to show the futility of life lived apart from God's principles. The Preacher begins, "Vanity of vanities" (1:2, which is translated in this volume as "frustrating and nothing makes sense" (*Prayer Bible - Paraphrase*). Then the Preacher asks the question, "What profit hath a man of all his labour which he taketh under the sun?" (1:3, KJV). The word "profit" is the Hebrew word *yithron*, a word unique to Ecclesiastes drawn from the business world. It means a financial profit, gain, superiority, or preeminence. What can man gain from a fallen world? Solomon concludes that money, luxury, and sexual exploits are all frustrating and meaningless. Solomon asked the same question the Lord Jesus asked, "For what shall it profit a man, if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?" (Mark 8:36). *Lord, I will seek Your wisdom to live properly for Your glory. Keep me from vanities and sin. Amen.*

Ecclesiastes 1

To Realize the Futility of a Life Without Purpose

[1]These are the words of the Teacher, son of David, king in Jerusalem: {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [2]"Everything is frustrating. And nothing makes sense. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}" [3]What does a person gain from all his hard work here on earth?

4People come, and people go, but by contrast the world remains the same. 5The sun rises and the sun sets, and it seems to hurry back to rise again. 6The wind blows to the south and it blows to the north. It swirls back and forth, and it seems to get nowhere. 7Rivers flow into the sea, but the sea is never full. The water goes back to the rivers and flows again into the sea. 8Everything is so tiring, more than we can describe. No matter how much we see or hear, we are never satisfied. We always want to see and hear more. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}
9History repeats itself. Nothing on the earth is really new. {514 Victory Over Doubt-Prayer, Mark 11:23} 10Can you point to something that is totally new? No. It has already existed years before, even before we were born. 11We easily forget about people who lived years ago, and people yet to be born won't be remembered either. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}

Lord, at times life seems pointless and meaningless; I seem to accomplish little for all I do. The eye never sees what is seeable, and the ear never hears what is hearable. What has happened in the past will happen in the future; what was accomplished before will be accomplished again, and under the sun. There is nothing new. Amen.

12When I was king of Israel living in Jerusalem, 13I tried to understand everything that is done here on the earth. But I soon realized that everyone carries heavy burdens. 14I have seen everything, and it is all so frustrating and without meaning. It's like chasing after the wind, a foolish waste of energy and an impossible task. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 15We can't straighten what is crooked, and we can't depend on something if it doesn't exist.
16I said to myself, "I am wiser than any king before me in Jerusalem. I am wiser and know more than any of them." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 17So I worked hard to see the difference between being wise and being foolish. Then I realized that that too is as pointless as trying to catch the wind. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 18It seemed like the more I knew, the more grief I felt. And my knowledge even caused me more distress.

Lord, I know that You gave wisdom to Solomon, king of Israel; he became the wisest man on earth. He applied his wisdom to investigate everything on earth, yet Solomon's wisdom made him a cynic because he did not make You the center of all inquiry. Lord, be the center of my life, {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} teach me facts to be smart, and give me understanding to be wise. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 2

To Realize the Purpose in Work

1I decided to have fun and try to enjoy life to see if that would make sense of the world. But it didn't. It too was frustrating. 2Why laugh and try to have fun all

the time? What good does that do? [3]So I tried cheering myself up with wine, while still being wise. I was hoping to find something that makes sense for us humans in our few years here on the earth. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}
[4]I took on some big projects to see if that would make sense of things on the earth. I built houses for myself. I planted lots of vineyards; [5]I made gardens and parks, and planted all kinds of fruit trees in them. [6]I made reservoirs to hold water for my groves of trees. [7]I bought male and female slaves, and other slaves were born in my house. I owned more herds and flocks than anyone who lived in Jerusalem before me. [8]Other kings brought me lots of silver and gold. I had many male and female singers, and many beautiful wives and concubines who gave me great pleasure. [9]So I became greater in wealth and fame than anyone who lived in Jerusalem before me. And I tried to stay wise as I evaluated everything. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
[10]I had everything I wanted, and I did whatever made me happy. I enjoyed hard work, and pleasure from it was the reward for my labors. [11]Yet as I looked at everything I had done and how I had worked so hard to accomplish everything, it all seemed so frustrating, like chasing after the wind. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} Nothing seemed to matter.
[12]So I compared wisdom {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} with foolishness. Anyone who succeeds me can reach the same conclusions I came to. [13]I concluded that yes, being wise is better than being foolish, just as light is better than darkness. [14]Being wise is like seeing with two good eyes, but being foolish is like walking in total darkness—fools can't see a thing. I realized that both the wise person and the fool end up the same way—dead. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1, 8}
[15]I then thought that since the fools and I will both die, what's the point of being wise? So I said again to myself, "This is all so frustrating and without meaning. [16]The wise and the fool both die and both will be forgotten." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}
[17]So I hated life because my work on the earth is such a burden. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Everything is frustrating and without meaning, like chasing the wind. [18]I hated everything I worked for because when I die, I have to leave it all to someone else. [19]And who knows whether he will be wise or foolish? He will own everything I gained by hard work and wisdom. That too is frustrating. [20]So I felt depressed as I thought about all my hard work here on the earth. [21]Though I have worked with wisdom and skill, {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} I have to leave it all to someone who has done nothing to earn it. That is meaningless and unfair. [22]What does a person get in return for all his hard work and restless activity here on the earth? [23]His days are filled with pain and grief, and at night he can't rest because his mind keeps thinking of things. This too is frustrating and meaningless. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[24]The best thing a person can do is to enjoy eating, drinking, and working. These pleasures are from God [25]for who can enjoy anything apart from Him? {534

Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}
[26]To the person who pleases Him, God gives wisdom, knowledge, and joy. But God may help a sinner become wealthy and then give his wealth to someone who pleases Him. Even this is frustrating and is like chasing the wind.

Lord, Solomon came to the wrong conclusion to eat, drink, and enjoy what one's work produced. He thought that You gave food and drink as the ultimate enjoyment in life; he didn't realize we should all enjoy You in all things. I praise You for any and all enjoyment in this life. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} Amen.

Ecclesiastes 3

To Realize God Has Given Us a Time on Earth

[1]Every activity on earth has its own time and season. [2]There is a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to harvest, [3]a time to kill and a time to heal, a time to tear down and a time to build, [4]a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance, [5]a time to scatter stones and a time to gather stones, a time to hug and a time not to hug, [6]a time to search and a time to quit searching, a time to keep and a time to throw away, [7]a time to tear and a time to mend, a time to be silent and a time to speak, [8]a time to love and a time to hate, a time for war and a time for peace. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}
[9]What does a person get for all his hard work? [10]I have seen the burden God has placed on people. [11]Yet He has made everything beautiful or appropriate in its time. And He has given people a sense of eternity in their hearts. And yet no one can fully understand all God has done from beginning to end. [12]So the best thing people can do is to enjoy life and do well in this lifetime. [13]Also they should appreciate God's gifts of food and drink and work. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [14]What God does will last forever. Nothing can be added to it or taken from it. God's purpose in all He does is to encourage people to reverence Him. [15]Whatever we see now has already happened in the past, and whatever will occur in the future will have already occurred. God does many things over and over. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
[16]Everywhere on earth I saw evil and wickedness instead of justice and fairness. [17]But I realized that in time God will judge everyone, both the righteous and the wicked. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [18]Another thought I had is that God often tests us {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} to show that in a sense we are often like animals. [19]In fact both people and animals die. And people and animals have the same breath, so that in a sense humans are no better off than animals. [20]Humans and animals die; they both go to the same place, the grave. They return to the dust from which they were made. [21]No one can see that the spirits of

humans go up and the spirits of animals go down. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} 22So the best thing we can do is enjoy our own work because that's why we are here. No one who has died can come back to life to enjoy the future. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Lord, You have given everything for its time and place in Your plan; You have made me aware that I'm preparing for eternity, but I can never fully understand what You're doing in my life because I don't know the beginning from the end. What time You give me on earth, I dedicate to You and will use it for You. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 4

To Learn the Value of Others

1Again I saw the troubles people were facing. They were in tears and no one was there to comfort them, and those who mistreated them were very powerful. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} 2It seemed to me that the dead are better off than the living. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} 3But better off than either the dead or the living are those who have never been born. Why? Because they have not seen all the evil on the earth. 4I realized that many people succeed in their work because they are jealous of others. This too is frustrating and meaningless, like chasing the wind. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 5Fools refuse to work and so they starve. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} 6Yet it is better to have a little and enjoy a peaceful life than to work hard and have no peace. This too is like chasing after wind. {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20}

7I saw another example of frustration. 8A man who lived alone had no son or brother. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} He worked all the time to keep getting more wealth. Yet he was never content with what he had. {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20} 9One day he thought, "For whom am I working so hard? Why am I always working and having no joy in life?" This too is frustrating and depressing. By having a companion to work with, the two can get more done and have better results. 10If one of them falls, the other can pick him up. But if someone has no one with him, he has no one to help him up. 11If two people are in bed on a cold night, they can keep each other warm. But a person can't be warm by himself. 12A person by himself can more easily be attacked, but two can help defend each other. A rope made of three strands can't be broken very easily. {501 Two-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

13It's better to be a poor but wise young person than an old but foolish king who won't take advice. 14A young person may have been in prison and then become king even though he was born into a poor family. 15Everyone on the earth followed him after the king died. 16Numerous people were subject to him, but the kings who came later were not pleased with him. This too is meaningless and is like chasing the wind. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

What is stamina prayer? It's serious prayer, or strenuous prayer, or dogged prayer. There comes a torturous time in life when our problems are so great and our circumstances are so dire, that all we can do is hang on. Somehow we know deliverance is not coming. So we hunker down to perseverance prayer, we determine to endure to the end (Heb. 6:15). Lord, I'm lost in the desert, there's no help in sight. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} Things are tough, but I'll not give up. I'll hang on and endure the pain. I'm not a quitter. So this is my stamina prayer, give me character to persevere. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 5

To Learn Tolerance

[1]Be careful when you enter the house of God and go there to listen and learn. Don't be like a fool who offers sacrifices without realizing what he's doing. [2]Don't be quick to talk or quick to make a rash promise to God. He's in heaven and you're on the earth, so don't talk a lot. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [3]Just as having many problems can give you nightmares, so talking a lot can show you are a fool. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

[4]If you make a promise to God, keep it right away, because God doesn't care for fools. [5]In fact, it's better not to make a promise at all than to make a promise and not keep it. [6]Don't let your words get you into trouble. And don't tell the temple messenger that you made a mistake when you made a vow. That would make God angry, and He might destroy everything you've worked for. [7]Dreaming and talking all the time are meaningless. Therefore keep your words few and reverence God. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

[8]If you see a powerful person giving a poor person trouble, or if you see someone being treated unfairly, don't be surprised. An official is doing what a higher official tells him to do, and that one is following orders from someone above him. [9]Everyone, including even the king, tries to get some share of crops he didn't plant. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

[10]People who love money never have enough. They are never satisfied. This too is frustrating and meaningless. [11]The more you have, the more everyone wants something from you. So what is the point of having a lot of money except to look at it as it vanishes? {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [12]Work hard and you can sleep well, whether you have a lot to eat or not. But rich people can't sleep well because they are always worrying about their money. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

[13]Another serious problem I have seen in the world is people gathering a lot of money and then experiencing harm [14]or losing it through some misfortune. So they have nothing left to pass on to their children. [15]People come into the world naked, and they leave this world the same way. They can take nothing with them when they die. [16]This too is frustrating. People leave the world just as they came

into it. And what does a person gain from all his work, which was like working for the wind? [17]Besides this, his existence is like eating in darkness, feeling frustrated, grief-stricken, and angry. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[18]I came to realize that one good thing for a person is to eat and drink and enjoy work, tiring as it may be, while he is on the earth in the few years God has given him. That is his lot in life. [19]Also if God gives someone wealth and he enjoys it and is happy in his work, that is a gift from God. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [20]When God helps a person be happy, he doesn't have time to think of how short life is.

Lord, Solomon said it was good for a man to eat, drink, enjoy life, and work hard, for this is Your plan for him under the sun. If a man will accept his work as a gift from You, at least he has something to keep him happy, nor will he complain that his life is meaningless. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} Amen.

Ecclesiastes 6

To Enjoy What You Have

[1]Here's another serious problem on the earth, and many people are troubled by it. [2]Some people have lots of money and are highly honored, so that they have everything they want. But then God doesn't let them enjoy it. Someone else enjoys it instead. This too is frustrating, a serious problem. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

[3]A man may have 100 children and live to be very old, but if he gets no satisfaction in life and doesn't even have a proper burial, {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} he would have been better off having been born dead. [4]Such a child has no meaning, ends in darkness, and is forgotten. [5]He never saw the light of day or knew what life is like, yet he has more rest than a rich but unhappy person. [6]If he lives 2,000 years, but can't enjoy life and then dies as does everyone else, what is the use? {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

[7]Everyone spends a lot of time and effort to have enough to eat, {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} but they never have enough. [8]What's the point then of being wise? And what do poor people, if they are wise, gain by knowing how to conduct themselves before others? [9]It's better to enjoy what we have than always to be wanting something more. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} That too is frustrating and like chasing the wind.

[10]Whatever happens was determined long ago, including what everyone is like. So there's no point in arguing with God, because He is stronger than anyone. [11]The more we talk, the less sense we make, so why talk at all? {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [12]Life is short and frustrating, and it passes quickly like a shadow. So who knows what is best in this life? And who knows what will happen after we are gone? {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord, whoever I am, I was named before I knew it, and You gave me a personality

before I reflected it. And I know I am only human. Therefore, I am not strong enough to defeat death, because it is mightier than all of us together, and any one of us individually. I am what You made me, and I'll be what You want me to be. Amen. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

Ecclesiastes 7

To Have a Good Reputation

1 Having a good reputation is better than
having expensive perfume. And the day
a person dies with a good reputation is
better than the day he is born with an
uncertain future. 2 It is better to attend
a funeral than a feast. Everyone will die,
and so it is good to think about death. {99
Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 3 Feeling
sorry is better than laughing all the time
because sadness can help us think of life
seriously. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps.
88:3} 4 A wise person thinks about death,
but a fool thinks only about having fun.
5 Being corrected by a wise person is bet-
ter than listening to a fool sing. 6 A fool's
laughter is soon gone, like nettles cracking
under kettles. This too is frustrating. {278
Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 7 Hardships
can make a wise person a fool, and even a
bribe can ruin him. {310 Money-Prayer,
Acts 2:44} 8 Finishing a project is better
than starting it, {186 Goal-Striving Prayer,
Phil. 3:10-14} and patience is better than
pride. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8}
9 Don't get angry easily, because that's what
fools do. 10 Don't long for the "good old
days," because you don't really know if they
were better than today. 11 Wisdom with an
inheritance is a good thing; it benefits
those who are on the earth. 12 Both wis-
dom and money can give protection from
trouble, but only wisdom can help a per-
son live longer. {534 Wisdom-Directed
Prayer, James 3:13} 13 Think of what God
has done. No one can change what He has
done. 14 So when times are good, enjoy life.
And when times are bad, think about the
fact that God has purposes in hard times.
God has made both good and bad times,
so that we can't predict the future. {364
Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
15 In my frustrating life I have seen good
people die young and wicked people live
long. 16 Don't think that being righteous
or wise will guarantee God's blessings.
You could end up being confused. 17 On
the other hand don't think that being very
wicked will mean you will live a long life.
18 Get ahold of both points, and if you rev-
erence God He will bless you. 19 Being wise
can make you stronger than city leaders.
20 Yet no one on the earth is always good
and never sins. 21 If you listen to everything
everyone says, you might hear your own
servant cursing you. 22 You know that you
have often cursed others. 23 I tried to be
wise and understand everything, but true
wisdom was beyond me. {279 Life-De-
fining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 24 Wisdom is
beyond our grasp and very deep. Who can
really discover it?
25 So I searched everywhere to try to find
wisdom {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer,
James 3:13} and how life works, and I
wanted to understand how wickedness

and foolishness can be so stupid. [26]I discovered that being involved with a prostitute is worse than death. She is like a trap to catch you, and her hands are like chains. You can escape from her if you please God, but sinners will be caught in her trap. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [27]This is what I have concluded after trying to see things from every angle: [28]One out of a thousand men could be said to be good, but not one woman. [29]I also found that God made people to be upright, but they, both men and women, have followed their own schemes. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

Lord, Solomon searched everywhere for truth. He looked everywhere to find an answer to life. But this was his conclusion: You originally made people to believe right but most people think up foolish schemes and excuses that will ultimately destroy their lives. Almost no one lives by Your principles. Almost no one wants You to rule their lives. But I will be the exception, I will live the way You want me to live, I will think the way You want me to think. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} I will be what You want me to be. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 8

To Learn to Do What Is Right

[1]Who can know and explain everything? Wisdom brightens a person's face and makes him smile. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [2]If you promised God you would obey the king, then you should keep that promise, [3]and not be in a hurry to leave his presence. Since the king can do whatever he pleases, don't take sides with people who do evil. [4]And since he has the final word, don't question what he's doing. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[5]Obey the king's command and you will avoid trouble. Be wise and you'll know when and what to do. [6]There is a time and a place for everything, even though life can be miserable. [7]No one knows what lies ahead, so no one knows when things will happen. [8]Just as no one can control the wind, so no one can control when he will die. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} And just as soldiers aren't sent home when a war is still on, so wickedness doesn't release its hold on those who practice it.

[9]I saw all this, and tried hard to figure out everything that goes on here on the earth. I don't understand why one person may rule over other people and bring them harm. [10]Also I saw wicked people go to the temple and when they are buried, they are commended in the very city where they committed their crimes. This too is frustrating. [11]If a crime isn't punished right away, criminals think they can get away with more crimes. [12]True, a wicked person may commit 100 crimes and live a long time. But still I know the person who reverences God will be better off. [13]And I know that it will not go well for the wicked. Since they don't reverence God, their days will be short like a moving shadow. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

14Here's another frustrating thing. Good people are often treated as if they are wicked, and wicked people are thought of as good. This, as I say, is very frustrating. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 15So we should enjoy life. Nothing on this earth beats eating, drinking, and being glad. Joy can brighten up a person's work each day God has given him here on the earth. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 16I stayed awake day and night trying hard to be wise and to see everything people are doing. 17Then as I considered what God does, I realized that we can't understand everything here on the earth. We can try hard to figure things out, but we can't really understand God's ways even if we tried. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Lord, I will obey the laws of my nation, because this is what You want me to do. I will not rebel against the goodness You want me to live, and I won't persist in breaking laws. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Lord, I want to do the right thing. So give me strength to always do right. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 9

To Know the Difference between Good and Bad

1So as I reflected on all these things, I concluded that both the righteous and the wicked {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} are subject to God's will, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} and that no one really knows if he will be loved or hated. 2Yet everyone faces the same destiny, death—whether he is righteous or wicked, good or bad, ceremonially clean or unclean, worshiping God with sacrifices or not, a sinner or not, one who keeps his promises or doesn't keep them. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 3Sin is everywhere on the earth, and the same destiny, death, is for everyone. People are such sinners and they are filled with madness, and then they all die. 4As long as we are alive, there is hope, just as a live dog, a scavenger animal, is better off than a dead lion, king of the animals. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}

5People who are alive know they will die, but a dead person doesn't know anything. They have no benefit from work, and people forget they even existed. 6They have no emotions; no love, no hate, no jealousy. These are all gone. They will never again have any part in what happens on the earth. Death is final. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

7Therefore while you are alive, enjoy your food and drink, for this is what God wants you to do. 8And wear nice clothes and put on some cologne. 9And enjoy your wife, the one you love, even though life here on earth is frustrating at times, God's plan for you is to work hard. 10So whatever you do, do it well. In the grave, where you will end up, you won't work or plan or know anything. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

11Here's yet another troubling thing I've observed on the earth: Fast runners don't always win the race. And strong soldiers don't always win battles. And being wise, sharp-minded, and educated doesn't always

mean you will have food to eat, or will be rich or have a good reputation. That's because many things seem to happen by chance. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 12Also no one knows when he will die. Just as fish are caught in a net and birds in a trap, so it is that people are often trapped by sudden tragedies. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

13An example of wisdom that impressed me greatly was this: 14A powerful king attacked a small town, 15and in that town was a poor man who was wise, and he saved the town by his wisdom. Yet people soon forget him. 16Obviously then wisdom is better than strength. Yet people who are wise but poor will be despised, and their advice won't be followed. 17Yet wise words spoken softly are more helpful than shouts of a foolish king. 18Wisdom is more powerful than weapons, but one foolish sinner can undo much that is good.

Lord, Solomon carefully observed the life and death of the righteous and wise. Then he observed the same in the unrighteous and fools. He concluded that all are ultimately in Your hands. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} No one knows whether these people will be rewarded or punished, because all options are possible to all. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 10

To Learn Not to Make Mistakes

1Just as flies can ruin a bottle of perfume, so a little foolishness can damage wisdom and honor. 2Wisdom protects from danger, but foolishness doesn't. 3The way a fool lives shows he has no sense, and everyone can see how stupid he is. 4Don't quit your job just because your boss gets angry with you. Be calm and he may overlook your sins. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

5Here's another terrible thing I've seen on the earth, a mistake a ruler may make while not intending to. 6He may put fools in positions of authority and place rich people in low positions, and 7slaves may ride like princes on horseback, and princes walk on foot like slaves. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

8If a person digs a pit, he might fall in it, and if he breaks down a wall, a snake might bite him. 9If a person cuts stones, they might fall on him and injure him, and if he splits logs, he might get hurt by the ax or a log may fall on him. 10If an ax is dull, it's harder to use. But a wise person sharpens his ax and does better. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 11A snake charmer is in trouble if his snake bites before it's even charmed. In a similar way wisdom may be of no value if it's not applied at the right time.

12A wise person's words win him favor with others, but a fool's words destroy him. 13A fool's words are ridiculous to begin with, and they end in madness. 14Yet he keeps on talking. Since no one knows what the future holds, no fool can tell another person what will happen next. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

15Fools easily get tired of work. And they don't even know how to get to town.

16That's bad news if your king is inexperienced, and if all your princes do is eat and get drunk every morning. 17But you can be glad if your king is mature and his princes eat and drink for nourishment and not to get drunk. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

18Some leaders are so lazy they don't fix sagging rafters and leaking roofs. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} 19They think eating and drinking are the ways to be happy, and that money can fix everything. 20However, if you have a bad king, don't criticize him even in your bedroom. Why not? Because some unknown person, like a bird, may have heard you, and will tell the king what you said. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, those who dig a pit usually fall into it, and those who dig in a snake's nest usually get bitten. Those who carry stones too big for them get hurt, and those who chop wood with a dull ax will get hurt. Give me the wisdom of common sense, and the strength to make smart decisions. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 11

To Learn the Inevitable Consequences of Life

1Just as trading foodstuffs by sea can give you some monetary return, so 2you should invest wisely by dividing money among seven or eight investors because you don't know if some disaster lies ahead. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 3Some things you can be sure of. Rainclouds will always bring rain, and in whatever direction a tree falls, there it stays. 4But if you keep watching which way the wind blows, you won't plant. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} And if you keep looking at the clouds to see if it will rain or not, you won't harvest a crop. 5Just as you don't know the way the wind will blow or how a baby grows in its mother's womb, so you can't understand what God, the Maker of everything, does. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 6Plant seeds in the morning, and keep working all day, because you don't know which crops will succeed, whether one or both. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

7It's a delight to see the morning sun. 8No matter how long you live, enjoy each day, because many dark days will come. In fact everything to come is frustrating. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 9Be happy while you are young, and be joyful in your youth. Do whatever your heart leads you to do and enjoy things you see, but realize that God will judge you for everything you do. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10So don't be anxious and try to avoid physical pain, because even the energetic days of youth can be frustrating. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}

Lord, I remember when I was a youth who spent my time only having fun, only entertaining myself. I remember all my wasted opportunities. Lord, I know You will hold me accountable, but be merciful and forgive. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I now realize no one can be young forever. Yet, what I did when young will stay with me forever. So now I pray for my remaining days. May I invest them wisely, may I use my resources to please You. May I do something today that will bless others after I'm gone. Use me in my remaining life—greater than I deserve to be used. Amen.

Ecclesiastes 12

Fear God and Keep His Commands

[1]While you are young, keep your Creator in mind. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} Days of trouble will come and you will say, "I don't enjoy life." [2]In old age the sun, moon, and stars will not seem bright, for clouds will block out their light. [3]In old age your arms will be weak, and your legs will be feeble. Your grinders, that is, your teeth, will be few, and your eyesight will grow dim. [4]You will lose some of your teeth (like doors to a street), and you won't hear the noisy grinding of the grain. You will get up early because you can't sleep, and you'll have difficulty hearing birds sing. [5]You will be afraid of heights and of walking down the street. Your hair will be white like almond blossoms, and you will drag along slowly like an old grasshopper. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} We will each go to our own eternal home, and the streets will be filled with mourners. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[6]So remember your Creator before death comes. It will be like the silver cord snapping, the golden bowl breaking, the water pitcher being shattered, and the wheel at the well broken. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [7]The dust from which the human body is made will return to the ground, and man's breath will return to God who gave it. [8]Much of human wisdom and effort is frustrating.

[9]Epilogue: The wise Teacher imparted knowledge, and he collected the thoughts about many proverbs. [10]He tried to explain them in the best way possible and to write words of truth correctly. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [11]Words of wise people can be like the stick a farmer uses to make his animals move—they encourage godly living. And they come from God, our Shepherd, whose sayings are like nails, giving security to life. [12]Avoid any teachings that conflict with these. Many books are written, and studying all of them can tire you out. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

[13]After everything has been said, here's the final word: Reverence God and obey His commands. That is man's total responsibility. [14]God will judge everything we do, including things we've done in secret, whether good or bad.

Lord, may I learn all You want me to learn before the final days make our memory hard; before I no longer have fun in life; before my eyes become dim, before my mind gets cloudy, and my previously mighty muscles begin to tremble; before my back bends

with the burden of years, and I am no longer able to work around the house; before I begin to lose my teeth, and then lose my eyesight; before I shut my mind to what's happening in the world, and my ears can't hear; before I have difficulty walking up stairs, and I am dizzy with heights; and when my hair is white like the dogwood tree in bloom, and the aphrodisiac berry no longer helps. *{362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}* ***Amen.***

Song of Solomon

Ch 1: Giving Yourself to the One You Love.....938
Ch 2: Love Grows in Separation 939
Ch 3: The Fulfillment of Love.....940
Ch 4: How Beautiful, How Wonderful.....941
Ch 5: Love Restored 942
Ch 6: Unbroken Communion 943
Ch 7: Come Back.....944
Ch 8: Out of the Wilderness.....944

SONG OF SOLOMON

Key Word: *Beloved* found 28 times, (see Song of Solomon 2:3).

Key Verse: "My beloved is mine, and I am his: he feedeth among the lilies" (2:16).

Theme: The sons of David worked in the fields to learn character, just as David learned many lessons as a boy shepherd. In the fields Solomon met a young dark-skinned Shulamite girl, and fell in love with her. It was pure love! Suddenly Solomon was taken away to become king. She was left alone with his promise that he would return. She had dreams and desires, and as the old adage says, "Separation makes the heart grow fonder." She loved Solomon more in separation than in presence.

The day came when Solomon returned triumphantly to claim his bride. His chariot came dashing down the country road. "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke?" (3:6).

This book is called "Solomon's Song of Songs" (1:1). But what does that mean? It means that this song is foundational to all other songs because it's about a *relationship* of pure love between a man and his wife; which is a picture of the believer's love for Christ. Christ loves us deeper than a bridegroom loves his new bride, and we ought to respond in kind. This is the best song that has ever been written, perhaps a "Song of Songs" about your love to Christ. *Lord, I love You with all my heart because You first loved me and gave Yourself for me. Amen.*

Song of Solomon 1

Giving Yourself to the One You Love

1 This is Solomon's best song.
The woman: 2 Kiss me over and over because your love is sweeter than wine.
3 Your cologne is so nice, pleasing like your name. No wonder all the young women like you. 4 Hurry, my love. Take me with you to your home. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}
Friends: We are glad for you, O woman, and we praise his love even more than wine. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
The woman: How right they are to adore you. 5 My skin is dark, but it is lovely like a dark tent in the desert or like Solomon's tent curtains. 6 Don't stare at me just because the

sun has tanned my skin. My brothers got angry with me and made me work in the vineyards. That's why I haven't given much attention to my skin.
7Tell me, my Lover, where you are leading your flock today and where will they rest at noon? I don't want to wander around veiled like a prostitute after other shepherds.
The man: 8My sweetheart, if you don't know, just follow the path of the sheep. You can then feed your young goats beside the tents of other shepherds. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} 9You are as gracious as the pony that leads one of Pharaoh's chariots. 10Your cheeks are so lovely, and earrings add to your beauty, just as does your necklace with many precious stones.
Friends: 11We will make you some gold jewelry with beads with silver.
The woman: 12The king is on his couch, enjoying the fragrance of my perfume. 13He is like a sachet of myrrh between my breasts. 14And he is like a bouquet of flowers from the vineyards of En Gedi. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}
The man: 15How beautiful you are, my darling. How beautiful. Your eyes are soft like those of a dove.
The woman: 16How handsome you are, my love. How handsome. And our bed will be green {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} 17under the cedar beams and fir rafters in our bedroom.

Lord, this ultimate song of love is a picture of my love for You. Show me Your unbounded love, so I can experience Your intimacy. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} When You said, "I will abide in you," You also reminded me, "You shall abide in me" (John 14:20). That's the oneness I want with You. Lord, Your name is wonderful; it soothes me like ointment; it heals my heart and relieves my pain. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} This is why I love You; I want to experience Your presence. I want to worship You in Your courts. Amen.

Song of Solomon 2
Love Grows in Separation

1I am only a rose from the land of Sharon, a lily in the valley. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}
The man: 2True. You are like a lily among thorns, beautiful compared to other women.
The woman: 3And you, my lover, are like an apple tree in the trees of the forest. Being with you is like being in the shade on a sunny day, and your fruit is delicious. 4You brought me to the banquet hall, and your love for me was like a banner over my hand. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 5Refresh me with raisin cakes and apples, because I am lovesick. 6Put your left hand under my head and embrace me with your right hand. 7Young women of Jerusalem, promise me by the swift gazelles and the deer that you won't awaken our love until the time is right. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10}
8I hear the voice of the one I love. He is leaping over the mountains and hills 9like

a gazelle or deer. He stands at our wall, looking through the windows and gazing into the room. [10]He said to me, "Get up, my beautiful darling, and let's go away. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [11]Winter is past, the rains have stopped. [12]And flowers are blooming, people are singing, and doves are cooing. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [13]Fig trees are bearing early fruit, and vineyards with their grapes smell wonderful. Get up, my darling, my beautiful one, and come away with me. [14]You are like a dove hiding on a cliff. Let me see your face and hear your sweet voice. Your face is so lovely. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [15]Our vineyards are in blossom with tender grapes, and so we must catch any foxes that would spoil the vines."

The woman: [16]My lover is mine, and I am his. He feeds his sheep among the lilies. [17]Before daylight comes and shadows flee away, come to me, my lover, and be quick like a gazelle or young deer on the mountains. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9}

Lord, You are my rose of Sharon, Your fragrance and beauty enhance my life. You are my lily of the valley, and You give color and tenderness to all I do. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Before the breezes of life make me old, before life's shadows lengthen into darkness, let me once more return to Your presence, let me enjoy Your Word, let me talk to You until I've nothing more to say. Amen.

Song of Solomon 3

The Fulfillment of Love

The woman: [1]One night as I lay in bed, I longed for my lover. I looked for him but didn't see him. [2]So I said to myself, "I will get up and search for my lover in the city streets and squares. But I couldn't find him anywhere. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [3]I asked the city guards, 'Have you seen the one I love?' {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [4]Soon after that I found him. I hugged him and wouldn't let go of him until I took him to my mother's home." {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [5]Young women of Jerusalem, promise me by the swift gazelles and the wild deer that you won't awaken love before it is time.

[6]Who is this coming from the desert like a cloud of smoke? He smells so nice with myrrh, frankincense, and other spices and sweet-smelling powders. [7]It is Solomon being carried on a throne, surrounded by 60 of Israel's best soldiers. [8]Each of them wears a sword; they are skilled warriors, ready to defend the king even at night in the dark. [9]King Solomon made the carriage himself from cedar wood from Lebanon. [10]Its posts are made of silver and its base is gold, and the seat is covered with purple cloth. The young women of Jerusalem lovingly covered the inside. [11]You daughters of Jerusalem, come see the crown Solomon's mother gave him on his happy wedding day. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Lord, You came mightily into my desert wilderness where I am thirsty and dying, where I am lost and afraid. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} You came in Your beauty and fragrance, You came to enlighten my Spirit. You came with the many fruits of the Holy Spirit so I could eat and refresh my character. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} You came to give me heaven's finest. You sent angels to protect me. You faced my dangers before I knew them. {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24} When I couldn't protect myself, You brought a wall of protection for me. Amen.

Song of Solomon 4

How Beautiful, How Wonderful

The man: [1]How beautiful you are, my sweetheart. How beautiful. Your eyes behind your veil are as soft as doves. [2]Your dark hair falls gracefully like goats skipping down the slopes of Mount Gilead. Your teeth are whiter than sheep with their wool just cut off and their skin washed. Your teeth are perfectly matched, and not one is missing. [3]Your lips are perfectly shaped like pieces of red thread, your mouth is lovely, and your cheeks behind your veil are lovely and sweet like halves of a pomegranate. [4]Your neck is as grand and you are as majestic as the tower of David, on which are displayed the shields of a thousand warriors. [5]Your two breasts are soft like twin fawns of a gazelle content as they feed among lilies.

[6]During the night, before dawn and the shadows are gone, I will enjoy your breasts like hills sprinkled with the sweet aroma of myrrh and incense. [7]My darling, you are beautiful, perfect in every way. {33 Beautiful-Prayer, Rev. 21:19} [8]Come with me from Lebanon, my bride, from the peaks of mountains where lions have their dens and leopards prowl. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [9]You have stolen my heart, my bride, with one glance of your eyes, and the glow of a single bead of your necklace. [10]How wonderful is your love, my bride. Your love is so much sweeter than wine. And the aroma of your perfume is more pleasant than any spice. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [11]Your lips, my bride, are as sweet as honey. Like milk and honey in Canaan, so your love is a source of joy. Even your clothes have the sweet scent of cedar trees from Lebanon.

[12]My bride, you are a private garden, and a fountain sealed off to everyone else and available only to me. [13]You are like an orchard of pomegranates with delicious fruits and all kinds of spices—henna, spikenard, [14]saffron, calamus, cinnamon, frankincense, myrrh, and aloes—all the very best spices. [15]You are a garden fountain, pure like a well of fresh water, and as refreshing as streams from Mount Lebanon. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10}

The woman: [16]Come, north and south winds. Please blow upon me, his garden, so that he, my lover, may enjoy its choicest fruits.

Lord, I bow at your feet that brought You to earth; I praise You for bringing salvation into my heart. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} How wonderful Your eyes to see all that is, that was, and that is to be. Your heart knows my intentions; You love me deeply in spite of my shallow love to You. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} I read Your words written to all, and how meaningful are Your words that apply only to me. Your message is a scarlet thread that reaches from the throne of God to me. Therefore I can say I know You because I've talked with You and You've talked with me. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} Amen.

Song of Solomon 5

Love Restored

The man: [1]My bride, I have come to you, my garden, and I have enjoyed its spices. Our love is like eating honey and drinking wine and milk. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} As God has said, He wants us to enjoy our love like eating and drinking at a banquet.

The woman: [2]One night I had a dream in which my lover was knocking {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} and saying, "My sweetheart, my dove, my perfect one, please open the door. My head is wet with dew and my hair is damp." [3]But I said, "I have already taken off my robe. Should I get dressed again? And I have washed my feet. Should I get them dirty again?" [4]My lover started to open the latch to the door, and I felt sorry. [5]So I jumped up to open the door for him as my hands and fingers were dripping with perfume. [6]But when I opened it, my darling wasn't there. So I searched and shouted for him, but I couldn't find him. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [7]The guards patrolling the city hit me and wounded me and tore off my veil. [8]If you, young women of Jerusalem find my lover, {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} please tell him that I am lovesick and I long to see him.

Friends: [9]Most beautiful of women, what is so special about your lover? How is he better than anyone else so that you want us to tell him how you feel?

The woman: [10]My lover is tanned and handsome, the most outstanding among ten thousand. [11]His head is as valuable as gold, and his hair is wavy and black as a raven. [12]His eyes are gentle like doves beside water brooks, and they are set like jewels. [13]His cheeks are as desirable as perfumed spices and herbs, and his lips are soft like perfumed lilies. [14]His arms are as attractive and valuable as gold covered with jewels, and his body is handsome like ivory and sapphires. [15]His lips are strong like marble and gold. He is tall like the cedar trees of Lebanon. [16]His kisses are sweet. He is so handsome. Young women of Jerusalem, this wonderful man is my lover and my friend. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}

Lord, You are magnificently divine and wonderfully human; You stand unique from anyone else. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev.

1:6} Your purity of love never changes; It is only matched by Your changeless holiness. I am the one who changes, because I am so human. When I enter Your love, I feel Your acceptance. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} But when I get sidetracked, I stray or I disobey, then I experience the rejection of Your holiness; {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} You don't change, when I move into a different relationship. When I change, You wait isolated in solitude; it's then You say nothing to me. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} You've said in the pages of Scripture all I need to know about You. You wait lovingly, patiently, and expectedly for me to come back to Your love, for You do not change Your love to me. {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7} Amen.

Song of Solomon 6

Unbroken Communion

Friends: [1]Most beautiful of women, where has your lover gone? We will help you find him. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
The woman: [2]My darling has gone to his garden to pasture his flock of sheep and to gather lilies. [3]I am his, and he is mine. He pastures his flock pleasantly surrounded by lilies. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2}
The man: [4]My sweetheart, you are as beautiful as the lovely cities of Tirzah and Jerusalem. You are as impressive as an army parading with many banners. [5]Look the other way because your eyes melt me. Your dark hair falls gracefully like goats skipping down the slopes of Mount Gilead. [6]Your teeth are whiter than sheep with their wool just cut off and their skin washed. Your teeth are perfectly matched, and not one is missing. [7]Your cheeks behind your veil are lovely and sweet like the halves of a pomegranate. [8]If I had 60 queens and 80 concubines and many virgins, [9]I would still choose you, my dove, my perfect one, your mother's favorite child. {33 Beautiful-Prayer, Rev. 21:19} The young women of Jerusalem bless you and the queens and concubines all praise you. [10]You are as majestic as the rising sun, as glorious as the moon, as bright as the sun, and as impressive as an army parading with many banners.
The woman: [11]I went to the orchard of nut trees and to the green valley to see the new growth on the grapevines and buds on the pomegranate trees. [12]Before I realized it, I imagined I was riding in a chariot going back to be with my lover. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1}
Friends: [13]Return to me, O beautiful woman from Shulam. Come back so we can see your beauty again.
The woman: Why are you interested in me?

Lord, I come to the garden to show my love to You. I come to refresh myself in Your presence, to worship You with the fruit of my tongue. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Before I knew it, I found myself caught up in the excitement of worship; I am in Christ and Christ, You are in me (John 14:20). Amen.

Song of Solomon 7
Come Back

The man: [1]O princess, your feet are pretty in your sandals. Your curved legs are like jewels, like the work of a craftsman. [2]Your navel is as attractive as a glass of wine. Your waist is as slender as a heap of wheat bound with lilies. [3]Your breasts are soft like twin fawns of a gazelle. [4]Your neck is beautiful like ivory, and your eyes sparkle like the Heshbon pools by the gate of Bath-Rabbim. Your nose is as lovely as the tower of Lebanon overlooking Damascus. [5]Your head is majestic like Mount Carmel, and your hair is so pretty that its beauty captivates me. [6]You are so beautiful, my love, and a complete delight. [7]You are tall and slender like a palm tree, and your breasts are like clusters of dates. [8]I said to myself, "I will enjoy her body like climbing a palm tree." Her breasts are delicious like clusters of grapes, and [9]your kisses are sweeter than the best of wine, flowing gently over your lips and teeth. {33 Beautiful-Prayer, Rev. 21:19}

The woman: [10]I am my lover's, and he wants only me. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [11]"My lover, let's go to the countryside and spend the night in a village. [12]Let's get up early and see if the vineyards are blossoming with grapes and if the pomegranates are in bloom. And when we are there, we can make love together. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [13]There the mandrake flowers with their sexual power will give off a fragrant aroma, and I have stored up at our door rare fruits for you, my lover.

Song of Solomon 8
Out of the Wilderness

[1]If you were my brother, I could kiss you whenever I want, and no one would question it. [2]I could take you to the home of my mother; the one who taught me all I know, where I would give you delicious wine and pomegranate juice. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [3]Put your left hand under my head and embrace me with your right hand. [4]Young women of Jerusalem, promise me you won't awaken our love until the time is right. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}

Friends: [5]Who is this coming up from the desert, leaning on her lover?

The woman: Under the apple tree where you were born I aroused your interest in me. [6]Place me like a seal over your heart, and with this arm bracelet remember me. Love is as irresistible as death, as possessive as the grave, {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} as passionate as fire. [7]Floodwaters can't drown out love, nor can love be bought with lots of money. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Friends: [8]We have a little sister whose breasts have not yet grown. What should we do if someone asks to marry her? [9]If she is a wall, that is, if she has resisted temptation, then we will encourage her, like putting silver defense towers on a wall. But if she is a door, that is, if she has been loose morally, we will enclose her with boards of cedar, that is, keep her from having contact with men.

The woman: [10]I am a wall, keeping myself pure for my husband, and my breasts are

fully developed like towers. Just looking at me brings him pleasure. [11]He had a vineyard at Baal-Hamon, and he rented it out to some farmers for 1,000 pieces of silver from each worker. [12]But as for my vineyard, Solomon, you can have my 1,000 pieces of silver, and I will give 200 pieces of silver to those who take care of the vines.
The man: [13]My lover, as you are in the gardens with friends, let me hear your voice.
The woman: [14]Hurry, my darling. Be quick like a gazelle or a young deer to come to my perfumed breasts, which are like mountains. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

This is a book of "Union and Communion," the title of J. Hudson Taylor's commentary on the Song of Solomon he wrote in 1893. He compares the intimacy of marriage to our intimacy with Jesus Christ. Union shows we live in Christ as He is at the right hand of the Father in heaven. We have all the "riches of the heavenlies in Christ" (Eph. 1:3). Communion shows Christ lives in us, so we have Christ's power to live a transformed life (Gal. 2:20). Union and communion reflect what Christ promises. "You in Me, and I in you" (John 14:20, NKJV). Lord, You live in my heart, I yield to Your supernatural power for my life; then I live in You, and I claim the heavenly privileges for today. Amen.

Isaiah

Ch 1: Isaiah Declares Israel's Guilty People 949
Ch 2: A Vision of the Glory of the Last Days 951
Ch 3: Israel's Humiliation 953
Ch 4: The Future Kingdom 954
Ch 5: The Sevenfold Woe 955
Ch 6: Isaiah's Vision of the Lord 957
Ch 7: Isaiah to Encourage King Ahaz 958
Ch 8: Assyria Will Overcome Israel 960
Ch 9: Child to Reign as Prince of Peace 961
Ch 10: God's People Punished 963
Ch 11: The Coming Kingdom 965
Ch 12: A Thanksgiving Song 966
Ch 13: Babylon to Become Utterly Desolate 967
Ch 14: Babylon Punished 969
Ch 15: The Doom of Moab 971
Ch 16: Moab Shall Be Utterly Desolate 971
Ch 17: The Doom of Idolatrous Israel 972
Ch 18: The Doom of Ethiopia 973
Ch 19: Egypt Judged 974
Ch 20: Philistia's Chief City to Be Sacked 975
Ch 21: An Approaching Storm 976
Ch 22: Jerusalem Judged 977
Ch 23: Tyre and Zidon Judged 978

Ch 24: Judgment on the Nations 979
Ch 25: The Song of the Redeemed 981
Ch 26: Song of Joy 982
Ch 27: A Song of the Vineyard 983
Ch 28: Israel Learns 984
Ch 29: The Destruction of Jerusalem's Enemies 985
Ch 30: Israel Asks Help from Egypt 986
Ch 31: Egypt Will Fail 988
Ch 32: The Righteous 989
Ch 33: The Righteous Protected 990
Ch 34: Destruction by the Lord's Anger 992
Ch 35: Fruitfulness 993
Ch 36: Jerusalem Besieged 994
Ch 37: Hezekiah's Prayer 996
Ch 38: Hezekiah's Deliverance 998
Ch 39: Hezekiah's Indiscretion 999
Ch 40: Isaiah's Vision of Redemption 1000
Ch 41: Protection by the LORD 1002
Ch 42: Jehovah's Anointed 1004
Ch 43: God's Care for Israel 1005
Ch 44: Idols Are Useless 1006
Ch 45: Prediction of Cyrus 1008
Ch 46: Israel's Folly in Trusting Idols 1010
Ch 47: Babylon Destroyed 1010

Ch 48: God Will Redeem Israel 1011
Ch 49: God's Servant 1013
Ch 50: Jehovah's Servant Is Humble 1014
Ch 51: An Appeal to Israel 1016
Ch 52: The Watchmen's Response 1017
Ch 53: God's Anointed Suffers 1018
Ch 54: Zion's Song of Joy 1020
Ch 55: Invitation to Zion and All Nations 1021
Ch 56: The Sabbath 1022
Ch 57: The Righteous Are Rebuked 1023
Ch 58: Fasting 1025
Ch 59: A Deliverer Promised 1026
Ch 60: God's Future Blessing 1027
Ch 61: The Redeemer Blesses 1029
Ch 62: Watchmen Called to Be Awake 1030
Ch 63: God's Mercy to Believers 1031
Ch 64: Israel Laments 1032
Ch 65: Israel to Be Restored 1033
Ch 66: The New Jerusalem 1034

ISAIAH

Key Words: *The Holy One of Israel* (Isaiah's unique name for God, Isaiah 1:4)

Key Verse: "Go, and tell this people, hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not. Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed" (6:9-10).

Theme: Isaiah began his career during a time of relative peace and prosperity under two of Judah's kings—Uzziah and Jotham. However, conditions deteriorated, especially on the international scene. During Ahaz's reign in the north, Assyria became a superpower and deported away Judah's sister kingdom (Israel) in 722 B.C. During Hezekiah's reign, Assyria ravaged the Judean countryside, and the city of Jerusalem itself almost fell. Again Isaiah preached a message of hope and Hezekiah's prayer turned away Assyria.

To view Isaiah merely as a preacher about events during his lifetime is to have only half the picture, because he is perhaps best known for his prophecies about the intermediate and distant future. Isaiah 1-39 deal primarily with events during the prophet's lifetime, but the latter part of the book is almost totally concerned with the future (from their vantage point in history). Isaiah 40 begins a major section that looks ahead to Judah's intermediate return from Babylonian exile in the sixth century B.C., and her return at the end of the age when God's people will triumphantly occupy the Holy Land.

Isaiah has many prophecies about the coming Messiah; the most striking relate to Jesus' miraculous birth (7:14), His deity (9:6-7) and His suffering and death (53). *Lord, thank You for the predictions of Jesus' birth and death, for these confirm to me His supernatural death for my sins. Amen.*

Isaiah 1

Isaiah Declares Israel's Guilty People

1 These visions about Judah and Jerusalem came to me, Isaiah, son of Amoz, when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah, were kings of Judah. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

2"You," the Lord, said "listen, heavens and
earth. The children I raised have turned
against Me. 3Even oxen and donkeys know
their owners and care for them, but My
people Israel don't know Me." {329 Obsti-
nate-Prayer, 2 Cor. 11:4} 4Israel is a sinful
nation, filled with guilt. They are evil and
corrupt and have turned away from the
LORD, the Holy One of Israel.
5"Why do your people want to be pun-
ished? Why do you keep on rebelling
against Me? Your head is injured, and your
heart is sick. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps.
2:2, 3} 6You are covered from head to toe
with bruises, cuts, and infected sores with-
out any soothing oil or bandages. {268
Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 7Your
country is in ruins, and your cities are in
ashes." LORD, foreigners destroy Your
land as the people look on and strangers
tear down everything. {139 Enemy-Strat-
egy Praying, John 8:44} 8Jerusalem is
empty like a watchman's hut in a vineyard
or in a field of cucumbers. It is as helpless
as a city under siege. {269 Justice-Prayer,
Ps. 7:17} 9If You, the LORD of the Heav-
ens, had not spared a few people, we would
have been wiped out like Sodom and
Gomorrah.
10"Listen to Me and My law, you rulers
and people of Jerusalem. You are just like
Sodom and Gomorrah. {90 Correcting
Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 11You offer Me
a lot of sacrifices, but they mean nothing to
Me. I don't want any more burnt offerings
of rams and the fat from other animals. I've
had enough! And I don't want any more
blood from your bulls and goats. {208
Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}
12Why do you bring all this to Me when
you come to the temple? 13Stop bringing
Me worthless sacrifices. Your incense is
offensive to Me. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2
Thess. 3:5} 14In fact, I hate your monthly
new moon festivals and annual festivals;
I'm sick and tired of them. {208 Guilt-Mo-
tivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}
15"When you lift up your hands and pray,
I won't listen. Even though you pray many
prayers, I won't hear them because you are
violent and your hands are covered with
blood. 16So wash yourselves clean. I don't
want to see your sinful ways. Stop sinning,
{90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}
17do what is good, see that justice is carried
out, encourage people who are oppressed,
and help orphans and widows." {291 Love
One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

Isaiah predicted terrible times were coming because of Israel's sin (v. 4). God had raised Israel just as a parent raises children, but God's people denied God's care and spurned His love. They refused to love God with all their hearts. We should not give Him outward worship, while we think inwardly of sin or we plan our next escapade. Isaiah says, "Stop doing wrong... learn to do good" (vv. 16, 17, CEV). Lord, because I have sinned, forgive me. Because I have drifted from You, pull me back into Your embrace. Lord, forgive me of my sin, and protect me from its consequences. Amen.

18"I, the LORD, suggest we talk this over.
Your sins are like a scarlet red stain, but I

can make you as clean and pure as snow or wool." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

Christianity is a rational religion. God does reasonable things, and He expects us to reason things out. God invites us, "Let us reason together" (v. 18, KJV). Lord, I know in my mind what to do; help me do in life what I know to do. Amen.

19If you obey Me, you will have plenty of good crops to eat. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 20But if you don't obey and you continue to rebel, your enemies will destroy you. I, the LORD, have spoken. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
21"Jerusalem, once faithful to Me, has become like a prostitute. It used to be a city known for justice and upright living, but now it's a city full of murderers. 22You used to be like pure silver, but not now, and your wine is watered down. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23Your city leaders have turned against Me, and are friends of robbers. They take bribes and gifts, and never help orphans or widows. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}
24"Therefore I, the LORD of the Heavens, the Mighty One of Israel, will punish you, My enemy, 25and then I will get rid of all your impurities 26and give you good judges and advisers like you used to have. Then you will be called The City of Justice and Faithfulness. 27The LORD, who is just and righteous, will save those who turn to Him. 28But rebels and sinners who turn from the LORD will be destroyed together." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

God always offers an open door for us to return to Him after we sin. "He will save her people (Israel) that come back to Him" (v. 27). Lord, I feel safe in Your presence. I want to stay near You. Amen.

29"You will be ashamed of the times you worshiped idols among your oak trees. You will be embarrassed when you think of the idols you worshiped in gardens. 30You will wither away like the fading leaves of an oak tree or like a garden without water. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 31The strongest among you will burn like timber set on fire by their sinful ways, with no one to put out the flames." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 2

A Vision of the Glory of the Last Days

1This is another message that I, Isaiah, son of Amoz, had about Judah and Jerusalem. 2Lord, in the future the mountain with your temple on it will be the most important spot on the earth, and people will go there from many places to worship You. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
3Many people will say, "Let's go to the mountain of the LORD, the temple of the God of Jacob, to worship there. The LORD will teach us His ways so we can follow Him." Your law and Your Word will be taught everywhere, starting in Jerusalem. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4You will settle arguments among nations. All

nations will beat their swords into implements for plowing and their spears into hooks for pruning plants. No longer will nations attack each other, and training for military service will end. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Isaiah predicts a coming time of peace on the earth when all wars and war machines are done away. Swords will be beaten into plows. People will stream to worship God in Jerusalem. The LORD will settle all arguments from His holy hill among the nations. Lord, I yearn for peace and safety; there's so much hatred in the world today. Lord, I look forward to a time when You rule the world; there's so much bickering among politicians. They enact laws for selfish reasons, and line their own pockets with money. There are so many lies and such arrogant pride. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

5Come, Israel, let's live by the light of the LORD and obey Him. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}
6LORD, You have deserted Your people because they follow the sinful ways of nations to the east, they practice fortune-telling like the Philistines, and they are friends with pagans. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 7They have lots of silver and gold, countless horses, and many idols, 8bowing down to idols they have made. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 9They will be ashamed and punished; therefore, God, do not forgive them. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
10You people, go hide in caves, and in holes in the ground because the LORD is angry and majestic. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 11People will be humbled and brought low, and the LORD will be honored. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
12LORD of the Heavens, You have chosen a day when You will put down proud and haughty people. 13You will destroy the cedars of Lebanon, the oak trees of Bashan, 14all high mountains and hills, 15every high tower and fortified wall, 16and every trading ship and great sea vessel. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 17Everyone who is arrogant or proud will be brought down. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} Only You, LORD, will be exalted, 18and every idol will be demolished. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
19As I said earlier, people will run to hide in caves and holes in the ground, because You, LORD, are angry and majestic. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 20In that future day people will toss their silver and gold idols to rats and bats. 21People will run to hide in caves, and under rocks at the tops of cliffs, because of Your anger and majesty when You come to shake the earth. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 22People need to stop trusting others to save them; they're not able to help.

Before that time of peace, You will judge the peoples of the earth for their rebellion and sin. Every nation will be judged. All idols will be smashed and all human pride and selfishness will be punished. People will hide in holes from the anger of the Lord. I know

there is terrible tribulation coming to the people of the earth, and the Day of Armageddon will follow. Lord, I will live righteously and I will wait for the rapture to go be with You. Amen.

Isaiah 3

Israel's Humiliation

[1]LORD of the Heavens and the earth,
You will soon take away from Jerusalem
and Judah everything it needs–food,
water, {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12}
[2]heroes and soldiers, judges,
prophets, fortune–tellers and elders, {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}
[3]army officers,
counselors, craftsmen, and enchanters.
[4]Boys will become leaders, and young children will govern them. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1}
[5]People will take
advantage of each other, neighbors opposing neighbors. Young people will oppose
their elders, and people in low positions
will have no respect for honorable people. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
[6]A man will say to his relative, "Since you
have a cloak, you be our leader and rule
this pile of ruins." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
[7]But he will say, "I can't do
that. I don't have any food or clothing in
my house. Don't make me your leader." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}
[8]Jerusalem stumbles and Judah falls
because they have spoken against You,
LORD, and have offended Your glorious
presence. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[9]The shameful look on their
faces shows they are sinning openly like
Sodom, and they are not ashamed. How
terrible it will be for them because they
have brought trouble on themselves. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20}
[10]But it will be well for those who are
godly. They will receive a nice reward. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}
[11]But
it will be terrible for the wicked. They
too will get what they deserve. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}
[12]Young people and women abuse and
rule Your people, LORD. They are leading
Your people down the wrong path. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1}
[13]LORD, please take Your place as Judge,
{269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
[14]and judge
elders and leaders who have ruined Your
vineyard and taken belongings from the
poor and put those things in their own
houses. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[15]They have crushed Your people
and rubbed the faces of the poor in the
dirt.
[16]As You, LORD, say, "The women of Jerusalem are proud, walking in pride, flirting
with their eyes, walking daintily, and with
ornaments jingling on their ankles.
[17]So I
will cover their heads with sores and make
them lose their hair."
[18]In that future day
LORD, You will take away all the jewelry on their ankles, heads, necks,
[19]ears,
arms, fingers, and noses, and their veils,
[20]perfume bottles, charms,
[21]rings,
[22]fine
robes, and all their dresses, purses,
[23]mirrors, capes, and shawls. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}
[24]There will be a terrible
smell instead of fragrance, a rope instead
of a belt, baldness instead of fancy hairdos,

burlap clothing instead of nice clothes, and scars instead of beauty. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [25]Men will be killed in war, {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [26]and helpless women will sit on the ground and mourn. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}

God described what happened when Israel turned from God, and why He will punish the nation. It sounds as if Isaiah is describing the United States as we turn from our Christian heritage. So how can Americans think God will not judge our nation? God says the young don't respect the old, or the former ways of doing things. Isn't that America? God says Israel is like Sodom—proud of her sin. Doesn't America almost "idolize" the sex lifestyle? God describes the many ways women call attention to themselves. Think of the way America sells almost everything with sex and beautiful women. Lord, You live in the past, present, and future. You have seen on many occasions all the sins of America. Nothing surprises You. God, convict America of her sins. God, revive America. God, save America. God bless America. Amen.

Isaiah 4

The Future Kingdom

[1]LORD, in that future day so few men will be left that seven women will grab one man and say, "Let's all marry you. We will provide our own food and clothing. Let's be called by your name so we won't be made fun of as old single women." [2]In that future day, Your Branch, that is, Your future offspring, will make the land fruitful and lush again. People who will survive will be proud of the land's excellent fruit. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [3]Those who are left alive in Jerusalem will be a holy people.

[4]LORD, when You wash away the moral filth of the women of Jerusalem and cleanse Jerusalem of its bloodstains by Your Spirit of judgment and fire, {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} [5]then You will cover all of Zion and everyone there with a thick cloud in the daytime and a thick fire at night {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} that will be like a protective covering over Your people.

The LORD promises in the future the Shekinah cloud will return to cover His people. Just as the Shekinah went before Israel to guide them out of Egypt, God will guide His people with His presence in the future. Just as the Shekinah went behind Israel to protect them from an attacking army, so God's cover will protect His people in the future. The covering will be God Himself who meets every need of His people. Lord, I know I'll have the Shekinah covering in the future, but I need You now, I need You today. Cover me from all threats as I go about my duties. "Deliver me from the evil one." I will walk under Your cloud, and I will rejoice in Your covering. Amen.

6In this way Your glory will provide shade
in the daytime heat and a place of shelter
from storms and rain."

God promises a safe place "to hide from the storms and rain." That doesn't mean God will keep the storms from beating on us, nor does it mean there will be no storms in the believer's life. It means that in the LORD there is safety. Lord, You see the future; so help me prepare for the storms that will come. Don't let me be terrified by storms, give me godly fear of Yourself. Yet Lord, when terrifying times come, give me Your peace as I hide in You. Whether storms are money storms... health storms... job storms... family storms... or whatever; keep me safe in Your presence. Amen.

Isaiah 5

The Sevenfold Woe

1The Lord said, "Here's a song for My loved
one about his vineyard. 'He had a vineyard
on the side of a fertile hill. 2He plowed the
land, removed all the stones, and planted
the best vines. He built a water tower
nearby and made a winepress. Naturally he
expected to get good grapes, but they were
all wild and sour.' {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}
3"Now you people of Jerusalem and Judah,
you be the judge of My vineyard. 4What
more could I have done? Why did I get
bitter grapes instead of sweet grapes? {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} 5Here's
what I'll do: I'll tear down the walls
around the vineyard and let the vines be
trampled on. 6I won't prune the grapes or
hoe the ground. I'll just let thorns grow
over it, and I'll tell the clouds not to send
rain on it. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
7"The point of this story is this: I am the
LORD of the Heavens and the vineyard
is My people, My pleasant garden. But
when I looked for honesty, all I found was
bloodshed, and when I looked for mercy,
all I found were people weeping in distress.
8How terrible it will be for people who buy
up houses and fields so that no one except
you has any place to live."

The story of the vineyard is about ingratitude. God did everything for Israel, just as the owner of the vineyard did everything to grow grapes. He chose rich soil, dug away stones, hauled away trash, and built a tower to provide water and a winepress to produce wine. But only wild grapes grew in the vineyard. It produced nothing. This was a picture of Israel. God came looking for the enjoyment of wine, which is a picture of God looking for the enjoyment of worship from His people. He wants praise, thanksgiving, and gratitude from His people. But there's silence. So the owner judged the vineyard and took everything away. Because God judged Israel and sent her into captivity, can we expect God to do anything differently to America? Lord, when You come to examine my life, discover praise in my heart, and worship on my lips. I give You thanks for all You've given me and all You've done for me. You've done so much for me and I've done so little for You. Forgive me for my

inadequacies and lack of gratitude. Thank You for forgiveness; I worship You for Your patience and grace with me. Amen.

9"I the LORD of the Heavens, say that these houses will be empty and these beautiful mansions will have no one living in them. 10A ten-acre vineyard will yield only about six gallons of wine, and six bushels of seed will yield only about a half bushel of grain. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
11"How terrible it will be for those who get up early to start drinking and who continue until late in the evening. 12In their wine-drinking parties they play music on harps, lyres, tambourines, and flutes. But they never think about what I have done. 13Therefore I will send My people away to foreign countries because they don't know Me. Their leaders will starve, and everyone will die from thirst."
14The grave has opened its mouth wide, ready to swallow up Jerusalem's leaders and its drunken crowds. 15You, LORD, will bring down common and proud people.

Your expressions of gratitude are the acid test of your character. If you are ungrateful for all you possess—like Israel—God will take away what you have. Lord, I'm thankful for my parents, my education, and the measure of health you've given me. I'm thankful for a good mind, opportunities, and Your provision of the necessities of life. I'm thankful for opportunities of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; even though limited and frail. I'm thankful for salvation, a new nature, and being placed in the body of Christ. I'm thankful for a desire to pray and know You better; so, Lord, I pursue You this day to be magnified in my life. Amen.

16But You, the LORD of the Heavens, will be exalted because You are just, holy, and righteous. 17Then lambs will feed among the ruins, and strangers will eat among the ruins of the rich.
18How terrible it will be for those who drag their sins behind them as if they were dragging a cart full of sins. 19They say, "Let God hurry up and do something. We want to see what He can do." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} 20How terrible it will be for those who call evil good and good evil, who say dark is light and light is dark, who say bitter is sweet and sweet is bitter. 21How terrible it will be for those who are wise in their own eyes and think themselves clever. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 22How terrible it will be for those who are so great at drinking wine and mixing drinks. 23They take bribes to let the guilty go free, and they put innocent people in jail.
24Therefore just as fire lights up straw and dry grass, so their roots will rot and their blossoms will blow away. That's because they have rejected Your law, LORD of the Heavens, and hate Your Word, O Holy One of Israel. 25That explains why Your anger, O LORD, is against these people. You have struck them down, the mountains shake, and their corpses cover the streets like garbage. Even then, O LORD, You are still angry and ready to strike again. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[26]You will signal for foreign nations to come and attack us, and You will whistle to other nations to come quickly. [27]The enemy doesn't easily tire or get sleepy, nor do they loosen their belts to relax, nor will their sandal straps be broken. [28]Their arrows are sharp, their bows are bent ready for battle, and their horses' hoofs are hard like flint, and their chariot wheels spin quickly like a whirlwind. [29]They roar like lions and growl as they pounce on their prey and carry them off where no one can rescue them. [30]They growl over their victims like the roaring of the ocean. In the land there is only darkness and trouble, and the sky is blackened by thick clouds. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 6

Isaiah's Vision of the Lord

[1]In the year King Uzziah died I saw You, the LORD, sitting on a high throne, and Your robe filled the temple. [2]Above You were winged creatures. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} Each had six wings. With two he covered his face, with two he covered his feet, and with two he flew. [3]They shouted to each other, "Holy, holy, holy is the LORD of the Heavens. The whole earth is full of His glory." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [4]Their singing shook the doorposts, and the temple was filled with smoke, a sign of God's presence. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30}

[5]Then I said, "How terrible it is for me. I'm doomed because I am a sinful man just like everyone around me. And I have seen You the King, the LORD of the Heavens." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [6]One of the winged creatures flew to me with a burning coal that he had taken from the altar with some metal tongs. [7]He touched my lips with the coal, and he said, "This has touched your lips, and so you are now no longer guilty. Your sins are forgiven." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

[8]Then, LORD, You asked me, "Whom shall I send as a messenger for Me to My people. Who will go?" I said, "LORD, I'll go. Send me." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [9]And You said, "Yes, go. But tell My people, 'You will keep on hearing what I say, but you won't understand. You will keep on seeing what I do but you won't perceive their meaning." [10]God will make your heart stubborn, your ears closed, and your eyes dim. That way they can't see with their eyes, hear with their ears, understand with their hearts, or turn to You and be healed.

The LORD called Isaiah to a ministry of failure. God told him to preach, but the listeners would not see God's truth; they would not hear and understand God's message, and they would reject his preaching. In that sense almost every believer is called today to witness about Christ to family and friends, but many do not understand and many will not respond. So like Isaiah, we are called to minister in the face of predetermined resistance. Lord, I will witness to my friends and family, even though many will not receive my message and believe the gospel. My job

is not to produce fruit, but to be a faithful witness... to plant... to weed... and to water. God, I trust You to grow the harvest. Amen.

11Then I asked, "How long, LORD, will this last?" {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} You answered, "Until your cities are ruined and their houses are empty, the land is a wasteland, 12and I have sent people away as captives and their land is in ruins. 13If a tenth of the land remains, it will be like a stump but it will be burned like a tree. But just as a stump remains when a tree is cut down, so the holy seed will be like a stump that will grow again." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah asked, "How long should I do this?" This was a natural question. The LORD didn't give Isaiah the answer he expected. Isaiah probably expected an answer from the calendar, that is,... weeks... months... or years. But God wanted Isaiah to be faithful to the end, whether or not he was successful. We live in a day of some spectacularly successful super mega churches. In a lifetime one pastor may build one of the largest churches in history. But for every successful pastor, there are probably thousands of pastors who minister a lifetime and only win a few. Some others win almost none who minister in cultures dominated by Islam or Hinduism, or some other blinding religion. Lord, take my eyes off of success and put them on Jesus. May I measure my success by my relationship to Jesus, and may I be satisfied with my abiding fellowship with Him. Lord, teach me to prize the important things in life. Amen.

Isaiah 7

Isaiah to Encourage King Ahaz

1When Ahaz, son of Jotham and grandson of Uzziah, was king of Judah, Rezin, king of Syria, and Pekah, king of Israel, attacked Jerusalem, but they couldn't take the city. 2When Ahaz heard that Syria and Israel had joined forces against Judah, he and everyone in Jerusalem were so afraid that they were shaking like tree leaves in a windstorm. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Ahaz and all the people of Judah were afraid. The people of Syria had always hated God's people. The king of Syria was angry and ready to attack God's people. But their fear was compounded; Israel—the northern half of God's people—had turned traitors against the Southern Kingdom. Like brothers who sometimes fight brothers, Israel and Syria joined forces against the Southern Kingdom. Lord, I expect unsaved people to attack me, but it's difficult when people who call themselves Christian attack me. Amen.

3Then You, LORD, said to me, "Take your son, Shear-Jashub, and go meet Ahaz at the end of the canal from the upper pool, on the road to the field where people wash clothes. 4Tell Ahaz, 'Stop worrying and don't be afraid of the anger of Rezin and Pekah. They are nothing but pieces of

wood on fire that's dying out.'" {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}

King Ahaz and the Southern Kingdom "became very scared." God sent them a message through Isaiah, "Be calm... don't be afraid" (v. 4). Why be courageous because fear makes a coward and cowards are weak in battle. Jesus told His followers on numerous occasions, "Fear not." He didn't want His disciples defeated. Lord, when I can't be strong in myself, I'll be strong in You and Your promises. Amen.

5"'True, they are coming against you 6and are planning to invade Judah and defeat it and make the son of Tabeel Judah's king. 7But that won't happen, 8because the capital of Syria is only Damascus and only Rezin is in Damascus. In less than 65 years Israel will be defeated. 9And the capital of Ephraim is only Samaria, and Pekah is the head of only Samaria. If you, Ahaz, don't stand firm in your faith in the LORD, you will fall.'" {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} 10Again the LORD said to Ahaz, 11"Ask Me for proof that I will defeat your enemies as I promised. You may ask for something as difficult as you like, something in the depths below or in the heights above." 12But Ahaz said, "I won't test You, LORD." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 13Then Isaiah said, "God says, 'Listen, all of you in David's royal family. You have tried My patience. Will you now try patience again by not asking for proof of what I said I will do?' 14So the Lord Himself will give you proof. A virgin will become pregnant and as a virgin she will give birth to a son and will name him Immanuel, which means God is with us." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

God promised a sign that they would be victorious. The virgin will be pregnant. She will deliver a son... "Immanuel" (v. 14). Obviously, that's a prediction of the coming Messiah—Jesus Christ. He is Immanuel, that is, God with us. Isn't Jesus always our answer to discouragement and fear? Lord, when I'm afraid, I'll trust in Jesus. He makes me courageous. Amen.

15"He will eat yogurt and honey, and he will soon know the difference between right and wrong. 16And before that, the land of the two kings you are afraid of will be desolate. 17The LORD will bring more trouble on you, Judah, and your family than anything you have experienced since Israel separated from Judah. He'll bring the mighty king of Assyria." {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 18In that future day You, LORD, will whistle and armies will come from Egypt like flies and from Assyria like bees. 19They will settle everywhere in the land, in ravines, between rocks, by thornbushes, and at all the watering holes. 20In that future day the Assyrians from the Euphrates will be like a razor and will shave your head, legs, and beards. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 21A farmer will be glad to have even a cow and two goats. 22And with the milk they give, he will have yogurt and milk. 23In that future day the lush vineyards, now worth

a thousand pieces of silver, will become overrun with thorns. [24]The entire land will be one big patch of thorn bushes where people will hunt with bows and arrows. [25]People used to dig the hillsides with hoes, but no longer because thorns will be there. Cattle will be loose there, and sheep will roam there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 8

Assyria Will Overcome Israel

[1]You, the LORD, said, "Isaiah, write on a large scroll in big letters the name Maher–Shalal–Hash–Baz (meaning 'Swift to the Plunder and Quick to the Loot'). [2]I will have Uriah the priest and Zechariah, son of Jeberekiah, both honest men, serve as witnesses." [3]I slept with my wife and she became pregnant and had a son. You told me to name him Maher–Shalal–Hash–Baz, [4]which suggests that before the boy can say 'Mommy' or 'Daddy,' the king of Assyria will attack both Damascus and Samaria and carry off their riches.

[5]Again the LORD spoke to me. He said, [6]"These people have refused the gentle water of Shiloah in Jerusalem and they have been glad because of what will happen to Rezin and Pekah. [7]Therefore I will send against Judah the armies of the king of Assyria like the flood waters of the Euphrates overflowing the banks. [8]It will flood Judah and cover it like water reaching up to your neck, and like a giant bird it will spread its wings over all your land." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[9]Go ahead, you nations, and go into battle. But you will be shattered. Get ready for battle, [10]prepare your plan of attack, but they will fail, because God is with us. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[11]You, the LORD, spoke sternly to me and warned me not to be like these people of Judah. [12]"Don't call something a scheme just because they do. And don't be afraid just because they are. [13]I, the LORD of the Heavens, am the one you should regard as holy and reverence and fear."

Notice God says, "Don't be afraid of the things they fear." Not only do we have our own personal fears, but we also let the fears of others scare us with the things that scare them. Then we are doubly weak. Why? Because when people talk about their fears, they exaggerate. The answer? "Remember the LORD of the Heavens... He is the One you should fear." Lord, direct my fears to the proper source. Forgive me when I don't fear You. I know You have all power in heaven and earth. I yield to Your will. Save me from my fears. Amen.

[14]"I will be for you, Isaiah, a sanctuary, place of safety. For Israel and Judah I will be like a rock that will make them stumble and fall, and like a trap for the people of Jerusalem. [15]Many of them will stumble and fall and will be taken captives." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[16]LORD, I will seal up these words and give them to my followers. [17]I will wait for You {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} even though You are turning away from Israel.

I will continue to place my trust in You.
18 The names of my children and my name
are signs from You, the LORD of the
Heavens, who lives on Mount Zion. {364
Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
19 So why should they go to mediums who
try to contact the dead, and psychics, who
whisper and mutter? Shouldn't they con-
tact You? {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-
23} 20 These fortune-tellers should follow
Your law, and since they don't, the light
of the truth is not in them. {323 "No"
Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

People today are looking for answers everywhere, just as they did in Isaiah's day. Back then, they went to fortunetellers or a séance to ask the dead just like today. Look at Isaiah's response, "I will wait for the LORD to help us" (v. 17). Do you know how to "wait"? The answer to your inquiry is with Him. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} Lord, I'm not good at waiting. I like to push ahead and do things my own way. Forgive my impatience. I'm waiting. Amen.

21 Your people will be led away as captives,
tired and hungry. And when they are
starving, they will shake their fists toward
heaven and will curse their king and their
God. 22 Everywhere they look on the earth
they will see trouble and darkness and
despair, and they will be driven into total
darkness. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5}

Isaiah 9

Child to Reign as Prince of Peace

1 But that time of gloom won't last forever.
In the past You judged the land of Zebu-
lun and Naphtali, but this land of the Gen-
tiles west of the Sea of Galilee and near the
Mediterranean Sea will be honored. {282
Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2
Cor. 4:3-4} 2 People who are walking in
darkness will see a great light, and those
who are living under the shadow of death
will see the light.

Galilee, which had been so ravaged for centuries by foreign invaders, was the area where Jesus the Messiah was raised. When Jesus was a small boy in Galilee, the sophisticated Jews of Jerusalem looked down on the Galileans. But those who were the most depraved knew they needed a Savior, so they gladly received the message of Jesus. Lord, come to me just as You came to Galilee. {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} I need Your message; I want Your love. Thank You for sending Jesus. Amen.

3 You have increased the nation in size,
and You have made them happy like the
way people are joyful at harvest time or
the way soldiers are happy when they are
picking up loot after a battle. 4 You will
break the yoke on their neck and the bar
on their shoulders, and free them from
their aggressors just as You destroyed the
Midianites with Gideon's small army. 5 No
longer will soldiers need boats or other
military equipment. Their blood-stained

clothing will be burned, all because peace is coming. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
6 A child has been born to us. We have been
given a son and he will be the nation's ruler.
His royal title will be Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, and
Prince of Peace. 7 His peaceful government
will never end. {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13} He will rule forever {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
from the throne of his ancestor, David,
with justice and fairness. You, the LORD
of the Heavens, will see that this is done.

Isaiah described the names of Messiah. First, Jesus is Wonderful Counselor: "Wonderful" is a word used for miracles. Counselor stands for One who shares wisdom. He has miraculous wisdom. Second, as the Mighty Powerful God: Jesus has all the power that God the Father possesses. Third, He is called Father of Eternity, which means just as a father will beget a child, so Jesus is the originator of the beginning of all things. Fourth, Jesus is the Prince of Peace. He gives us peace with God which is salvation, and He becomes our inward peace over stress and turmoil. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} Lord Jesus, I use Your many names to worship You. It takes so many names to describe You because You are so vast, and because You do so much. I am overwhelmed with Your greatness. Amen. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}

8 You have spoken against Israel, and
everyone in Israel and especially Samaria
will hear it. 9 In their pride they have said,
10 "The bricks have fallen down, but we will
rebuild the bricks with cut stone, and we
will replace the sycamore fig trees that the
enemy cut down with cedar trees." 11 You
caused the enemies of Rezin, king of Syria,
to attack Israel. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12 These enemies will include
Syrians from the east and Philistines from
the west. But even then You will still be
angry and You will continue punishing
Israel. 13 Still Your people have not turned
back to You nor have they sought You,
the LORD of the Heavens. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 14 In one day
You will destroy both head, that is, 15 the
leaders, and the tail, that is, the prophets,
who tell lies. 16 They led the people down
the wrong path, and the people were led
astray. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 17 You did not have any pity on young
men, or orphans, or widows because they
were all ungodly and speak foul language.
{374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 18 Their sin will be like
a fire that burns briers and thorns and
even entire forests, sending up columns
of smoke. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Did you see that evil is described as a "small fire"? Usually evil begins in a small way in your heart. You see, or hear, or touch something that is prohibitive. But you must have it; at least you want just a little touch. But evil, just like fire, burns everything it touches. Evil burns your belongings in your life. Then evil burns your soul. Then, "Everything goes

up in a column of smoke." Lord, I want more than smoke. I know evil burns because I've been hurt by small evils. Touch me, Lord, and forgive all the evil I've ever done. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Heal me, Lord, from scars created by evil fires. Transform me, Lord; take away my fascination with evil-fire. Amen.

19 In Your wrath, LORD of the Heavens, you have scorched the land and have destroyed the people as if they are fuel for a fire, and no one tries to help anyone else. 20 Like animals, they will eat but are still hungry and never filled. In fact they even eat their own children. 21 West Manasseh and Ephraim will attack each other and will then turn against Judah. Even then You, LORD, will still be angry, and ready to punish Judah even more. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah 10

God's People Punished

1 "How terrible it is for people who make unfair or troublesome laws, 2 depriving the poor of their rights and desolate of justice, and robbing widows and orphans. 3 What will you do when I punish you by bringing people against you from a different country? Where will you go for help? And where will you hide your valuable belongings? 4 You will stumble along as prisoners or fall among the dead. Even then I, will still be angry and ready to punish Judah even more." {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}

God seems angry with lawmakers. God hates their evil intentions that produce evil results. These were lawmakers over nations, states, and cities. They enacted laws that made it hard for people, especially the poor. They got rich off their positions. They stole from widows and orphans. It looks like the problems Israel had with lawmakers is the same problem America has today. Lord, I pray for those politicians over me just as You command me (1 Tim. 2:1-3). I pray they will make righteous laws and they will live by the laws they make. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} I pray that politicians would be honest and upright. Amen.

5 "How terrible it will be for the Assyrians. I will use them like a club against My people, a godless nation that makes Me angry. 6 So I will send them to grab lots of loot and to stomp down on the people like trampling on mud in the streets. 7 But the king of Assyria won't know that I sent him. He will plan to destroy Judah and also many other nations. He will say, 8 "I will make each of my commanders a king. 9 They have already conquered the Syrian cities of Calno, Carchemish, Hamath, Arpad, and Damascus, and Israel's capital city Samaria. 10 The gods of these kingdoms were greater than those of Jerusalem and Samaria. 11 So I will destroy Jerusalem and her idols, just as I did Samaria and her idols.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
12 LORD, when You have used Assyria to punish Jerusalem, then punish the proud, haughty king of Assyria. {268

Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [13]He says, "I have conquered these places by my power and my wisdom. I took over much of their land, looted their treasures, and killed their kings. [14]I took their wealth as easily as taking eggs from a chicken's nest. I gathered up nations like gathered eggs from a nest with no hen. And no one flapped a wing or peeped in protest." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [15]But king of Assyria, you are only an ax, and so you aren't greater than the one who swings it. And you are only a saw, so you aren't greater than the one who uses it. A pole can't lift the one who holds it, nor can a club swing at the one who has it in his hand. [16]Therefore, You, the Lord, LORD of the Heavens, will send a terrible disease on their soldiers, and they will burn with fever. [17]You, the Light of Israel, and the Holy One, will be a flaming fire that will consume the Assyrians like burning up thorns and thistles. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [18]You will completely destroy their great forests and fertile lands, like a sick person dying away. [19]There will be so few trees in the Assyrian forests that even a child could count them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah describes God as a "fire." Just as a fire burns everything it touches, so God will judge all things. One day God will burn away all illegal drugs of the addict, and all alcohol that poisons lives, and all anger that causes one to hurt another. Just as a fire illuminates, God will see all evil and iniquity. Nothing sinful will escape His scrutiny. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} ***Lord, shine Your light in my heart to see all sin and purify me. I confess I have a sinful nature; I long for the coming day when You purify my heart from sin and make me clean within.*** *{524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}* ***Then I will worship You from a pure mind and from honest motives. Lord, I long for that day to worship You perfectly. Amen.*** *{544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9}*

[20]In that future day survivors of Israel and Judah will no longer rely on the Assyrians, but only on You, LORD, the Holy One of Israel. [21]A few will survive and will return to You, the Mighty God. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [22]Your people are as numerous as the grains of sand on the seashore, but only a few will return. That's because You in your righteous way have decided that many of them will be destroyed, [23]You, Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, will destroy them as You promised. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[24]This too is what the Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, says: "You people in Jerusalem, don't be afraid of the Assyrians. True, they will punish you with rods and clubs as the Egyptians did. [25]But soon I won't be angry with you, and then I will turn My anger against the Assyrians to destroy them. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} [26]I, the LORD of the Heavens, will punish them much as I used Gideon to defeat Midian and used Moses to defeat the Egyptian army at the Red Sea. {362

Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [27]In that future day I will lift the Assyrian burden from you like lifting a yoke from your neck.

[28]"The Assyrians reached Aiath, went through Migron, stored some of their supplies at Micmash, and camped overnight at Geba. [29]This frightened the people of Ramah, and everyone in Gibeah, Saul's hometown, ran away. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [30]People in Gallim, Laishah, and Anathoth are screaming in fear. [31]People of Madmenah and Gebim have left. [32]The enemy will stop at Nob and shake their fist at mount Zion in Jerusalem, only a few miles away. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [33]I the Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, will destroy Assyria like cutting off tree branches and chopping down tall trees. [34]I the Mighty One will destroy the Assyrian soldiers like cutting down forest trees in Lebanon with an ax." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah 11

The Coming Kingdom

[1]Like a branch that sprouts from a tree stump, someone from David's family will be like a fruit-bearing branch. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7}

The Messiah-Jesus is predicted as a coming branch. Don't think of just a tree limb. This prediction pictures a tree that was cut down and only a stump was left. That tree was David's kingdom. Isaiah's prediction came true in 587 B.C. when the kingdom of Judah ceased and David's line of successive sons on the throne ended. There has never been another king of the Jews since 587 B.C. The coming Branch is Jesus from the line of David, through both Mary and Joseph. They mocked Jesus on the cross calling Him "the King of the Jews," and in divine providence, they were right. There is coming a day when Jesus will rule the world in peace. Sin will be no more and "Leopards will lie down in peace with goats." Lord, I submit to Your rulership now so I can enjoy Your peace in the future. You will take evil out of us, just as Your will takes the predator's nature out of lions which will then eat grass. Lord, I look forward to the elimination of my old evil nature in the future. Change me today to be like Jesus. Amen.

[2]The Spirit of the LORD will be with Him and will give Him wisdom, insight, counsel, power, and knowledge. And He will honor the LORD, {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

Isaiah predicted that the Spirit of God would rest on Jesus, so we shouldn't be surprised when we read of when it happens. The Spirit gave Jesus "wisdom, understanding, guidance, and power," and because Christ dwells in our hearts, He brings to us that same Holy Spirit of "wisdom, understanding, guidance, and power." Lord, I need wisdom today; I yield to receive it. Lord, I need understanding today; I receive it through Your word. Lord, I need guidance today; lead each step I take. Lord, I need power to live and serve You today; fill me. Lord,

when I have You, I have all the Holy Spirit wants to give me; thank You for His presence. Amen.

3and He will delight in obeying Him. He won't judge people simply by what He sees or hears. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4He will judge the needy with fairness and justice, and He will make decisions to benefit the poor. He will put criminals to death merely by what He says. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 5Fairness and faithfulness will be as much a part of Him that they will be like His wearing a belt or a sash. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17}

6"Wolves will no longer kill and eat lambs; they will live together. And leopards will no longer attack goats to eat them; they will lie down together. Calves and year-old horses will be safe with lions, and a little child will lead them all. 7Cows and bears will eat together, and calves and cubs will lie down together. Lions will eat straw with oxen. 8Babies can play near snake holes, and young children can put their hands in the dens of poisonous snakes and not be hurt. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 9Nothing will be harmful or destructive in all My holy mountain, Zion. As water covers the ocean, so the land will be filled with people who know Me, the LORD." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

10In that future day one of David's descendants from the 'Root' of Jesse, will be like a signal for people of all nations to come to Him, for His land will be glorious. 11"In that future day I, the LORD, will bring back home My people from Assyria, Egypt, Ethiopia, Elam, Babylonia, Hamath, and coastlands." {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} 12He will signal the nations and will bring home the refugees of Israel, gathering the scattered people of Judah from all around the world. 13Israel will no longer be jealous of Judah, and Judah will no longer be an enemy of Israel. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 14Together Israel and Judah will swoop down on Philistia on the west and take loot from the people to the east, and defeat Edom, Moab, and Ammon. 15 "I will dry up the sea of Egypt, and I will send a scorching hot wind over the Euphrates River, breaking it into seven streams so that people can walk across it. 16For the people who survive I will make a highway from Assyria just as I made a road for your ancestors to come from Egypt." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28}

Isaiah 12

A Thanksgiving Song

1On that day I will say, "I praise You, LORD, because You are no longer angry with me, and You are a comfort to me. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 2You have come to save Me, and so I trust You and I won't be afraid. You, LORD, make me strong and give me reason to sing. You have saved me." {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10}

This chapter predicts "at that time" Israel will be restored from her captivity to the

Promised Land. Then, the LORD will "make me sing." That's a picture of Israel rejoicing. But it's also a picture of what God does for individuals when He saves them. Lord, You make me sing a happy song because I'm on my way to heaven. You make me sing a thankful song because you've forgiven my sins. You make me sing a reverent song in praise for all You've done. Lord, I sing worship to Your majesty. Amen.

3"With joy I drink from the wells of salvation." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}

Salvation is pictured as drawing water from a well. Lord, when I'm almost famished emotionally, I come to drink strength from You. Lord, when I'm too weak to carry on, I replenish myself from You. Lord, sometimes I just want to enjoy You and get satisfaction by drinking Your water. Ah! Your water is good. Amen.

4In that future day I will say, "Thank the LORD. Praise His name. Tell the nations the wonderful things He has done, and how great He is. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 5Sing to the LORD because of the wonderful things He has done. Tell everyone how wonderful He is. 6You people in Jerusalem, shout your praise of Him with joy. Great is the Holy One of Israel who lives among you." {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

The reason God has saved us and called us to Himself is for worship; Isaiah exhorts us, "Praise the LORD and worship Him." And how do we worship God? "Tell how great He is." Worship is not about your method of approach, God; it's about Your majesty. Worship is not about how high we jump, or how deep we bow; it's about Your exaltation. Worship is not about lifting hands or folding hands, it's about recognizing His holiness... His justice... His truth... and worth. Worship is about You. Lord, all of these things are true; I worship You. Amen.

Isaiah 13

Babylon to Become Utterly Desolate

1This is the message God gave me about Babylon. 2"Flags are waving on a hilltop. Cheer them on in their march against Babylon." 3LORD, You have ordered Your armies to carry out this task and to rejoice when You are victorious. 4I hear the noise of the many soldiers on the mountains. They sound like numerous nations shouting together. You, the LORD of the Heavens, have brought them together to fight in a war. 5They are coming from distant countries, and LORD, they are Your weapons of anger to destroy the whole earth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6You people in Babylon, cry because the time when the Almighty One will destroy is now near. 7Everyone's hands are weak and everyone's courage is gone. 8You will be afraid, and everyone will be in pain like a woman in childbirth. When you look at each other, your faces will be red with embarrassment. {28 Avoid-Persecution

Prayer, Acts 25:11} [9]The day of the LORD is coming, a cruel day of wrath and anger against you. He will destroy your land and every sinner in it.

Why would God use an evil nation like Babylon to punish His people? God hates all sin, equally; whether it's the sin of His people or the sin of an evil nation. But it's worse when someone sins against light. So God took a powerful nation that ravished every people it conquered and used them to punish God's people living in the Promised Land. God's people sinned against His commands; they sinned in the presence of the Levitical priest when the sacred chest sat in the temple. What will the LORD do to us when we know better but sin anyway? Lord, I'm sorry for every transgression of mine. Forgive me of all my evil intentions and my outright disobedience. Cleanse me by the blood of Christ; don't deal with me according to Your judgmental nature; deal with me in grace. Amen.

[10]Stars won't shine, and neither the sun nor the moon will give light. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[11]"I, the LORD, will punish the world for its evil and the wicked for their sins. I will stop the proud from being so haughty, and I will bring down the pride of dictators. [12]People will be as scarce as pure gold, more rare than the gold of Ophir. [13]I will shake the heavens and make the earth move. I, the LORD of the Heavens, will do this in My wrath and anger. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[14]"The people will run home to their countries like a hunted deer or like wandering sheep without a shepherd. [15]Everyone who is captured will be killed by a sword. [16]Their little children will be beaten against rocks while they look on, and their houses will be robbed and their wives raped. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [17]I will send the Medes to attack the Babylonians, and the Medes won't be bought off with any amount of silver or gold. [18]The Medes will shoot young men with arrows, and they will have no mercy on babies and children.
[19]"I will defeat Babylon, the jewel of kingdoms, and the pride of the Babylonians, just as I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

God doesn't ignore the transgressions of the transgressors. God used Babylon as a stick to punish Israel. But He didn't overlook the sins of those who punished Israel. The Medes and Persians defeated Babylon in 538 B.C. and later Xerxes completely destroyed the city of Babylon. Lord, I fear You, because You will punish my every sin. But Christ took my punishment for all my sin. Now I bow in worship at Your feet; thank You for complete forgiveness. Amen.

[20]"No one will live in Babylon. Nomads will not camp there, and even shepherds won't rest their flocks there. [21]But wild carnivores of the desert will live there, and jackals will move into the empty houses. Owls will dwell there, and wild goats will leap around in the city's ruins. [22]Hyenas and wolves will

howl from the city's strongholds and palaces. Babylon's time is just about up." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

Isaiah 14

Babylon Punished

[1]You, LORD, will have mercy on Israel. They will again be Your special people, and You will bring them back to their land, and foreigners will join them as part of Israel. [2]People from other nations will help Your people return home, and those who come to live with them will serve them. Israel will take as captives those who had taken them as captives, and Israel will rule over its enemies. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[3]LORD, when You give Your people relief from suffering, sorrow, and slavery, [4]they will mock the king of Babylon and say, "You, camel leaders, your end has come, and your fury is over. [5]The LORD has crushed your evil power and has broken your sinful reign. [6]In anger you persecuted people and never stopped abusing them. [7]But now the land is at rest and is peaceful, and people are singing. [8]Cypress trees and cedar trees of Lebanon are now saying, 'King of Babylon, now that you are cut down, no one will now come to cut us down.' {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

[9]"The people who are dead are excited about your joining them. The spirits of the dead, including many world rulers, will welcome you. [10]They will all say together, 'Now you are as weak as we are. You are just like us.' [11]Your pride and the music of your harps have ended here in the grave. You are covered with worms like a blanket, and maggots are like a sheet under you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[12]"You Lucifer, the bright morning star, have fallen from the sky. You destroyed nations, but now you are destroyed. [13]You said to yourself, 'I will climb to heaven and put my throne above the highest stars. I'll be seated there with the gods far away in the north. [14]I will climb to the highest place in the clouds and be like the Most High God.'" {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}

Isaiah writes under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to describe the coming fall of a future king of Babylon, but actually pictures the fall of Lucifer in the historic past. Lord, thank You for telling me how one of the created angels fell into sin because of pride. Notice the five ways satan sinned, "I will ascend into heaven" (14:13). There are three heavens; (1) the atmosphere, (2) the stellar heaven, and (3) the abode of God and the angels. Satan attempted to move into the 3rd heaven, that is, into God's place. Lord, forgive me when I take credit for what You do and when I try to take Your seat on the throne of my life. The second thing is that satan wanted to "raise his throne above the stars of God" (14:13). The stars represented angels and satan wanted first place in the universe to rule all angels. Lord, forgive me of selfish ambitions that attempt to exalt myself against You. Third, satan tried to govern heaven when he desired "to sit on the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the

north" (14:15). Satan wanted God's role. Lord, forgive me when I try to force my decision in Your realm. Fourth, satan wanted the glory of God when he desired to "ascend about the heights of the clouds" (14:14). Clouds represent God's glory. Lord, forgive me when I try to take credit for Your work in this world, or for the good things You do in my life. Fifth, satan wanted "to be like the Most High" (14:14). Satan knew he couldn't be God, but the closest was to be like God. Even then satan knew He couldn't be God, "Creator God," or "Jehovah," the self-existing "I Am that I AM," or Adonai, the divine name of Master. The closest to God that satan could become was El Elyon, that is, the ruler of the world which is rendered by our English term, Most High. And today satan is the god of this world (2 Cor. 4:4), and satan wreaks havoc on all who swear allegiance to him. Lord, I swear allegiance to You. You are my Lord and protector. Put a hedge around me and protect me from satan (1 John 4:4). Amen.

15"But not so. You will be brought down to
the lowest parts of the ground. {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 16People who
see you there will ask, 'Is this the one who
made the earth shake and made kingdoms
tremble? 17Is he the one who made the
world a desert, conquered its cities, and
who would not let prisoners go free?'
18"Kings are buried in attractive tombs,
19but not you. You are left unburied, like a
branch no one wants. You will be covered
with dead bodies of people killed by the
sword, kings who go at death to the lowest
parts of the world of the dead. Your unbur-
ied corpses will be trampled by horses'
hooves. 20You won't have a burial because
you destroyed your nation and killed your
people. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts
5:4, 9} No one will remember your off-
spring. 21Your sons will be slaughtered for
the sins of their ancestors. They won't con-
quer the land or rebuild cities." {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
22You, LORD of the Heavens, have said, "I
will rise against you and destroy your chil-
dren and grandchildren so they will never
sit on your throne. 23I will make Babylon a
land fit for only porcupines, a land full of
swamps. You will sweep the land to destroy
it like You are using a broom." {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
24You, LORD of the Heavens, have made
this promise: "Everything I have planned
will take place just as planned. 25I will
defeat the Assyrians in My land, and I
will trample on them on My mountains.
My people will no longer be slaves to the
Assyrians. 26This is My plan in the whole
world; My hand of control will stretch
over all nations. 27I, LORD of the Heav-
ens, have spoken, and no one can stop Me."
{364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen.
45:5}
28This is the message God gave me in the
year King Ahaz died. 29"You Philistines,
don't be happy that the king who attacked
you is dead. Like a broken rod, he's gone.
But his son will be far worse than he ever
was. From the snake will come a poisonous
viper, a fiery serpent. 30I will feed your very
poor people and your needy will rest in
peace. But I will starve you with a shortage

of food and others will be killed. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
31"You Philistine cities, cry because you are doomed. A well-trained army is coming from the north like a snake. Every soldier is in rank, ready to fight. 32What should you tell messengers who come from a far-away country? Tell them that the LORD has built Zion, and the poorest of His people will be safe there." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 15

The Doom of Moab

1This is God's message about Moab. "In one night your cities of Ar and Kir will be destroyed and ruined completely. 2People in Dibon will go up to their temples and shrines to mourn over Nebo and Medeba. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} In sorrow they will shave their heads and cut off their beards. 3They will wear burlap clothing in the streets, and at home they will weep. 4Crying in Heshbon and Elealeh {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} will be heard in Jahaz. Moab's burnt warriors will cry out in fear. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
5"I pity Moab. The people run to Zoar and to Eglath-Shelishiyah, and they cry on the way to Luhith and all along the road to Horonaim. 6The streams in Nimrim are dried up, the grass is withered, and all the vegetation is gone. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 7The people of Moab carry what things they can as they run across Willow Creek. 8Everywhere in Moab people are weeping, from one end to another, from Eglaim to Beer-Elim. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 9The streams near Dimon are red with blood, but I am still not finished with Dimon. Those who try to escape will be attacked by lions." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah the prophet weeps as he sees the coming destruction by Assyria of Moab, Bajith, Dibon, Nebo, Medeba, Heshbon, Elealeh, and Jahaz. These Moabite cities will be quickly—in a night—destroyed. These were constant enemies of Judah, but Isaiah was not quick to rejoice when an enemy was eradicated. But he weeps, as should any servant of God when their enemies are punished. Lord, I don't like to be punished, and I don't want to see any of my enemies punished. I pray that You will save those who hate me. Lord, do good to those who would do me harm. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} May they see You properly and see the error of their ways (Luke 6:27-38). Amen.

Isaiah 16

Moab Shall Be Utterly Desolate

1"Moab's refugees at Sela will send lambs to Jerusalem to ask for help."

Isaiah says the only hope for Moab is to make peace with Judah. The words "Send a lamb from Sela" (the reference to Petra, the capital of Edom), meant Moab had to recognize the Davidic dynasty was set up by God. Moab had to recognize the living God of David

and of the Jews. Lord, I recognize all You did for Your people the Jews. You blessed them when they obeyed, and You punished them when they sinned. Lord, I know You will do the same to me. So I will obey You and worship You with all my heart. Amen.

2"The women of Moab will be at the crossings of the Arnon River like homeless birds. 3They cry, 'Help us and protect us like a daytime shadow. Hide us and don't betray us. 4Let us fugitives stay with you, and shelter us.'
"Oppression will end and the enemy will disappear. 5Then a faithful descendant of David will sit on his throne, {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} and he will rule in fairness and do what is right.
6"We have heard of Moab's pride, conceit, and empty boasts. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 7The people creep and long for the raisin cakes of Kir-Hareseth. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 8They weep because the farmlands of Heshbon and the vineyards of Sibmah are dried up, The rulers of nations have trampled down Moab's grapes from vineyards that used to reach all the way to Jazer and across the desert and beyond the Dead Sea. 9But now I mourn for Jazer and Sibmah, and weep for Heshbon and Elealeh because there is no joy over the harvest fruits. 10There is no joy in the orchards, no singing in the vineyards, and no joyful shouts when grapes are pressed in the winepresses. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 11I weep for Moab as if I were playing a mournful tune on a harp. My sorrow for Kir-Hareseth is great. 12When Moab's people go to their hilltop shrines to pray to their idols, it does them no good. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 13I the LORD have said all this about Moab in the past. 14Now I say that within three years Moab's greatness will be gone, her people will be hated, and only a few people will survive." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah 17

The Doom of Idolatrous Israel

1This is God's message to me, Isaiah, about Damascus. "Damascus will no longer be a city. It will be nothing but ruins. 2The villages of Aroer will be deserted, with only sheep lying down there and no one to chase them away. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 3Just as Israel will lose its fortress, so Damascus' great power will end. The few survivors in Syria will suffer the same fate as Israel. I, the LORD of the Heavens, have promised this.
4"In that future day, when Assyria will invade Israel and Syria, Israel's glory will decrease and people will lose weight because of the lack of food."

Isaiah predicts the downfall of the alliance between Syria and Israel, the northern nation. Tiglath-Pileser, king of Assyria, destroyed Damascus in 732 B.C. Note that Isaiah predicts the downfall of Israel in this chapter, "Israel's wealth will be gone." The King James reads, "Israel shall be made thin"

(v. 4). Lord, when I see You judge Your people for sin; I re-examine myself. I will confess obvious sins, and I will search for hidden sins. Lord, see my repentant heart and have mercy on me. Amen.

5"Israel will be deserted like wheat fields in
Rephaim Valley after harvest. 6Only a very
few people will be left. It will be like only
a few olives left on an olive tree in its top
branches. I, the LORD, the God of Israel,
have promised this.
7"In that future day people at last will think
of Me, their Creator, and will look to Me,
the Holy One of Israel. 8They will no lon-
ger look to their altars and the idols they
have made. They will never again worship
Asherah poles or burn incense on altars
they've made. 9Cities Israel conquered
will be as deserted as places overgrown
with weeds. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10Israel, you have forgotten
Me, the God who can save you; I who am
like a rock where you can be protected.
You plant nice flowers and vines. 11They
may bud the very morning after you plant
them, but you'll have no harvest. Instead
you will suffer endless pain. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
12"The nations are noisy like a raging
ocean, roaring like a terrible flood. 13They
may roar like rushing water, but I will give
the word and they will turn back. They will
be like dust or like a tumbleweed blown by
the wind in a storm. 14An enemy attacks
us at night, but by morning they are gone.
This is what happens to those who rob
you." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

Isaiah 18

The Doom of Ethiopia

1"How terrible it will be for Ethiopia, a
land where locusts' wings are often heard
buzzing. 2It sends messengers down the
Nile in fast boats made of papyrus reeds
to a people who are tall and have smooth
skin. Many nations are afraid of them.
They are aggressive, they speak a strange
language, and their land is divided by
branches of the Nile River.
3"I will raise My battle flag for everyone
to take notice. And they should all listen
when the trumpet sounds." 4The LORD
said to me, "I will look on quietly from My
temple, like the heat on a summer day or
like dew forming quietly on a morning in
the harvest season."
5Assyria, before you begin your attack,
God will cut you off like cutting off rip-
ened grapes. He will cut you off as with
pruning shears and will cut off the spread-
ing branches. 6Your soldiers will be left to
be eaten by wild birds all summer and wild
animals all winter. 7People will bring gifts
to You, the LORD of the Heavens, in Jeru-
salem, gifts from the land divided by the
branches of the Nile and from people who
are tall, smooth-skinned, and are feared
by people everywhere. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah describes Ethiopia as "filled with the sound of wings," which is a picture of the swarming insects who cover Africa with frequent plagues to cause continuous famine. Lord, nothing much has changed in Africa;

there are still plagues and famine. I pray for revival in Africa. Lord, Isaiah predicts that "gifts will be brought in the end time" by Ethiopians to You, LORD, Most High. Amen.

Isaiah 19

Egypt Judged

[1]This is God's message to me about Egypt. "Notice that I am riding on a cloud against Egypt. The idols of Egypt shake in fear, and the people are afraid. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [2]I will cause the Egyptians to fight against each other, including brothers, neighbors, cities, and provinces. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [3]The Egyptians will be completely discouraged because I will confuse their plans. They will ask their idols for help, and they will try to get advice from the spirits of the dead, and from fortune-tellers and psychics. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} [4]I will hand the Egyptians over to a cruel master, a fierce king," says the LORD, the LORD of the Heavens. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

[5]"The Nile will dry up and its riverbed will be parched. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [6]The canals and streams of the Nile will become dry, and the papyrus reeds [7]and plants will dry up. Every field will dry up and its crops will blow away. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} [8]Fishermen who use hooks and nets will die away. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [9]Weavers will have no flax or linens [10]and so they will all be discouraged. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

[11]"The officials at Zoan are fools and they give Pharaoh stupid advice. They say they come from a long line of wise ancestors. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [12]But Pharaoh, where are those counselors now? If they are so smart, they should be able to tell you what I the LORD of the Heavens, had planned for Egypt. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [13]But these officials of Zoan and Memphis are fools and are deceived, leading her people astray. [14]I have sent a spirit of foolishness on them so that they stagger and vomit. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [15]No one in Egypt, leaders or common people, can help them in any way. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

[16]"In that future day the Egyptians will be weak like women, shuddering with fear because of the LORD of the Heavens who will oppose them. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [17]The Egyptians will be terrified by just the mention of Judah." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah makes an unusual prophecy about Egypt that included both God's judgment and God's blessing. This prediction comes when Judah was depending on an alliance with Egypt because throughout history, Egypt had been the dominant power of the world. God is telling His people not to depend on a world power for protection, but

upon God's sovereign power. Lord, I depend on strong things to protect me like police, courts, and the laws of the land. While these may be good, still many good people suffer loss and harm. Lord, I look for Your protection, even in a good land among good people. Lord, raise up a "hedge" to protect me (Job 1:10). Amen.

18"Five of Egypt's cities will follow Me, the LORD, and will even speak Hebrew and pledge their allegiance to Me, the LORD of the Heavens. One of these will be Heliopolis, the City of the Sun. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 19An altar will be built to Me in the very heart of Egypt, and a monument will be set up to Me in Egypt. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} 20This will be a sign to remind them that they will witness to Me, the LORD of the Heavens, in Egypt. When the Egyptians ask Me for help against their enemies, I will send someone to rescue them. {218 Help the Oppressed by Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9}
21"In that future day I will make Myself known to the Egyptians, and they will worship Me with sacrifices and offerings and make promises to Me and keep them. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 22I will punish Egypt, but then I will restore them. They will turn to Me and I will respond and heal them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 23In that future day a highway will extend from Egypt to Assyria, and the Egyptians will go to Assyria and the Assyrians to Egypt, and they will worship Me together. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 24Israel will join them and be a blessing to them. 25I, the LORD of the Heavens, will bless Egypt, My people, and Assyria, whom I made and Israel, My special people." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

Isaiah 20

Philistia's Chief City to Be Sacked

1King Sargon of Assyria went to Ashdod and captured it. {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} 2"At that time I spoke to Isaiah and said, 'Don't wear your outer garment of burlap or your sandals.' And he did as I told him." {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} 3Then I said, "My servant Isaiah has not been wearing his outer garment for three years. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} 4This is a sign to warn Egypt and Ethiopia not to trust in Assyria because Assyria will lead Egyptians and Ethiopians into captivity with hardly any clothes on. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 5The Philistines who trusted in Egypt and Ethiopia to help them will be afraid and embarrassed. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 6And the Philistines will say, 'We turned to these two countries to help us against Assyria. But look what happened to them. So is there any hope there for us?'" {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Isaiah was told by God to take off his burlap outer garment (that was a sign of repentance) and "walk naked and barefooted" (20:2). Some scholars teach that Isaiah was

not nude or naked without clothes (because of a strong ethic by the Jews against nakedness). So these scholars describe Isaiah walking in his underwear, itself a shock. Other scholars teach that the nature of the prediction—that Assyria would capture both Egypt and the Ethiopians—was descriptive of what Assyria did to its captives. Prisoners were stripped naked, chained together, and deported to a foreign land. So Isaiah's nakedness was a prediction of what Assyria would do. Lord, I believe You demand modesty of Your people, so I will dress appropriately to bring glory to You. Nakedness was a symbol of Adam and Eve's first sin, so I will not expose my nakedness, nor be impure in areas of sexuality. Amen.

Isaiah 21

An Approaching Storm

[1]This is a message about the Babylonians, by the Persian Gulf, the Desert by the Sea: A nation will invade you like a whirlwind from the desert. [2]I, Isaiah, saw a vision of one nation destroying another and of lots of loot being taken. Elamites and Medes will attack you. You, Babylon, will fall. The LORD will end the groaning of the many nations cursed by Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [3]I'm in pain like a woman in childbirth, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} and I'm disturbed by what God is planning to do. [4]My heart skips a beat, I'm trembling with fear. The evening, usually a pleasant time, is now a time of fear. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [5]You Babylonians continue to feast as if nothing will happen. But officers, get up, grab your shields, and get ready for battle. [6]The Lord said to me, "Have a watchman on the city wall ready to report what he sees. [7]When he sees chariots and horses and soldiers riding donkeys and camels, tell him to sound an alarm." [8]Then the watchman said, "I have watched for several days and nights. [9]Now at least I see a man with a team of horses and he is shouting, 'Babylon has fallen! All its idols lie broken on the ground.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]My people, Judah, you are crushed like wheat on a threshing floor. But I am only telling you what the LORD of the Heavens has told me. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

[11]This is a message about Dumah: From the country of Edom someone keeps shouting to me, "Watchman, when will morning come?" [12]And he said, "Morning is coming. But then night will fall again. If you want to ask again, then come back and ask." {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4}

[13]This is a message about Arabia: Caravans from Dedan, camping in the desert of Arabia, [14]bring water to the thirsty. And you people in Tema, take food to the refugees. [15]They are tired from running from the enemy's swords and arrows. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [16]"I, the LORD, say that within a year all the glory of Kedar will end, just as a worker's contract ends after a year. [17]Only a few archers will survive. I, the LORD, the God of Israel, have spoken these words."

Isaiah describes Babylon as located "in the desert by the sea," a reference to the alluvial plains surrounding Babylon, that is, surrounded by a sea of sand. This is an amazing prophecy because Babylon has not yet grown into a world power. When Isaiah wrote, both Egypt and Assyria were the most fearsome powers in the world. But the eternal God who lives in the past, present, and future, knew what was coming. So God knew Babylon would grow in power to destroy both Assyria and Egypt. Then almost a century later, a new world power Medo-Persia would destroy Babylon. So in chapter 21 God is looking far into the future. Lord, I'm amazed when you accurately predict the future, "You calleth those things which be not as though they were" (Rom. 4:17, KJV). Because You know the future, I trust my future to You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} Lead me where I should go, make me what I should be, and use me as You will. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Amen.

Isaiah 22

Jerusalem Judged

[1]This is a message about Jerusalem, the Valley of Vision: {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} Why are you celebrating on your flat rooftops [2]when the city is in an uproar? Bodies of dead people weren't killed in battle by the sword. [3]Instead your leaders ran but were captured without a fight. And others tried to get away, but they were captured too. [4]So I said, "Let me weep. Don't try to comfort me as I see my people being destroyed."

The valley of vision may refer to a valley where Isaiah got this vision of the fall of Jerusalem. Others think the valley refers to the Tyropoeon Valley which runs between Mount Zion (where most of the people lived) and Mount Moriah (the temple mount). Therefore this is a vision of Jerusalem itself. In either case, Isaiah describes with accuracy the fall of Jerusalem. Those who heard Isaiah rejected his message because they thought Jerusalem was the eternal city set on a mountain; no one could conquer her. But God allowed Babylon to conquer them because of Israel's sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Lord, teach me to fear sin, because it will destroy me. But more importantly, teach me to fear You because You demand holiness {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} in Your children. Amen.

[5]The Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, has caused confusion and fear in the valley. Jerusalem's walls have been broken down and crying can be heard in the nearby mountains. [6]The Elamites are the archers riding in chariots, and the soldiers of Kir hold up their shields in defense. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]The enemies' chariots are everywhere in your valleys, and cavalrymen are at the city gates. [8]Judah is left defenseless. When you ran to the armory in the Forest Palace, [9]you saw the holes in the walls of Jerusalem. You stored up water in the Lower Pool, [10]and you tore down some of the houses to get

stones to repair the city wall. 11Between the city walls you built a reservoir for water from the old pool. But this won't help you because you didn't ask God for help. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}
12When all this happened, the Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, told you to weep and mourn, to shave your heads, and to wear burlap clothing. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 13But instead you eat beef and lamb and drink wine, saying, "Let's eat and be happy because tomorrow we may die." 14The LORD of the Heavens has told me He won't forgive your sin, as long as you live. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
15The LORD of the Heavens gave me this message for Shebna, the palace administrator: 16"Why are you building a tomb for yourself from this rock? {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} 17I will send your army into captivity. 18I will roll you into a ball and toss you away into a distant land. You will die there, and your great chariots will be useless. You are a disgrace to your master, 19so I will take away your job. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 20Then I will replace you with Eliakim, son of Hilkiah. 21He will wear your royal robes and will have your authority. He will be concerned for the people of Jerusalem like a father is concerned for his children. 22I will give him the key to the house of David. He will open and close doors and no one can close or open them. 23He will keep firm on his position as a tent peg. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 24He will bring honor to his family. 25But that day the peg will come loose and fall, and everything hanging on it will come loose. I, the LORD, have spoken these words."

Isaiah 23

Tyre and Zidon Judged

1This is God's message about Tyre: "Weep, O ships of Tarshish. Your harbor at Tyre is gone: And houses in Tyre are destroyed too. What you heard in Cyprus is true. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 2Your people of the coast and your merchants of Sidon, mourn in silence. 3Your sailors crossed the sea, and brought grain from Shihor, a Nile River branch in Egypt, and harvests along the Nile. You became the leading center for many nations.
4"Sidon, you are a fortress built on the coast. The sea has said, 'I didn't go through labor to have children. I produced wealth without going through pain.' 5When Egypt hears the news about Tyre, she will be in agony over her financial losses. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6Flee to distant Tarshish, and be sad, you people who live along the coast. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 7It's hard to believe that this has happened to Tyre, a city full of joy, who sent people off to live in distant lands. 8Who planned all this against Tyre, that great city, whose merchants are famous like princes and whose traders are known everywhere? 9I, the LORD of the Heavens, planned this in order to destroy your pride and to humble all famous people. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
10"Tarshish will not be a safe refuge for you. It will be devastated like the Nile. 11I,

the LORD, hold out My hand over the seas and I disturb the nations. I have given orders to destroy fortresses in Canaan. [12]I said to the people of Sidon, 'Stop celebrating, because you are now crushed. Even if you go to Cypress, you won't find any rest there.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah's burden (message) of judgment against Tyre extends to the entire nation, not just this one city. Historically, this was the nation of Phoenicia, today called Lebanon. Phoenicia was a nation built on a commercial shipping enterprise. They traded with Egypt, plus all the nations of the Mediterranean world. Isaiah begins with a statement of God's judgment on this nation, yet ends with a message of hope. Lord, You gave both the carrot and the stick. You promised blessings {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} and You promised punishment {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}. I will claim Your blessings and avoid Your punishment. I will live according to Your commands. Amen.

[13]"Look at the Babylonians, who are now nothing. The Assyrians attacked the Babylonians, and made it so desolate that only desert animals live there. The Assyrians built siege ramps against Babylonian's walls, tore down its palaces, and made it nothing but a pile of rubble.
[14]Weep, O ships of Tarshish, because your part of Tyre is destroyed. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [15]Tyre will be forgotten for 70 years, the length of a king's life. Then after those 70 years, Tyre will sing like a prostitute. [16]Play the harp, walk through the city, and sing several songs so you will be remembered. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [17]Yes, after 70 years Tyre will be like a prostitute. [18]But none of what is earned will be hoarded. Instead her earnings will be for the LORD and will provide food and clothing for the LORD's priests. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Isaiah 24

Judgment on the Nations

[1]You, LORD, will destroy and devastate the earth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} You will make it a wasteland and scatter the people everywhere. [2]This will happen to everyone: priests and ordinary people, masters and servants, mistresses and maids, sellers and buyers, borrowers and lenders, and debtors and creditors. [3]The earth will be completely emptied and much loot taken. You, LORD, have spoken. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
[4]The earth will dry up and waste away, and its great leaders will weaken. [5]The earth is contaminated by the people's sins. They have disobeyed the LORD's laws, nor kept His commands, and have broken the everlasting promise.

This section of Isaiah has been called the "Little Apocalypse" because it looks at the immediate judgment of the Gentile nations, but it also looks far into the future to the final judgment during the Tribulation period. These past tense verbs of what God

has done are technically "prophetic perfects." Thus Isaiah sees the events of the future as though they have already happened. Lord, You know what will happen in the future, so I trust You today. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} *Lead me and keep me from making mistakes; I want to live right in the future.* {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} *Amen.*

6 Therefore a curse is on the earth, and the
people are guilty. They will be destroyed
by fire and there will be few survivors.
7 Grapevines will dry up and there will be
no more wine. People who used to make
music will groan. 8 Tamborines and harps
will not be played, and shouts of joy will
not be heard. 9 People will not sing as they
drink wine because strong drink will be
better.
10 The city is in ruins, and doors of houses
are locked to keep looters out. 11 People
gather in the streets wanting wine, but all
joy is gone. 12 The city is in ruins, and its
gates are damaged. 13 The same will be true
throughout the world. Just a few people
will be left alive, like a few olives left on an
olive tree or a few grapes left on the vine.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
14 But those who are left will shout for
joy. Those in the west will praise You, the
LORD, for Your majesty, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 15 those in the east
will give You glory, {367 Praise-Worthy
Prayer, Luke 10:21} and those on the coast
will exalt You, the LORD, the God of
Israel. 16 You can hear people everywhere
singing, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
"Glory to the Righteous One." But I said,
"I feel terrible. So many people are evil and
are betraying each other." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 17 Everywhere people
face terror and are trapped by their sins.
18 If you are terrified and run, you may fall
into a pit. And if you get out of the pit,
you may step into a trap. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
Destruction will fall on you from the sky,
and the earth will tremble beneath you.
{135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 19 An
earthquake will shake everything and will
cause great crevices to open up. 20 The earth
will stagger unsteadily like a drunkard and
sway like a watchman's hut in a windstorm.
Burdened down with so much sin, the
earth will fall and not rise again.
21 In that future day the LORD will punish spiritual forces that oppose you and
proud rulers on the earth. 22 They will be
gathered together and shut up in prison
and then punished. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 23 The brightness of the moon
and the sun won't be needed because of
the glorious reign of You, the LORD of
the Heavens, on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem before all the leaders of the people.
{74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67;
Matt. 6:9}

This chapter describes divine judgment when people are partying and getting drunk. God intervenes in their self-inflicted addictions to bring punishment. Then the LORD invites His people to break into song, "These songs praise God, the Righteous One." {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} *Lord, I never*

thought of praising You because You judge sin; but when You judge sin, it's the only thing You can do. It's the right thing to do because a holy God cannot allow sin to go unpunished. Lord, thank You for the cross where my sin was judged; thank You that Jesus died and was punished for me. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} When I think of people being judged, I rejoice that the Bible promises, "God will wipe away every tear from their eyes; there shall be no more death, nor sorrow, nor crying. There shall be no more pain..." (Rev. 21:4). Amen.

Isaiah 25

The Song of the Redeemed

[1]You, LORD, are my God. So I will praise You. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} You do such wonderful things and You are so faithful in carrying out everything You planned. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

This chapter begins with a testimony of praise, "O Lord, You are my God" (25:1). The survivors of the Tribulation will exalt God for His great intervention on their behalf. They fall on their faces to worship Him, "I will praise Your name" (25:1). The strong nations have been defeated, and God's people magnify Him, "You have been a refuge from the storms" (25:4). Lord, I commit my whole life to You; keep me safe {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} when the pressures and storms of life attack. Amen.

[2]You turn cities into piles of rubble, and fortified cities into ruins. They will never be rebuilt. [3]Therefore strong and cruel nations will honor and reverence You.
[4]You protect the poor from the storms of life and You protect the needy in their times of distress. You are a shelter from the storms and a shade from the oppressive heat. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Even the breath of heartless people is like a storm beating against a wall [5]or like the awful heat of the desert. But You can silence the boastful singing of heartless people just as a cloud can reduce heat. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

When Isaiah says, "He will swallow up death forever" and "the LORD God will wipe away all tears" (25:8), there can be no doubt he is referring to the Jewish millennial kingdom of the future. Lord, I go through problems and pain on this earth knowing I will live in peace with You {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} in the future. Amen.

[6]In Jerusalem You, the LORD of the Heavens, will make a wonderful feast for everyone in the world. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} It will be a feast of good food and the best meats and wines. [7]You will remove death that covers everyone like a cloud. [8]You will swallow up death forever. You, the Sovereign LORD,

will wipe away everyone's tears and remove the shame of Your people. You, LORD, have spoken.
9In that future day people everywhere will say, "This is our God. He saved us. He is the LORD, and we trusted in Him. So let's rejoice in the salvation He gives." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 10You, LORD, will place Your hand of blessing on Jerusalem. Moab, typical of all Israel's enemies, will be punished like trampling down straw. 11Like a swimmer spreading out his hands to swim, Moab will try to save itself. But You will bring down their pride despite their cleverness. 12You, LORD, will destroy Moab's high fortified walls, bringing them to the dust. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Isaiah 26

Song of Joy

1In that future day this song will be sung in Judah: {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} "Our city Jerusalem is strong because You, the LORD, defend its walls and defenses. 2Open the city gates so that Israel, God's righteous nation, can enter. 3You, God, give perfect peace to those whose thoughts are on You and who trust in You. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 4We trust in You, LORD, because You are dependable and strong, like a mighty rock."

This chapter opens with the redeemed ones entering the eternal city in the millennial kingdom. They sing a great song of praise in the land of Judah (lit., praise). Their salvation is not just physical, but God completely cares for His people in all ways. Lord, I look forward to living with You throughout all eternity. Amen.

5"You bring down those who are proud. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} You bring down to the dust the city that is haughty. 6The oppressed and poor will trample it under foot."
7The path of the righteous is easy, and You, O upright One, make their path smooth. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 8LORD, we wait for You to punish the wicked, and we want Your reputation to be known everywhere. 9My soul longs for You both in the night and in the morning. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} People will learn what righteousness truly is like when they are judged. 10Yet even Your grace doesn't always influence them to be righteous. They keep on sinning and have no interest in Your majesty. 11O LORD, even when You raise Your hand to act, they ignore it. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} They need to see how eager You are to defend Your people. Perhaps then they will be ashamed. But since they don't, let fire consume them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
12LORD, please give us peace. We know that everything we have done is because of You. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 13O LORD, our God, others have ruled over us, but You are the only one we honor. 14These rulers are dead and will never live again. You punished them and brought them to ruin, and no one

remembers them. [15]Our nation has grown,
O LORD, because of You {364 Praise for
God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} and we have
more land than before.
[16]"LORD, when You punished us Your
people, we came to You, but we could
barely whisper a prayer. {494 Trou-
ble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [17]When we came
to You we were like a woman in the pain
of childbirth. [18]But in our pain, instead of
having a child we produced only wind. We
have not brought salvation to others. [19]Yet
those who belong to You will live. {405
Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor.
15:50} Their bodies will rise again. Those
who are dead will wake up and shout for
joy. By being raised they will be refreshed
as dew refreshes the grass each morning."

God promises, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee" (26:3, KJV). The promise of "peace" literally reads, "peace, peace," which is the Hebrew way of indicating God's peace goes beyond human understanding. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} Lord, I want Your peace that is the only real peace, so I will lean on You to get it. Amen.

[20]Israel, go home and lock your doors and
hide until the Lord is no longer angry.
{387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[21]LORD, You are coming to punish peo-
ple for their sins. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} Everyone will see those who
shed the blood of others.

Isaiah 27

A Song of the Vineyard

[1]In that future day, You, LORD, will
pierce with a great sword the serpent
Leviathan, the dragon of the sea, a picture
of God's enemies. {517 Victory-Prayer,
2 Cor. 2:14} [2]In that future day we will
sing about Israel, a fruitful vineyard. {439
Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [3]You, LORD,
will care for it, watering it and guarding it.
[4]You are no longer angry at Israel. If You
find sin in Israel, like thorns, You will deal
with it. [5]If Israel comes to You for safety, it
will then be at peace with You.
[6]In that future day Jacob will take root like
a vine, and it will blossom and provide
fruit for all the earth. {74 Coming-King-
dom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [7]LORD,
You haven't punished Israel the way You
punished their enemies. [8]You dealt with
Israel by war and captivity, and You forced
Israel out of her land like being blown out
by a scorching heat or an east wind. [9]This
was Your way of purging Israel of its sins.
Then Israel will show that they have been
forgiven by crushing to pieces the pagan
altars, Asherah poles, and incense altars.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[10]Israel's fortified cities will be empty like
the desert. Cattle will graze and lie down
there, and strip the trees of their branches.
[11]When tree twigs are dry and fall to the
ground, women will pick them up and use
them to build a fire. Because Your people
are stupid, You, their Maker, will show no
mercy.
[12]In that future day You will gather Your
people one by one like grain, from the

Euphrates River to the river of Egypt. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 13In that future day a great trumpet will be played. And Your people who were dying in Assyria and were captives in Egypt will worship You on Your holy mountain in Jerusalem. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Isaiah says, "a great trumpet" (27:13) will be blown to regather His people into the Promised Land from around the world. Lord, I'm listening for the trumpet {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} when Jesus shall come. Amen.

Isaiah 28

Israel Learns

1How terrible it will be for Samaria, the pride of Israel's drunkards. It is located in a rich valley, but its beauty will fade like that of a flower. 2You, LORD, are powerful and strong. You will throw Samaria to the ground with the force of a hailstorm, a terrible wind, a driving rain, or a downpour of rain. 3Samaria, the pride of Israel's drunkards, will be trampled beneath its enemies' (Assyrians') feet. 4That fading flower and beautiful city in a rich valley will suddenly lose its glory. It will be snatched up as an early fig is picked and eaten. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

5In that future day You, the LORD of the Heavens, will be like a crown and a beautiful wreath for Your people. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} 6You will make Your judges want to exercise justice, and You will give Your soldiers courage as they defend their city at the gate.

7Now, however, Israel's priests and prophets stagger because they are drunk. They are confused, and they make stupid decisions. 8Their tables are covered with vomit and filth. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 9They say to me, "Isaiah, who do you think you are? Do you think of us as little children just weaned? 10You repeat yourself in silly baby talk, saying, 'Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule, a little here, a little there.'"

11Since they didn't listen to me, Isaiah, then You, the LORD, will speak to them in a foreign language. 12You had offered them rest in their own land, but they refused to listen. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 13So again You will say to them, "Do and do, do and do, rule on rule, rule on rule, a little here, a little there." 14Therefore you scoffing rulers in Jerusalem, listen to what the LORD says, 15"You boast that you have made a bargain with death {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and an agreement with the grave so that you will avoid both. Thus when the Assyrians attack us, they won't be able to touch us. Our lies and deceptions will keep us safe."

16The sovereign LORD also says this: "I am laying a cornerstone in Zion. It is tested and firm and safe to build on. Whoever trusts Me need never be agitated and confused. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 17With the measuring line of justice and the plumb line of upright living, I will measure the foundation wall you built. It looks fine, but since it is built on a lie, a

hail storm will knock it down, and a flood of water could sweep it away. [18]Your bargain with death {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and your agreement with the grave will be canceled. When the enemy comes in like a flood, you will be trampled. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [19]Again and again that flood will come, morning after morning, day and night, until you are carried off."

This message will be terrifying. [20]To seek protection from false gods will be as inadequate as a short bed or a narrow blanket. [21]You, the LORD, will come against the enemy just as You did against the Philistines at Mount Perazim and against the Ammonites in the Gibeon Valley. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} You will do a strange thing, that is, You will destroy Your own people. [22]So you people stop mocking or your punishment will be even worse. You Lord, the LORD of the Heavens, told me of the destruction You have in mind for Your people. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

[23]Listen carefully to what I say. [24]Does a farmer plow continually and never sow? Does he break up the soil and never plant seeds? [25]Doesn't he finally plant seeds for dill, cumin, wheat, barley, and spelt? [26]He knows what to do because God has taught him. [27]Dill and cumin aren't threshed with a heavy threshing sledge. Instead they are beaten softly. [28]Wheat and barley are easily crushed, so he doesn't keep on threshing it. They are run over with a threshing sledge but not to grind it to dust. [29]Farmers know all this from the LORD of the Heavens, who gives them wisdom. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Isaiah predicts the fall of the Northern Kingdom, calling them Samaria, the capital city. He says the glory of Samaria is a fading flower (28:1, 4) and there is a storm coming that will destroy them. Isaiah accuses them of being overcome with wine (28:1) and being a drunkard (28:3), and given over to intoxicating drink (28:7). They have given themselves to physical pleasures rather than to God. They stumble and vomit in their debauchery. Lord, I will not drink alcohol, knowing Your mockery of those who are slaves to liquor. Fill me with Your Spirit (Eph. 5:18). Control me by the Spirit of God, not the spirit of the bottle. Amen.

Isaiah 29

The Destruction of Jerusalem's Enemies

[1]"How terrible it will be for Ariel, another name for Jerusalem, the City of David. Year after year you hold your festivals. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [2]But I, the LORD, will besiege Ariel, and the people will weep, and the city will be like the meaning of its name Ariel—a hearth. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} [3]I will be your enemy; I will surround Jerusalem with soldiers and attack you. [4]When you die, you will call for help from deep in the ground, with only a faint whisper like that of a ghost. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27}

5"However, your many enemies will be
driven away like chaff in the wind. Sud-
denly 6I, the LORD of the Heavens, will
come against your enemies with thun-
der, an earthquake, noise, a windstorm,
and flame. {493 Triumphant-Praying,
2 Cor. 2:14} 7All the many nations that
attack and lay siege to Ariel will vanish
like a dream or a vision. 8A hungry person
dreams he is eating, but when he is awake,
he is still hungry. And the same for some-
one who is thirsty. In the same way your
many enemies will dream of defeating
Jerusalem, but they will be unsuccessful.
{528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}
9"Go ahead and be stunned and blind to
the truth. And be drunk and stagger but
not from wine. {442 Sober-Praying, Prov.
23:31} 10That's because I the LORD have
made you sleepy and closed the eyes of
your prophets and seers. {450 Spiritual-In-
sight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 11This message is
like a sealed book to you. Some may say,
'I can't read this because it's sealed,' 12Or
they may say, 'I can't read it because I don't
know how to read.' {244 Insight-Prayer, 2
Cor. 4:3-4} 13So I, the LORD, say, 'These
people honor Me with their words, but
their hearts are far from Me. {548 Yearn-
ing-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} In worshiping Me
they just repeat man-made rules. {205
Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} 14So
I will shock them {205 Guard Your Heart-
Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} by destroying the wis-
dom and intelligence of those who claim
to know.'" {490 Transformation-Prayer,
Rom. 8:29}
15How terrible it will be for those who
try to hide their plans from the LORD,
who work in the darkness and think the
LORD doesn't see them. {71 Clean-Con-
science Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 16You people
have it wrong. The clay can't say to the pot-
ter, "You didn't make me," or "You don't
know anything." {479 Testing Response of
Prayer, James 1:12}
17Soon Lebanon will be a fertile field with
crops thick as a forest. 18The deaf will hear
what is read to them, and blind people will
no longer live in darkness. 19Again the hum-
ble and needy will rejoice in the LORD,
the Holy One of Israel. {91 Correction-Re-
sponse Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} 20Cruel
people and mockers will be gone, and evil
people will be killed. 21Also those who
make an innocent person guilty and who
tell lies against the innocent will be gone.
{235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
22"I the LORD, who redeemed Abraham,
say this to Israel: 'My people will no longer
be ashamed and embarrassed. {110 Deliver-
ance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} 23When
they see their many children and the many
material blessings I have given them, they
will see the holiness of Me the Holy One
of Jacob, and they will stand in awe of Me.
{364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen.
45:5} 24Those who are in error will gain
understanding, and those who have com-
plained will be willing to be taught.'" {456
Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Isaiah 30

Israel Asks Help from Egypt

1"How terrible it will be for rebellious
'children,' people who carry out their own

plans and make treaties without asking Me first," says the LORD. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 2"They pile up one sin after another when they ask Egypt for help and look to Pharaoh for protection and to Egypt for shade. {380 Priority-Faith Praying, Matt. 6:33} 3But you will be disappointed and shamed by trusting in Pharaoh." {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31}

Isaiah warns Judah against seeking protection from Egypt, and not from Him. Judah made plans, but never asked the LORD for help. Isaiah concludes, "They will be put to shame" (30:3). Lord, help me learn a negative lesson from Judah. May I learn not to forget You when making plans. Amen.

4"His power reaches all the way from Zoan in northern Egypt to Hanes in the south. 5But you will get no help from Egypt. You will have only shame and dishonor." {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1}
6This is a message about the animals of the Southern Desert: You messengers from Judah are moving through a terrible desert where there are lions and snakes. Your donkeys and camels are loaded with treasures in Egypt, a weak nation. 7But they can't help you, and that's why I call Egypt "Rahab the Do-Nothing." {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4}
8Write down those words about Egypt, which will be a witness forever of Israel's unbelief. 9The people of Israel are rebellious and deceitful, and they refuse to listen to the LORD's instructions. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 10They tell the prophets, "Don't tell us what God has shown you. Tell me pleasant things and lies. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 11Stop telling me what God has said. We don't want to hear about the Holy One of Israel." {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2}
12Therefore the Holy One of Israel says this: "Because you reject what I tell you and rely on violence and lies, {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 13this sin will be like a cracked wall that suddenly collapses. 14It will be smashed like a piece of pottery so that not a piece will be big enough to carry coals or to scoop water out of a well." {209 Guilty-Blocking Prayer, 1 John 3:21}
15And the Holy One of Israel also says this: "Do you want rest, salvation, quietness, and strength? Then turn to Me. But you refused." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

Isaiah promises Judah the rest and peace of God, "For thus saith the LORD GOD, the Holy One of Israel; in returning and rest shall ye be saved; in quietness and in confidence shall be your strength" (30:15, KJV). Lord, that's the rest and peace I want; I come to You to find strength. Amen.

16"You said, 'We'll escape on fast horses.' True! You'll be on fast horses all right. But those who chase you will be faster. 17Five of them or even one will chase a thousand of you. And your few survivors will be as lonely as a mountain flagpole. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 18I want to be gracious to you and show you My love. I

am the God who does right, and I bless those who wait for Me to help them." {473 Tarrying-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

Isaiah promises God's grace to them, but there is a condition to receive it, "Blessed are all they that wait for him" (30:18, KJV). Lord, I'm still and I'm quiet. I'm waiting to hear Your instructions to me. I'm waiting for orders. Tell me what to do. Amen.

19"You people in Jerusalem don't need to weep anymore because I will be gracious when you pray for help. I will answer you right away. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 20I have given you trouble, but you will now listen to your teachers, the prophets. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 21If you get off the right path, you will hear a voice saying, 'This is the way; walk here.' {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 22Then you will destroy your silver idols and gold images and toss them away like filthy rope. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6}
23"I, the LORD, will send rain to water your planted seeds and you will have great harvests, and your cattle will graze in plenty of pastureland. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 24Oxen and donkeys will eat good grain. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 25When your enemies are slaughtered, you will be blessed with plenty of water. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 26The moon will shine as bright as the sun, and the sun will be seven times brighter than usual. This will be when the LORD bandages His people's injuries and heals their wounds. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
27"I, the LORD, am coming from far away, burning with anger and surrounded by a thick cloud of smoke. My words are like a consuming fire. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 28My anger pours out like a flood. I sifted out the nations, and I put a bridle in their mouths and led them away. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 29You will sing as you do when you celebrate a religious festival. You will be glad as when you go to Jerusalem, the mountain of the LORD, the Rock of Israel, singing while festivals are playing. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 30I, the LORD, will come in My anger, with cloudbursts, thunder, and hail. 31My voice will destroy Assyria. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 32As I attack them in battle, you will rejoice with the music of tambourines and harps. 33Topheth, the place of burning, is ready for the Assyrian king. It has lots of wood, and My breath, like burning sulfur, will set it on fire." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 31

Egypt Will Fail

1How terrible it will be for those who go to Egypt for help, or depend on horses, chariots, and cavalrymen but refuse to look to Me, the Holy One of Israel, for help. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 2I can bring disaster and I can do exactly as I say I will do. I will oppose wicked people and those

who help them." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 3Remember, the Egyptians are humans; they aren't God, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and their horses are mere flesh, not spirits. When I, the LORD, oppose the Egyptians, I will destroy them and any who try to help them." {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Isaiah has two messages for the people of Jerusalem and Judah. First, they will not get any help from Egypt. Isaiah reminds them, "The Egyptians are men, and not God" (v. 3). He predicts "Egypt will be destroyed" (v. 3, ELT). In a second prediction Isaiah says, "Assyria will be destroyed" (v. 8, ELT). By looking through God's predictive eyes, you can see nations rise and fall. Only God remains. Lord, I don't know the future, but I trust You to guide my steps; because You know the future. Amen.

4The LORD said to me, "When a lion kills a sheep, it pays no attention to shepherds shouting at him. In a similar way I, the LORD of the Heavens, will fight on Mount Zion and not be scared off. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} 5I, the LORD of the Heavens, will protect Jerusalem like a mother bird flying over her nest will defend it and rescue it from danger. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

6"Israel, though you have turned from Me, the LORD, turn back. 7The day is coming when you will get rid of the silver and gold idols your sinful hands made." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Isaiah predicts the coming golden age of Israel when they will live in peace in the Promised Land. "The time is coming when each of you will stop worshiping the idols of gold and silver that you made" (v. 7). Lord, I live in the midst of sin where people are trying to step over me to get ahead. I look forward to a time of universal peace when each person will worship You wholly, and live for You completely. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

8"Assyria will be destroyed, but not by human swords. Young men will try to escape, but they will be caught and made slaves. 9Their fortress will fall, and their commanders will panic. This is what I, the LORD, say, whose fire of wrath continues to burn." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Isaiah 32

The Righteous

1A king and his rulers will rule with justice and fairness. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 2They will keep others safe from trouble like a storm, and provide refreshment like water in the desert and protection like a big rock that gives shade from the sun. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

Isaiah predicts the coming of a righteous king, that is, the LORD Jesus Christ who

will rule over Israel in the coming millennium. This king will be "like a stream of water in a dry land." That reminds us of Jesus who said, "If anyone thirsts, let him come to Me and drink" (John 7:37). Lord, what You will do physically in the future, do spiritually for me now. When I am faint, I drink from You. When I need satisfaction, I drink from You. Ah... Lord, You are good. Amen.

3Then everyone with eyes and ears will see and hear spiritual truths, {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 4and they will know the LORD's Word and speak it clearly. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 5Fools and scoundrels will no longer be respected. 6Fools are always busy making plans to do sinful things, lying about You, the LORD, {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} and not helping the hungry and thirsty, 7Scoundrels are evil, making sinful plans to destroy the poor and the needy. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 8But good people have good plans, and they will live on. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

9"You women who are so smug and feel so secure, listen to me. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 10In little more than a year the grape harvest will fail and you will tremble. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} 11Shudder, you smug, secure women. Wear burlap clothing instead of your regular clothes. {140 Ephesians' Church-Prayer, Rev. 2:4-6} 12Beat your breasts because your fields and vines 13are covered with thornbushes. Mourn because happy homes and the city of joy are gone. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 14The palace and the city will be deserted. Fortresses and towers will be places for donkeys and pastures for sheep. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 15When My Spirit is poured down from heaven, the desert will become as fertile as a forest. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} 16Justice and fairness will be everywhere, 17and justice will produce peace, quietness, and confidence. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 18The LORD said that people will live in peace, security, and rest. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 19Hail may destroy forests and cities may be destroyed, {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 20but people will be blessed as they plant crops by streams as oxen and donkeys roam free. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Isaiah 33

The Righteous Protected

1How terrible it will be for you, Assyria, who defeated others. Now you will be defeated. You betrayed others; now you will be betrayed. When you stop destroying and betraying others, that's when you will be destroyed and betrayed. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} 2LORD, be kind to us. We have waited for You to help us. Give us strength each day and save us when we are in trouble. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

Isaiah tells how God's people will call on Him for help, "O Lord, God give us strength

every morning. Save us when we are in trouble" (v. 2, ELT). Lord, that's my prayer every morning, "Help me make it through this day; I'm already saved from sin, but save me in the hour of temptation, and save me from evil trials sent by satan." Amen.

[3]The enemy runs when he hears Your voice, and when You stand up, the nations scatter. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [4]We will take loot from the nations much like a swarm of locusts eating every bit of crops. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8}

[5]LORD, You are great and You live in heaven. You provide justice and fairness for Jerusalem. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3} [6]We depend on You, our sure foundation, who gives us much salvation, wisdom, and knowledge as we reverence You. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10}

[7]Our ambassadors weep because Assyria has refused to grant them peace. {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12} [8]So the highways are empty. The Assyrians have broken their treaty, and have no respect for anyone. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [9]Our land of Israel is barren, Lebanon withers, the plain of Sharon will come to nothing, and the trees of Bashan and Carmel will lose their leaves. [10]"But now I'll be exalted," the LORD says. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [11]"You'll be like conceiving chaff and giving birth not to a baby but to straw. Your own breath will consume you like a fire. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [12]You will be burned up like thornbushes set on fire. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [13]You who are at a distance and you who are nearby, listen to what I have done and see My power." {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9}

[14]Sinners in Jerusalem are afraid as they ask, "Who can live here in this raging fire?" {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [15]Those who live right, say what is right, reject making money by fraud, don't accept bribes, don't listen to plans to murder, and don't look on evil {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}—[16]they are the ones who will live in a high, safe place and in a secure, mountain fortress. People will bring them food and water. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [17]You will see the glorious King and the extent of His kingdom. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [18]You will think of that time of terror and ask yourself, "Where now are those officials who made us pay heavy taxes?" {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} [19]Soon those proud people will be gone, those people who spoke a strange, foreign language.

[20]Instead you will see Jerusalem, where festivals are held. You will see a peaceful city, as secure as an unmovable tent. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [21]You, LORD, will be our Mighty One, like a wide river protecting us from our enemies and on which no ships can sail. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [22]You, LORD, are our judge, lawgiver, and king, and You keep us safe. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} [23]The enemies' sails hang loose on broken masts. Their wealth will be divided by Your people, and

even lame people will carry off lots of loot. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 24You will forgive our sins and everyone in Jerusalem will be healthy. {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6}

Isaiah 34

Destruction by the Lord's Anger

1Come near, all you nations, and listen to what I will say. Everyone, please pay attention. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 2The LORD is angry with all nations, and His fury is against their armies. He will completely destroy them by slaughter. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 3Their dead bodies will be left to stink, and the mountains will be covered with their blood. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 4The sky will disappear like a rolled-up scroll. And the stars will fall from the sky like dried-up leaves on a vine or shriveled-up figs on a fig tree. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

5"When My sword has done its works in the skies, it will come down on Edom, a nation I will completely destroy." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

This chapter shows God punishing Edom, the people who descended from Esau. They have continually persecuted God's people, the Jews. Because God loves the Jews, we shouldn't be surprised when God punishes those who punish His people. Esau's descendants had a historic knowledge of the LORD and His salvation. When Edom rejects God, they reject His salvation; so we should not be surprised when God punishes those who reject Him. Lord, I pray for my unsaved family and friends. Use me when I give them the gospel, convict them of sin and bring them to salvation. I believe You, Lord, when the Bible said, "The LORD is... not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance" (2 Peter 3:9). Amen.

6"My sword is covered with animal blood and fat. I will slaughter many people in Bozrah, a city in Edom. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 7Edom's leaders are like wild oxen, calves, and bulls. The country will be soaked in blood and the ground will be covered with fat. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 8I have chosen a day and year when I will pay Edom back for what it did to Israel. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 9Edom's streams will become tar, and her nation will be on fire, 10which will never go out. For generations Edom will be desolate, and no one will travel through it. {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 11Owls and ravens will nest there. I will bring chaos and destruction to Edom. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} 12Her rulers will have no kingdom, and her princes will all be gone. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 13Her fortresses will be covered with thornbushes, and jackals and owls will live there. 14Wild desert animals, hyenas, wild goats, and creatures of the night will reside there. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 15Owls will raise their young there, as will falcons." {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}

16As you search the book of the LORD,
you will read, "The LORD has given His
order and the Holy Spirit will bring these
animals to Edom, with none missing. {27
Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 17He has
decided where each one will live, and they
will be there for generations to come." {192
God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Isaiah 35

Fruitfulness

1In those days the desert will be glad, and
barren lands will rejoice and blossom.

Isaiah predicts the coming millennium of peace in the Holy Land. The land will be transformed and become beautiful and alive. The King James predicts, "The desert shall... blossom as the rose" (v. 1, KJV). It hasn't happened yet, but it looks like a beginning. Israel is back in the Promised Land, and the desert is growing roses and oranges to be shipped to Europe and around the world. Lord, I don't need to see rain in the desert to believe Your predictions about the future. I believe Your predictions in the Bible. You will punish sin (chap. 34) and You will reward Your people who believe in You (chap. 35). Lord, I don't look for rewards, I look to live with You in eternity (John 14:1-3). Therefore, the LORD commands us, "Be strong, do not fear! Behold, your God will come" (Isa. 35:4). Lord, I will be strong in faith, and I will trust You for everything. Amen.

2Flowers will bloom everywhere in the
desert and will be happy and shout for joy.
The desert will be fertile like Lebanon and
as lovely as Mount Carmel and the plain
of Sharon. There will be the glory of the
LORD, our God. {93 Creation-Inspired
Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
3If you have tired hands or weak knees, be
strong and encouraged. {463 Strength-
Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 4"Don't be afraid,
because I'm coming to punish your ene-
mies and rescue you. {42 Blessing A Per-
son-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 5Then the
blind will see and the deaf will hear. 6The
lame will leap like a deer, and those who
couldn't speak will shout with joy." {404
Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Living with the LORD in the future will be healthy. The LORD promises, "The eyes of the blind shall see" (v. 5, ELT), and "The deaf shall hear" (v. 5). The LORD adds, "Crippled people shall jump like deer, and those who cannot talk will shout with joy" (v. 7). Lord, I pray for Your healing on earth while now only some are healed; but when we get to heaven, all will be healed. Amen. The LORD promises, "Streams will flow in the dry land" (v. 6, ELT). Lord, sometime my life is dry like the desert. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} I suffer failure and broken promises. I feel parched and can barely talk. Then I come to You in prayer and You fill my mouth with refreshing water. When I feel faint and feel like giving up, I drink from Your well and am satisfied. Lord, You fill me up. Amen.

7"Water will rush through the desert. Hot desert sand will become a pool, and springs will water the thirsty land. Grass and papyrus reeds will grow where desert dogs used to live. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
8"A good highway will be there and it will be called 'The Highway of Holiness.' Only those who love Me, the LORD, can travel on it. The spiritually unclean and sinful fools will not be allowed to travel on it. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 9No lions or other fierce animals will be on it. Only those I have saved will be allowed on the highway, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 10and they will go home on that highway, singing with joy. Happiness will be like a crown on their heads. They will be filled with gladness and joy, because all sorrow and mourning will be gone." {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}

Isaiah 36

Jerusalem Besieged

1When Hezekiah had been king of Judah for 14 years, Sennacherib, king of Assyria, attacked and captured all the walled cities of Judah. 2Then Sennacherib sent his personal representative with a huge army from Lachish to Hezekiah in Jerusalem. The representative stood on the road beside the canal from the Upper Pool near where people wash their clothes. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 3Three officials in Judah went out to meet him. They were Eliakim, son of Hilkiah, who was the palace administrator, Shebna, the count secretary, and Joah, son of Asaph, the royal record keeper. 4Sennacherib's representative gave this message to Hezekiah: "The great king of Assyria says, 'Why is he so confident? {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} 5His talk of military strategy and strength is nothing but empty words. On whom are you depending for help? 6Your depending on Egypt and Pharaoh is like leaning on a broken stick that pierces your hand. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 7Or if you are depending on the LORD, didn't Hezekiah tear down all except one of His places of worship? {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 8The king of Assyria will give you 2,000 horses if you have enough men to ride them. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 9How could you defeat the least of my army master's officials, even with the help of Egypt's chariots and cavalry? {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 10Also, remember that the LORD sent me here to destroy your nation.'" {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}

The enemy of Israel lied to God's people to coax them to surrender. After he belittled Egypt's power, he promised them 2,000 horses. Then with an outright lie, he said God told Assyria to come destroy Israel. Remember, satan is the father of lies, and the first temptation of Eve was a lie, "You will not surely die" (Gen. 3:4), and "You will be like God" (Gen. 3:5). Lord, give me spiritual insight to recognize the lies of satan; also to determine when people lie to

me. Keep me so close to Your heart that lies won't trip me up. Amen.

[11]Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah told the representative, "Don't speak to us in Hebrew because the people who are listening will know what you are saying. Instead speak in Aramaic; we understand it." {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [12]But the representative said, "No way, Sennacherib wants everyone to hear these words, not just you three. And your people will soon have to eat their own body waste and drink their own urine, and so will you three." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [13]Then the representative shouted in Hebrew, "The great king of Assyria says, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [14]"Don't let Hezekiah deceive you. He can't save you. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [15]Don't trust him when he says the LORD will save you, and Jerusalem will not be given to the Assyrians.' {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} [16]The king of Assyria says that if you make peace with him, then each of you can continue for a while to have your own vineyard, fig tree, and water cistern. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [17]Then you will come to Assyria, where you'll have plenty of grain and new wine."

The enemy promised Israel freedom, "Everyone will be free to eat the fruit of his own grapevine... everyone will be free to drink water from his own well" (v. 16). But Assyria always took prisoners and put them in harsh servitude in another country. In the same way Your spiritual enemy lies to you. He may promise you freedom from the "legalistic church" if you will enjoy alcohol... drugs... sex... but the Devil doesn't give you freedom. You'll end up in addiction, with broken health, or you'll die early from a disease related to your sin. You'll be blinded to the truth, and it may be impossible for you to return to God; apart from His mercy and grace. Lord, keep me from sin. When I am blinded by the world, let the Holy Spirit give me sight. When my steps turn toward temptation, stop me! Turn me around! I want to be free in Christ. "Therefore if the Son makes you free, you shall be free indeed" (John 8:36). Amen.

[18]"Hezekiah says the LORD will rescue you from us. However, has the God of any nation been able to rescue them from us? [19]What about the gods of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvaim, and Samaria? {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [20]Have they been able to rescue their people from us? What makes you think your God can rescue Jerusalem from Assyria?" {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

[21]The people said nothing because Hezekiah had told them not to respond. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [22]Then Eliakim, Shebna, and Joah tore their clothes in grief and told Hezekiah what Sennacherib's representatives had said. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Isaiah 37

Hezekiah's Prayer

1When Hezekiah heard their report, he tore his clothes in grief and put on burlap clothing, and went into the temple to pray.

There is a time to pray desperately (see the Prayer of Desperation, Elmer L. Towns, How to Pray (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), pp. 107-13. Peter asked to come to Jesus, walking on water. When Jesus said, "Come," he actually walked on water until he took his eyes off Jesus and looked at the threatening waves. When Peter began to sink, he cried out desperately. "Lord, save me" (Matt. 14:30). When Hezekiah got the message from the Assyrian general, he put on burlap (a sign of repentance). It's then Hezekiah prayed desperately. Lord, I will stay close to You so I won't need to pray desperately. But when unexpected dangers attack me, I will cry out unashamedly and passionately. Amen.

2Then he sent Eliakim and Shebna and the head priests dressed in burlap clothing to me, Isaiah. 3They told me what Hezekiah said, "This is a day of distress and shame. It's like a mother at childbirth having no strength to deliver her child. 4Let's pray that the LORD will hear these words of ridicule by Sennacherib's representatives and then rebuke him. Pray for all us who are left." {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28}

5I, Isaiah, then said to them, 6"'Tell your master Hezekiah that the LORD says, 'Don't be afraid of these words of insult against Me. 7I will make sure Sennacherib, on hearing a report of some problem in Assyria, will return to his homeland, where he will be killed.'" {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

8The representative heard that Sennacherib had left Lachish and went to attack Libnah. So that's where he went. 9Then Sennacherib got a report that Tirhakah, king of Ethiopia, was on his way to fight against him. Then Sennacherib sent this message to Hezekiah: 10"Don't let your God deceive you when he says Jerusalem won't be handed over to me. 11Remember what I have done to other countries, destroying them completely. Would it be any different for you? 12My forefathers destroyed the towns of Gozan, Haran, Rezeph, and the people of Eden who lived in Tel Assar. 13Also the kings of Hamath, Arpad, Sepharvain, Hena, and Ivvah are all gone."

14When Hezekiah received this letter, he went to the temple and spread it for the LORD to see. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Hezekiah went into the temple to pray. That's a good place to go to pray when you've been out of fellowship with God. Technically, God will hear you from any place when you pray, because God is everywhere present at the same time. Lord, I will meet You in Your house to listen to preaching and teaching of Your Word. I will fellowship with other believers and will serve You with them. But I will pray in Your house. Jesus told us, "My

house shall be called a house of prayer for all nations" (Isa. 56:7). Amen.

15Then he prayed, 16"O LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, you are enthroned above the winged creatures. You alone are God, and You made the Heavens and the earth. 17Listen and see how Sennacherib has insulted You, the living God. {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 18True, the Assyrian kings have destroyed these many nations, 19and have tossed their idols into the fire. But these gods were made of only wood and stone by human hands. 20Now, O LORD our God, rescue us from Sennacherib so that all nations will know that You alone, O LORD, are the true God."{464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30}
21Then I, Isaiah, sent this message to Hezekiah: 22"The LORD, the God of Israel, says this to Sennacherib: 'Jerusalem hates you and laughs at you. 23Sennacherib, you have insulted, and made fun of, and raised your voice against the Holy One of Israel. 24Your messengers have insulted Me, and you said you have conquered the highest peaks of Lebanon and have cut down its cedar and pine trees deep in its forests. 25You also said you dug wells and dried up streams of Egypt. 26Sennacherib, haven't you heard that I planned all this long ago? I am the one who decided to let you demolish walled cities into piles of stone. 27Their people became weak and ashamed. They were like wild flowers, blades of grass on housetops that are scorched in the sun.' {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
28"'I know all about you, your comings and goings, and your fierce anger against Me. 29Because of your anger against Me and your disrespect for Me, I will put a hook in your nose, and a bit in your mouth, and I will send you back by the road on which you came.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
30I, Isaiah, said to Hezekiah, "Here is proof that the LORD will protect Jerusalem from Assyria. This year you will eat crops that grow on their own, and the next year you will eat whatever springs up where those crops were. Then in the third year you will plant crops and harvest them. 31You who are in Judah will be like a vine with deep roots that bear fruit. 32A remnant will go from Jerusalem to repopulate the land, and the LORD of the Heavens in His passion will see that this happens." {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
33The LORD says this about the king of Assyria: "He won't get into Jerusalem, or shoot arrows into the city, or march around it with their shields, or build a siege ramp against it. 34He will return by the way he came, and he will not enter the city. 35I'll defend the city for My reputation and the reputation of David My servant." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}
36Then at night the LORD sent an angel into the Assyrian camp and killed 185,000 Assyrians. When the surviving Assyrians woke up the next morning, they found the dead bodies everywhere. 37So Sennacherib left and went back to Nineveh. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 38One day while he was worshiping in the temple of his god, Nisroch, his sons Adrammelech

and Sharezer killed him with the sword, and they escaped to the land of Ararat. Sennacherib's son, Esarhaddon, became the next king of Assyria. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 38

Hezekiah's Deliverance

[1]About that time Hezekiah was sick and nearly died. So I, Isaiah, went to see him and I told him, "The LORD says you need to take care of things because you will soon die." {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [2]Hezekiah turned toward the wall and prayed, {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

God had a purpose in allowing this sickness and announcement of Isaiah's premature death. What was it? Perhaps God wanted to scare Hezekiah so that he would repent so deeply that it would influence his prayer life. Early in life, Hezekiah was not known for spirituality. The announcement of his death so shook Hezekiah that he prayed deeply that God answered and gave him fifteen extra years. But Hezekiah was permanently influenced. He later could pray Israel out of danger when Rabshakeh and Assyria defeated every Judean town and almost conquered Jerusalem. Lord, teach me to get answers to prayer today, so I'll be able to pray and get answers when the day of extreme danger comes. Amen.

[3]"Remember, O LORD, that I have been faithful to You and have done what pleases You." Then he sobbed bitterly.
[4]Then the LORD gave me this message: [5]"Go tell Hezekiah that I, the LORD, have heard his prayer and seen his tears. [6]So I have decided to give him another 15 years to live. And I will rescue him and Jerusalem from the king of Assyria. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [7]As proof that what I've said is true, [8]I will make the afternoon shadow go back up 10 steps on the stairway of Ahaz." So the shadow on the sundial went back 10 steps. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
[9]After Hezekiah got well, he wrote these words: [10]"I thought I would die in my best years and enter the gates of death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [11]I thought I would never see the LORD or my friends again. [12]I thought my life was ending like a tent is taken down by a shepherd, and was being cut short like a weaver cuts cloth from a loom. I thought my life would end any day or night. [13]During the night I thought You, LORD, like a lion would break my bones. I thought my life would soon end. [14]I chattered like a bird and mourned like a dove. My eyes grew tired from looking up for help. LORD, I am in trouble. Please help me. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}

Obviously, Hezekiah was moved to deep prayer when told he would die of his sickness; then he prayed immediately from the depth of his heart. God uses experiences to motivate us to a deeper walk with Him.

Lord, help me go deep with You–not out of fear–but out of love. Give me a deeper love for You. Amen.

15"But there is nothing I can say since
You have caused me to be sick. So in my
bitterness, I will be humble before You.
{228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 16People
live because of what You do and say.
And I am encouraged by those things too.
You have restored my health and let me
live. 17It was good for me to suffer. And
I'm grateful that Your love kept me from
dying and that You have forgiven my sins.
{173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
18Dead people can't praise You or sing to
You. They can't see Your faithfulness in
action. 19But only the living, including
myself, can praise You, and each genera-
tion can tell the next how faithful You are.
20You, LORD, will save me, {416 Salva-
tion-Prayer, Luke 18:13} and every day I
live I will sing in the temple to the music
of stringed instruments."
21I, Isaiah, then told Hezekiah to put some
mashed figs on his boil and he would
recover. 22Then Hezekiah asked for proof
that he would worship again in the temple.

Apparently Isaiah didn't get out of the king's house before God changed His mind and told Isaiah to go back with a second message, "Thus saith the LORD... I have heard thy prayers" (38:5). As a result Hezekiah was the only one in history that knew the year of his death. What would you do if you knew the exact time of your death? Would you goof off until the last moment, and then get right with God? Or would you become neurotic, living a "fast-forward" life of service, trying to get as much done before the appointed time? Lord, I'm glad I don't know the exact time of my death so I can live a normal life for You. I will pray fervently every day as though it's my last day on earth. I will plan and pray patiently as though I have a long life ahead of me. For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Amen.

Isaiah 39

Hezekiah's Indiscretion

1Merodach-Baladan, son of Baladan, was
now king of Babylonia. When he heard
that Hezekiah had been sick and now
was well, he sent him letters and a gift.
2Hezekiah welcomed the messengers and
showed them his storerooms full of silver,
gold, spices, and oils. He even showed
them the rooms with all his weapons. He
showed them everything in his palace and
his entire kingdom. {101 Deceitful-Heart
Prayer, James 4:3}

This chapter introduces the rest of the book of Isaiah, where he focuses on the coming captivity of Israel by Babylon. After Hezekiah got well of his disease, the king of Babylon sent an envoy and letters to congratulate Hezekiah. This incident led to Hezekiah's foolish mistake, done in vanity and pride. He showed the Babylonians "all that was found in his treasures" (39:2). Lord, keep me from bragging about anything that I am, or anything I possess. I give you thanks for

everything I possess. May I use all my talents and "things" for Your glory. Amen.

3I went to Hezekiah and asked, "Where are these men from, and what did they want?" Hezekiah said, "They come from the distant land of Babylonia." 4I asked, "What did you show them?" Hezekiah answered, "I showed them everything in my palace and in my kingdom."
5Then I said to Hezekiah, "The LORD of the Heavens says 6that Babylon will carry off everything you and your ancestors have stored up in your palace. 7And some of your own sons will be taken to Babylon and made to serve in the palace of the Babylonian king." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 8Then Hezekiah thought, "At least there will be peace in my lifetime. So in a sense that is a good word from the LORD." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Isaiah predicts two things. "All that is in thy house... shall be carried to Babylon," and "thy sons that shall issue from thee... shall be eunuchs in Babylon." With this judgment was a word of hope. Remember, Hezekiah did not have any sons. If he had died in the previous chapter, there would have been no heir to the throne. Also, presumably, the line of the Messiah would have been cut off. So when Hezekiah is told he will have sons—Manasseh was not yet born—it was a sweet promise in his ears. What was Hezekiah's response? "Good is the word of the LORD." Lord, Your word is always good—when spoken in judgment as promised—because You will carry out Your will. I yield to Your good will for my life. Amen.

Isaiah 40

Isaiah's Vision of Redemption

1God says, "Comfort My people. 2Tell Jerusalem that she can be encouraged because her slavery is past and her sins are forgiven, even though she has been punished fully for her sins." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

When you turn the page into the second half of Isaiah, it's like walking out of darkness into light. (Chapters 1-34 tell of the punishment of God on Israel and the surrounding nations for their sin. Chapters 40-66 tell of the salvation of God after He pardons our sins). The cry of COMFORT follows true repentance, so this is a view of Israel's future, "Her warfare is ended" (40:2). Lord, I yearn to feel your comfort after You pardon my sin. It feels good to feel good because You've renewed my Spirit. Amen.

3Someone is shouting in the desert, "Prepare for the LORD's coming. Make a straight road for Him."

Isaiah predicts the coming ministry of John the Baptist who was "the voice of one crying in the wilderness" (40:3). He predicts the spiritual preparation necessary for the coming of the Messiah, that is, the LORD Jesus Christ. The reference to the "valley... mountain... rough ground" describes the work

of God in the hearts, not just the physical transformation of the planet at the end of this age. Lord, smooth out the rough ground in my heart so Your glory will be revealed in my life. Lord, I want to see Jesus as did John the Apostle who said, "We beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father" (John 1:14). Amen.

4"Fill the valleys and level every mountain
and hill, and smooth out the rough spots
in the road. 5Then everyone will see His
glory, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} just as He has said." {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}

This promise is for more than all Israel—the Jews—it is for "all flesh." Lord, You "take away the sins of the world" (John 1:29). Lord, You "reconcile the world to yourself" (2 Cor. 5:19, ELT). Lord, You are "the propitiation... for the sins of the whole world" (1 John 2:2). Lord, not everyone receives Your salvation, but You made it possible "for all flesh shall see it" (40:5). Amen.

6I heard someone tell me to shout. I said,
"What shall I shout?" The answer came,
"Shout that everyone is like grass and flowers that die away. 7They died off because
God blows on them. 8Flowers and grass
fade, but God's Word lasts forever." {143 Establishing Doctrine by Prayer, Titus 1:5}
9Messenger of good news to Jerusalem, go
on a high mountain, and don't be afraid to
shout to Judah, "Your God is coming. 10He
is coming with power to rule with great
strength, and He will reward people when
He comes. 11He will care for His people as
a shepherd takes care of his sheep and carries lambs in his arms, holding them close
to his heart, while leading mother sheep."
12Has anyone ever measured the ocean in
his hand? Or has anyone ever measured
the sky with a ruler? Who has ever held
all the dust in a basket or weighed all the
mountains on balance scales? Obviously
no one. 13In a similar way no one can fully
understand the Spirit of You, the LORD,
or given You advice as if he were Your
counselor. 14You never asked anyone to
teach You or to give You knowledge and
understanding. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
15Compared to You all nations are as small
and insignificant as a drop of water on the
side of a bucket or like dust on balance
scales. All the islands are like mere dust.
16All Lebanon's forests would not provide
enough wood to burn animal sacrifices
to You, and all Lebanon's animals would
not be enough for offerings for You. 17All
the nations are nothing compared to You.
In fact they are less than nothing, totally
worthless.
18Can anyone be compared to You, LORD?
Certainly no idol is like You. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 19Idols
are made of gold and decorated with silver.
20A person too poor to present an offering
to You may ask a worker to make him an
idol from wood that won't rot and to set it
up so it won't fall over.
21Don't you people know? 22Haven't you
heard that God rules from heaven above
the earth, and that compared to Him,

people are as small as grasshoppers? He spread out the sky like a curtain or like a tent. [23]He judges rulers and brings them to nothing. [24]Like plants that start to grow and wither, rulers get established, but then God blows on them, they wither, and the wind carries them off like chaff. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

[25]You, the Holy One, ask, "Can anyone compare with Me? Is anyone equal to Me?" [26]Look at the sky and ask, "Who created all this?" You, LORD, are the one who created each of them and You gave a name to each one. You are so powerful that no star is ever missing. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

God's power will save great numbers in a great way. Isaiah says "don't doubt it" but "lift up your eyes to see His greatness" (40:26, ELT). God created the stars, and He leads them like a mighty army. There are trillions upon trillions of stars according to recent research, yet God, "calleth them all by names." If God can keep up with the stars and call them by name, we can't get lost in God's plan of care. Lord, I marvel that You would care for me, and know me, and guide me. Amen.

[27]Israel, how can you say God doesn't see you or doesn't care for you? [28]Have you forgotten that the LORD is the eternal God, the Creator of the earth? He never gets tired, and no one can measure His wisdom. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

[29]You, LORD, strengthen tired people and help those who are weak. [30]Even young people get tired and worn out and stumble and fall. [31]But those who trust in You will gain new strength. They will be strong like eagles soaring high. They will walk and run without getting worn out and tired. {453 Spiritual-Stability Prayer, Eph. 5:6}

Isaiah compares the strong young man who runs mightily, to those who "wait upon the LORD." The strong faints and fails, but those who enjoy God's presence renew their strength... walk... run... mount up like eagles. Lord, I am not strong in myself, but I will abide in You for strength. I will pray for energy to walk. Fill me with the Holy Spirit to run. When You take over my life, I will mount up with wings of eagles. Amen.

Isaiah 41

Protection by the LORD

[1]The LORD says, "Be silent and listen, you lands beyond the sea. You and all the nations, come and speak. Let's settle the matter. [2]Who stirred up this king from the east who has victory in every battle? Obviously only I, the LORD. I have helped him defeat nations and kings, turning them to dust and chaff with his sword and arrows. [3]He chases them and is unhurt in the process as he walks over unfamiliar territory. [4]Who controls things from one generation to another? I, the LORD, do it. I am the first and the last. I am He. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

5"The lands beyond the sea have seen what
I do and they tremble. 6Yet they encourage
each other by saying, 'Be strong.' 7Wood-
carvers, goldsmiths, and other workers
making idols say, 'You've done a good
job.' Then they nail down the idols so they
won't fall over.
8"But I have chosen you, Israel, My ser-
vant, the descendants of my friend Abra-
ham. 9I called you here from the remote
parts of the earth and made you My cho-
sen servant. I won't desert you. 10Don't be
afraid, because I am with you. Don't be
upset, because I am your God. I will make
you strong and help you as I hold you with
My hand. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb.
5:7}
11"Anyone who hates Me will be shamed,
and if he opposes Me, he will vanish.
12You'll search for your enemies but won't
find them. If they fight against you, they'll
become nothing. 13I, The LORD, your
God, hold your hand. And I tell you not
to be afraid because I will be here to help
you. 14As I said, don't be afraid, Israel; even
though you may feel small and feel like a
worm. I, your Redeemer, the Holy One
of Israel, will help you. 15I will make you
a threshing sledge with many new teeth
to crush all your enemies, turning moun-
tains into chaff. 16Like a wind blowing
away chaff, I will blow away your enemies.
Then you will be glad and you will delight
in Me, the Holy One of Israel. {364 Praise
for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
17"The poor and needy search for water
and can't find any. I, the God of Israel, will
help them and not neglect them. 18I will
make rivers appear on mountaintops and
give them springs in the valleys. Pools of
water will be in the desert, and springs will
appear on parched land. 19In the desert I
will plant cedar trees, acacia trees, myr-
tle trees, olive trees, pine trees, fir trees,
and cypress trees. 20Then people will see
this and will know that I, the Holy One
of Israel, did this. {272 Knowing-God
Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
21"Present your arguments. 22Can your
idols tell what happened long ago, 23or
what will happen in the future, to prove
that they are gods? Do something great so
we will be shocked and afraid. 24But your
idols are nothing, and people who follow
you are disgusting. {364 Praise for God's
Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
25"I, the LORD, will cause a ruler (Cyrus)
to come from the north and the east. He
will honor My name, and he will defeat
rulers like a worker trampling on mortar
or a potter treading clay. 26Did any of your
idols predict this? No, of course not. 27I,
the LORD, was the first to tell Jerusalem
he was {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps.
67; Matt. 6:9} coming. 28Not one of your
idols could answer when I asked them.
29All your idols are false, who can do noth-
ing. They are as empty as the wind."

The LORD rebukes Israel for worshiping idols by asking, can they "show us what will happen" (41:23, ELT)? No, idols "are nothing" (41:24). Then God again says only He can predict the future. Lord, I trust You the Creator, I worship You who has all life in Your hand. Amen.

Isaiah 42

Jehovah's Anointed

[1]The LORD says, "Here is My servant! I chose Him and delight in Him. I will put My Spirit in Him, and He will be the Judge of the nations. [2]He won't shout or yell or be noisy in the streets. [3]If someone, like a bruised reed, is hurting, He won't make him feel worse. And if someone, like a dying flame, is discouraged, [4]He won't discourage him further. He'll see that justice is done. In fact He'll keep at it till He brings justice to all the world. No wonder people in distant lands will trust in Him." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

Who is the Servant (42:1) that Isaiah introduces? None other than the Messiah, Jesus Christ. In the end times He will judge all people and nations. The reference to "the isles" (v. 4, KJV) and "a light to the Gentiles" (v. 6, KJV) points to the worldwide ministry of Jesus Christ. As great as Jesus Christ is, He is called a "Servant." Lord, I want to be Your servant. May I serve You in every little way, as I live. But also Lord, use my service in a way that is bigger than I could ever imagine or dream. Amen.

[5]"I am the LORD who created the sky and stretched it out like a tent. And I created the earth and everything in it. I give breath and life to everyone. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [6]I have called You to do My will. And I will take Your hand and keep You and help You fulfill My promises. You will be a light to guide nations to Me, [7]and You will open blind eyes, free captives from prison, and free those who are sitting in a dark dungeon. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [8]I am the LORD, and I will not share My majesty with idols. [9]Everything has happened as I said it would, and now I'll tell you what will happen next." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

[10]Sing a new song to the LORD; praise Him in song throughout the earth. You sailors and you people who live in distant lands, sing to the LORD. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [11]People living in desert towns like Kedar in Arabia and Sela in Edom should sing of the LORD, shouting from mountaintops. [12]And they should glorify the LORD and praise Him everywhere. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

Because of what Messiah will do, we are to "sing to the LORD a new song" (42:10). Lord, I sing happily of my redemption. I sing happily of my new assurance. I sing happily because You guide me daily. I give glory to You, my Lord (42:12). Amen.

[13]The LORD will march out like a strong soldier, shouting in victory over His enemies.

[14]"I, the LORD, have kept quiet for a long time. But now I will cry out like a woman in childbirth. [15]I will level mountains and hills and dry up green growth on them. I will dry up rivers and pools. [16]I will lead the blind, guiding them along unfamiliar paths. {483 Thanksgiving for

Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} I will turn darkness into light and level out rough places. I will do these things; you can depend on it. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} 17But people who trust in idols as their gods will be ashamed. 18"You who are deaf, listen, and you who are blind, look. You, My servant Israel, are blind and deaf. 19You have seen and heard many things, 20but you don't really see or listen. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 21I, the LORD, was pleased to make My law great. 22But you have been robbed and trapped in pits and imprisoned. They have been made captives. They themselves are loot, and no one is interested in sending them back. 23Will you not pay attention to what I am doing? 24I am the one who let you be taken as captives, and that is because you did not obey Me or keep My laws. 25So I poured out My anger on you in violent warfare. Yet even with the flames you didn't understand or do anything about your sin." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 43

God's Care for Israel

1"Descendants of Jacob, I created you, and formed you into a nation. Don't be afraid; I have rescued you. I have chosen you for a special relationship to Me. You belong to Me. {395 Redemptive Prayer for the Lost, Rom. 10:1} 2When you cross the deep waters of trouble, I will be right there with you and you won't drown. When you walk through the fires of difficulties, they won't harm you. 3I am the LORD, your God, the Holy One of Israel, who saves you. I gave up Egypt, Ethiopia, and Seba in exchange for your freedom." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

The LORD promises them deliverance through... waters... rivers... fire (43:2). These were both physical and spiritual deliverance. Lord, when I go through deep waters of trials, thank You for being with me. When I go through threatening rivers of sufferings, thank You for not letting them overflow me. When I go through the fires of persecution, the flame will not destroy me (I may die, but I'll live with You in heaven). And Lord, when I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, You will be with me. Thank You and Amen.

4"I traded their lives for yours, because you are precious to Me and I love you.
5"You have no need to be afraid, because I am with you. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} I will gather you and your children from the east and the west, 6and the north and the south. I will bring My sons and daughters from faraway lands, including 7everyone I have chosen and created to honor Me." {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

The LORD promises to bring Israel back to the land, long before Babylon destroyed the temple and burned Jerusalem. God says He will bring these back from "the east... the west... the north... the south... and the ends of the earth" (43:5-6). We see the beginning

of this miracle in modern-day Israel, yet one day "all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26) and dwell in the Promised Land. Lord, this is too great for humans to expect, but I know it will happen because You promised it in Your word. Help me understand Your greatness and worship You because of it. Amen.

8"Bring My people together, even though they are spiritually blind and deaf. None of their idols predicted this. They may bring in witnesses to say they predicted what I will do. 9Gather the nations together. Can their idols predict anything? Where are the people who can say they told the truth? 10But You, My servant Israel, whom I have chosen, are My witnesses. You know and understand that I am He. No other God besides Me exists, and there never will be another God. 11Only I, the LORD, am Your Savior. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 12I said I would save you, and I, not some foreign god, did. And you are witnesses that I am your God. 13I am God from eternity to eternity. And no one can set people free from Me or reverse what I do. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}

14"Israel, I am your Redeemer, your Holy One, and this is My message: For your sakes I will send an army against Babylon and take away their people as captives in their very own ships. 15I am the LORD, your Holy One, and Creator and King. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 16In the exodus I opened a way for you through the waters. 17An Egyptian army with chariots and horses lie dead, snuffed out like the fire on a candlestick. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 18But forget the past, because I'm going to do something new. In fact I have already begun. 19I'm making a road and streams in the desert. 20Wild animals, jackals, and owls will be glad I'll give them water in the desert. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} In fact I'll also provide water for you, 21My chosen people, so that you can praise Me.

22"But, My people, you haven't asked for My help. You are tired but not from worshiping Me. 23And you haven't brought Me animals for burnt offerings. And I haven't asked for offerings and incense. 24And you haven't brought Me any sweet-smelling oil or the fat of sacrificed animals. Instead you have burdened Me down with your sins. 25But for My reputation I'll remove your sins and I'll never remember them again. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

26"State your case as to why I should forgive you. 27Adam sinned, and your prophets and priests rebelled against Me. 28So I'll shame your temple priests, and I'll destroy them and I'll despise your nations." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 44

Idols Are Useless

1"Israel, My servant, I have chosen you. 2I created you, and I formed you like forming a baby in the womb. I will help you so you don't need to be afraid. As I said, you are My servant whom I have chosen. 3I will water your land, and I will pour out My Spirit {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer,

Eph. 5:18} and My blessings on your descendants."

How can you not stop reading and start praying when you read what God promises, "I will pour water on him who is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground" (44:3)? Who doesn't want to be refreshed by the LORD? Lord, I want to be renewed by You. I want to "spring up as grass." Lord, pour water on me that I may live and be fruitful. I live in a desert and everything around me seems dry. Lord, I'm thirsty. Pour right here where I'm standing. Amen.

4"They will prosper like grass and like willow trees by streams. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 5They'll say, 'I am the LORD's,' or 'I am a descendant of Jacob.' Still others will write My name on the back of their hands to show they belong to Me.
6"I am Israel's king, Redeemer, the LORD of the Heavens, and I have existed forever (I am the First) and will continue forever (I am the Last). I am the only God. 7No one is like Me. Can anyone say what has happened since I made you My people? Or can anyone say what will happen? 8So you don't need to tremble in fear. I'll tell you what My plans are for you. Is there any other God? No. Is there anyone who is as reliable as Me like a rock? No. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
9"People who make worthless idols are themselves worthless. Those people are blind, stupid, and shameful. 10Those idols they make can't help them at all. 11People who make idols are mere humans. They will stand before Me in terror and disgrace." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah emphasizes the high and lofty nature of God. The idols that Israel was worshiping in Isaiah's time were nothing compared to God. God "is the first" and God is "the last," and He says "beside Me there is no God" (44:6). Lord, You are the true God, the only God. You have told me, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3, KJV). Lord, forgive me for putting my schedule before You, and I'm sorry when I put "stuff" before You. Lord, teach me that You are the only God, and there's nothing besides You. Amen.

12"Think of how stupid it is to make an idol. A blacksmith hammers out a piece of metal in the shape of an idol. Then he gets hungry and thirsty. 13Then a woodcarver draws an outline of an idol on a piece of wood. He chisels it, and the wood now looks like a person. 14He uses wood from either cedar, cypress, or oak trees, or even a pine tree he planted that was watered by rain. 15Then he uses some of the wood to make a fire for heating or cooking. From the other part of the wood he makes an idol and worships it. 16He burns part of the tree to roast his meat and to keep warm. 17Then he makes an idol from the rest of the wood and bows down to it and asks it to rescue him. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}
18"How stupid are such people. They are so ignorant, their eyes are closed, and their minds can't think. 19Idolmakers don't stop

to think, 'I used half of this wood for fuel for a fire and to cook my bread and meat. How can the rest of the wood be an idol? Why should I bow down to a block of wood?' [20]Actually this wood will become ashes. It can give him no help at all. He doesn't realize that the idol in his hand is a lie.

[21]"Israel, you are My servant, and so you need to remember these things. Since I made you, I won't forget you. [22]Come back to Me because I have removed your sins as if they are floating clouds. Come back to Me because I have paid the price to set you free. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [23]Heavens and earth, sing and shout. And mountains, forests, and every tree should sing because I have rescued My people and show My majesty. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}

[24]"I am your Redeemer and I formed you like forming a baby in the womb. I, the LORD, made everything, including the heavens and the earth. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [25]I show that false prophets are liars and that fortune-tellers are fools. I turn human wisdom into nonsense. [26]By contrast I carry out what My prophets say and predict. If they say Jerusalem will be lived in again and Judah's towers will be rebuilt, it will be done. [27]If I tell the rivers to dry up, they will be dry. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [28]And when I say Cyrus will be My shepherd and He'll obey Me, He will. He will rebuild Jerusalem and help restore My temple."

Isaiah 45

Prediction of Cyrus

[1]"I said to Cyrus, my chosen one, I have taken hold of your right hand to enable you to conquer nations to defeat kings. City gates will be open for you and won't be closed. [2]I will level the mountains and knock down bronze gates and iron bars. [3]I will give you treasures hidden in dark, secret places. Then you will know that I am the LORD, the God of Israel, who has chosen you for a special relationship to Me." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

God predicts Cyrus will set Israel free, and "he will rebuild My city" (45:13). God calls one pagan world ruler by name over 150 years before he was born. Why? Because Cyrus moved the forces of history to allow the Jews to return from captivity and rebuild Jerusalem (read Ezra and Nehemiah). Lord, You are the God who controls history. You set nations up and You tear them down. I worship Your awesome power, seen in so many ways. Amen.

[4]"Israel, you are My servant, and in My relationship to you, I will honor you even though you don't admit that I am the only true God. [5]I am the only God; there is no other. I will make you strong against your enemies, even though you don't know Me. [6]From east to west everyone will know that I am the LORD and that there are no other gods. {131 Effective-Prayer, Phil.

4:6-7} 7I create light and darkness, good and bad times."

Isaiah makes two unusual statements about God, "I form the light and create darkness" (45:7, KJV). That's easy to explain, before creation there was only God; nothing else existed. There was no light and no darkness. So on the second day God created light and two days later created light holders, that is, the sun and stars. And what is darkness but the absence of light? Then God says, "I make peace and create evil" (45:7, KJV). That's tough to interpret, because it seems that God is the author of evil. The Hebrew word here is "trouble" not "evil," which means God can send problems or difficult circumstances ("good and bad times"). God didn't create evil, but He allowed the situation where evil was formed. God gave Adam and Eve free choice, that is, the liberty to do right or wrong. When they chose to disobey God, sin or evil was introduced into the world. Lord, thank You for freedom. At times my freedom has gotten me in trouble, but on one occasion I chose Christ as My Savior. Now, I am a follower of Jesus Christ. Thank You for freedom to choose Christ. Amen.

8"Let the skies pour out justice like rain. Salvation and justice will spring up like flowers. I, the LORD, will do all this. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
9"How terrible it will be for anyone who disagrees with his Maker. He is like a clay pot asking the potter, 'Why did you make me this way?" And he doesn't say, 'You are so clumsy, as if you had no hands.' 10How terrible it will be for anyone who says to his parents, 'Why did you bring me into the world?' 11As I said, I am the Holy One of Israel and Your Creator. How can you dare ask Me questions about what I will do? 12I created the earth, and I put people on it. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} And I made the heavens and filled it with many stars. 13I will raise up Cyrus, and I will guide him on smooth roads. He will rebuild My city Jerusalem and set My captives free without paying for it at all. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} Remember, I, the LORD of the Heavens, say all this.
14"The riches of Egypt and Ethiopia will be yours, Cyrus, and the people of Seba will be your captives. They will say, 'We know God is with you and that there is no other.'" {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 15You, O God, seem to work behind the scenes, but yet You are our Savior. 16People who make idols will be ashamed and dishonored. 17But You will save Israel and they will never be ashamed and dishonored throughout endless ages. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
18"I, God, created the heavens, and made the earth, not for it to be empty, but for people to live in it. I could do this because I am the LORD and there is no other. 19I haven't spoken in secrets, and I didn't tell you to search for me in vain. I always spoke the truth. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 20To every freed captive I say, 'Realize how stupid it is to worship wooden idols or to pray to gods that can't help.' 21Argue your case with proof

that idol worship is good. I told you long ago what would happen. I am the only God, a just God with power to save. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
22"Invite everyone to look to Me for salvation. I am God, and there is no other. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}
23What I have said will come true. Everyone will bow down {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} and worship Me. 24They will admit that I am just. And anyone who is angry with Me will come to Me and be ashamed. 25I will give victory to all of Israel." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Isaiah 46

Israel's Folly in Trusting Idols

1"The idols of Babylon, Bel and Nebo, are being hauled off on ox carts. 2But the oxen are stumbling, and the idols are falling off the carts. The idols and the people go off as captives together. 3You survivors in Israel, listen to Me. I created you and cared for you from the day you were born. 4And I'll care for you even when you are old and gray. I created you, I will take care of you, and I will rescue you from trouble. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
5"Can you compare Me with anyone? {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
6Some people hire a goldsmith to make an idol from their silver and gold. Then they bow down and worship it. 7In fact they carry the idol around on their shoulders, and when they set it down it can't move. And when they ask it for help from their troubles, it has no answer and no power to help him.
8"Don't forget this, you sinners. 9Remember what I've done in the past, and that I am God and that no one is like Me. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
10Only I can tell you in advance what will happen, and I do whatever I wish. 11I will call that bird of prey, Cyrus, from the east, and he will do what I want him to do. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 12You stubborn people, listen to Me. You are far from doing what is right. 13But I will come rescue you because I am not far away. I will restore Jerusalem, and I will give my honor to Israel." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

Isaiah 47

Babylon Destroyed

1"City of Babylon, you were unconquered. But you sit in the dust without a throne. You will no longer be lovely like a tender plant. 2Grind corn. Remove your veil and your fancy clothes as you cross the streams. 3You will be naked and ashamed. I will take revenge against you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 4I am your Redeemer, the LORD of the Heavens, the Holy One of Israel.
5"Babylon, sit in the dark. No one will ever again think of you as their queen. 6I was angry with My people, so I let you conquer them, and you even made older people carry heavy loads. 7You thought you would be a queen forever. But you didn't think about what could happen to you. {268

Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [8]Listen, you wealthy, pleasure-seeking nation, You think you are secure as you brag that you are the greatest. You say you'll never be a widow or lose any of your children. [9]But you are wrong. In a moment you will become a widow and lose your children, in spite of your relying on demonic power and magic."

God knew that Babylon would fall in one day to the Medo-Persians (Dan. 5), so God writes, "In a moment in one day" (47:9, KJV). Lord, You know the big things that will happen in the future, but You also know the small isolated things that will happen in each and every day. It's secure to trust You, a God like that. Amen.

[10]"You thought no one sees you in all your sin. You thought you were wise in saying that you are the greatest. [11]But suddenly disaster will come and you won't be able to buy your way out. This catastrophe will come so quickly you won't know what happened. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[12]"You have been involved in demonic power and magic ever since your nation was founded. Keep using these powers and see if they will help you. [13]You are worn out trying to know the future by studying the stars and making predictions every month. Let these astrologers help you. [14]But they are as worthless as straw burning in a fire. They can't even save themselves, and their fire can't make you warm. [15]People you've known and with whom you've done business since you were a child can't help you." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 48

God Will Redeem Israel

[1]"Listen, Israel and you who are from the tribe of Judah, You make promises to Me, but you are lying."

What Isaiah said about the ancient people of Israel is true about many modern Christians. They "make mention of the God of Israel, but not in truth, nor in righteousness. (48:1, KJV). Lord, see through my mask and hypocrisy. I sing, "My Jesus, I love Thee," yet other things cloud my view of You. I sing, "More love to Thee, O Christ," yet I still have love for the world in my heart. Cleanse me O God, and make me pure. Forgive me and deal with me in mercy. Amen.

[2]"You say you are citizens of Jerusalem and that you depend on Me, the LORD of the Heavens. [3]I told what will happen in the future. Then suddenly I made it happen.
[4]"You are so stubborn. Your neck was stiff like iron, and your forehead was as hard as bronze. [5]I told you what I was going to do so you couldn't say your idols of wood or metal did them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [6]You've seen what I predicted, but you won't admit I did it all. Now I will tell you new things I haven't mentioned before. [7]These are new and recent, so you can't say you already knew it. [8]You were never willing to hear these things before,

because you are so rebellious even from the day you were born. 9But I will delay sending My wrath against you, so that you will praise Me."

God should have punished Israel long before Isaiah's day, but He says, "For my name's sake will I defer mine anger" (48:9, KJV). Lord, don't judge me instantly when I sin. I'm weak and I have a sinful nature that tempts me. Be patient with me. Forgive me! Strengthen me to overcome temptations. I want to be strong for Your glory. Take away my bent to sinning. I want to be as perfect on earth as I will be one day in heaven. Amen.

10"I tested you in your troubles, but not in the way silver is refined in a furnace. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 11I will rescue you because of who I am. I will not let other nations claim their gods helped them.

12"Listen, Israel, My chosen people. I alone have existed forever (I am the First) and I will continue forever (I am the Last). 13With My own hand I made the earth and the sky. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} I spoke, and they came into being. 14Come and listen to Me. Have any of your idols told you that Cyrus, my ally, will destroy the Babylonians? 15Yes, I chose him. I will bring him against you and he will succeed. 16And listen to this too: I have never spoken secretly. I have always spoken plainly so that you would understand."

I, Isaiah, received this message from the sovereign LORD and His Spirit: 17"I am the one who rescues you; I am the Holy One of Israel. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} I am the LORD your God who teaches you what is best and I lead you on the right path." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

God has promised, "I am the LORD thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go" (48:17, KJV). Lord, I need this promise fulfilled in my life. Teach me Yourself so I can worship You better and in truth. Teach me inner purity so I can be a testimony to You. Teach me how to live so I will obey You implicitly. Teach me how to serve You so I can advance Your work. Amen.

18"If you had obeyed My commands, you would have had peace like a gentle, flowing river and your upright way would have been as continuous as the waves of the sea. 19And you would have had as many descendants as grains of sand on the seashore. And you would not be destroyed.

20"Now, Israel, leave Babylon! Be happy for your release and shout for everyone to hear, 'The LORD has rescued His servant Israel. 21When He led us through the desert centuries earlier, we were not thirsty because the LORD gave us water from a rock.' {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 22But I say that the wicked will have no peace."

Isaiah 49

God's Servant

[1]Listen, you people in distant lands. Before I was born, the LORD chose me. [2]He has made my words pierce like a sharp sword or arrow. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [3]He said to me, "You are My servant. And because of you I will display My greatness." [4]But I said, "My work seems useless and for nothing. Yet I did it all for the LORD, and He will reward me." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
[5]Now as the LORD says, "I formed you in the womb to be My servant, and to lead the people of Israel back to Me." He has honored me and strengthened me. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [6]He also said, "But you will be more than My servant in restoring My people back to Me. You will also be a light for the nations and you will bring salvation to everyone on the earth." {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} [7]And the LORD said, "I, the Holy One of Israel, will rescue My people, though many people despise and reject you and treat you like a servant of rulers. But kings and rulers will honor you. I will be faithful for I am the Holy One of Israel who has chosen you." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
[8]The LORD also says this: "At just the right time I will rescue you, My servant, and you will fulfill My promise to Israel to rebuild her land." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

This chapter describes how God will bring His people the Jews back to the Promised Land in the coming millennium. This period is also called the kingdom. Isaiah described the land as "desolate" (49:8, KJV) but God will "raise up the tribes of Jacob" (49:6, KJV). Lord, if You can resurrect the believing Jews and restore them to an earthly kingdom, I know You can resurrect me and deliver me to heaven. You are life-giving and powerful. Amen.

[9]"And to set captives free to return to their land. My people will find plenty to eat even on hillsides. [10]They won't be hungry or thirsty, and the sun and desert heat won't hurt them. I will guide them with My tender love beside streams of water. [11]I will make My mountains level for them, and I will raise my highways. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [12]My people will return from lands in the north and the west and from Aswan in Egypt.
[13]"Heavens, earth, and mountains, rejoice in Me, because I will give comfort and tender love. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [14]You may say I have forgotten you. [15]But could a mother forget her nursing baby? Could she not love a child to whom she gave birth? Even if she could reject her child, I won't forget you. [16]I have written your name on the palm of My hand. I always think about you." {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

Jerusalem is called the Eternal City, and it has a special place in the heart of God. He

says, "I have inscribed you on the palms of My hands; Your walls are continually before Me." (49:15-16, NKJV). Lord, because You love Jerusalem, I have a special love for that city. Every time I go back, I feel Your special divine presence there. Lord, I pray for that city and its inhabitants as You told me, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Ps. 122:6). Amen.

17"Your descendants will return, and
those who destroyed your city will leave.
18Look up and you will see all your sons
coming back. {74 Coming-Kingdom
Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Your people
will be like a bride's jewelry. 19True,
Jerusalem is in ruins now, and your land
is deserted. But it will be rebuilt and
repopulated, and your enemies will be
gone.
20"People born when you were in cap-
tivity will say, 'This is too crowded. We
need more space.' 21But you will ask,
'How could I be their mother when
I was all alone as a captive. Who bore
these children and raised them?'" {74
Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
22The LORD also says this: "I will order
godless nations to bring back your chil-
dren to you."

This chapter is about more than Jews. It shows God's plan for the Gentiles. Isaiah asks for the distant lands" to listen to God. "Take heed, you people from afar" (49:1, NKJV). Then the LORD says, "Behold, I will lift up Mine hand to the Gentiles" (49:22, ELT). A Gentile is anyone who is not a physical Jew. God has a plan for the Gentiles, God loves the world. Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness to the Jews. Because You didn't disown them because of their sin, I have comfort knowing You won't disown me. You have forgiven all my sin through Christ. "The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7, KJV). Thank You for "the Lamb of God who taketh away the sin of the world" (John 1:29, KJV). You will save every Jew or Gentile who calls on You for salvation (Rom. 10:13). Amen.

23"Kings and queens will bow down before
you. This way you will know that I am the
LORD, and by trusting in Me you won't
be disappointed. {74 Coming-Kingdom
Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 24Can loot be
taken from soldiers? Who can rescue your
children from tyrants? 25Captives of war-
riors will be released, and our loot will be
retrieved. I'll fight for you and I'll rescue
your children. 26I will make your enemies
eat their own flesh and drink their own
blood. Then everyone will know that I,
the LORD, am your Savior and that I,
the Mighty One of Israel, will rescue you."
{45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer,
Eph. 6:10 ff.}

Isaiah 50

Jehovah's Servant Is Humble

1The LORD says, "Has your mother gone
away because I divorced her? Did I send
you away to pay for debts? No, I divorced
her, and sold you because of your sins.
2When I come home, the house is silent

and empty. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Why? Is it because I don't have the power to rescue? No. Just with a word I can turn the sea and rivers into a desert, and then fish die and stink."

Isaiah is pleading the case why God will save Israel in the future. Isaiah quotes God, "Is My hand shortened at all, that it cannot redeem" (50:2, KJV). This question applies to us today. God says His "hand is not shortened that it cannot save" (59:1, KJV). Then God adds a condition, "but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid His face from you" (59:2). Lord, I know You won't look the other way when I pray because I come through Jesus Christ my High Priest (Heb. 7:25), and I come through His blood (1 John 1:7). Amen.

3"I can make the sky dark like burlap clothing." {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

4The Sovereign LORD gives me the right words to say to comfort the weary. Every morning He wakes me up and I'm eager to learn from Him. 5When He speaks, I don't refuse to listen. 6I let them beat my back and pull out my beard. I didn't resist when they made fun of me and spit in my face. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

In this passage we have the only reference that Jesus Christ had a beard. Lord, thank You for the physical suffering You endured for me. Thank You for the shame and rejection You went through. Because You suffered for me, I am willing to suffer for You. Amen.

7But the Sovereign LORD helped me, and I was not ashamed. So I will not give up; I have determined to do His will and I know He will support me. 8He, my Defender, is near. So who can accuse me now? Let my accuser confront me. 9Since the Sovereign LORD is my helper, no one can say I'm guilty. In fact they will all be destroyed like old cloths eaten by moths. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

10Not one of you reverences the LORD or obeys His servant. You walk in the darkness of confusion and sin. But you should trust in the LORD. 11Go ahead and walk in the light of your own fires. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

Those who "fear the LORD" may even find themselves walking in "the dark and have no light" (50:10), because the whole world is darkened by sin. What should that believer do? Isaiah says, "Let him trust in the name of the LORD" (50:10, KJV). So that person should "kindle a fire" (50:11, NKJV), then "walk in the light of his fire" (50:11, NKJV). Lord Jesus, You are the light of the world. When You came into my heart, You brought light. So I read the Scriptures daily to "light my own fires" and I will walk daily by the light I get from Your word. Amen.

But the LORD will punish you, and you will lie down in torment. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

Isaiah 51

An Appeal to Israel

[1]You who follow the LORD and do what
is right, look to the rock from which
you were cut. [2]Abraham and Sarah, your
ancestors, were that rock. From that one
man came many descendants and a great
nation. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11}
[3]Zion is in ruin, but the LORD will com-
fort her and look on her with tender love.
Her deserts will be lovely like the Garden
of Eden. She will be joyful and glad, and
she will be thankful and will sing. {484
Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
[4]The LORD says, "Listen, My people.
Listen, O Israel. My law will be known,
and justice will be a light to the nations.
[5]Righteousness, deliverance, and justice
will come to the nations. People who live
in far-off countries will wait for Me to res-
cue them by My power. [6]Look up at the
sky and the earth. The stars will disappear
like smoke, and the earth will wear out like
clothes. Everyone will die like flies. But
My deliverance will last forever, and My
upright rule will never fail. {60 Charac-
ter of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [7]Listen,
you people who know right from wrong
and who obey My law, don't be afraid of
people's criticisms or insults. [8]They will
be eaten away like a garment eaten by
moths and like wool eaten by worms. But
My deliverance will last forever, and My
upright rule will never fail." {60 Character
of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[9]LORD, please wake up. Be strong, and be
alert as You were for people years ago. You
defeated the sea monster Rahab, a name
for Egypt. [10]You dried up the Red Sea and
made a road in the middle of the sea so
Your people could go across safely. [11]Those
You have rescued will return to Jerusalem,
singing along the way. They will be glad
and joyful, then sorrow and mourning will
disappear. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer,
James 1:12}

God also promises a great entrance into His millennial kingdom. "The redeemed of the LORD should return, and come with singing unto Zion; and everlasting joy shall be upon their head" (51:11, KJV). Lord, I apply this future picture to my weekly entrance into Your house. I will come before Your presence with singing and everlasting joy. Lord, You know I don't sing perfectly, so look into my heart and accept my gratitude and praise as the worship I bring to You. Amen.

[12]"I, the LORD, comfort you. So why do
you fear mere humans? They will dry up
like grass. [13]Why have you forgotten Me,
the LORD, who made you and the heav-
ens and the earth. Every day you lived in
fear of those who in their anger wanted to
destroy you. But where are they now? {60
Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[14]Prisoners will soon be set free. They
won't die in dungeons, and they will no
longer be hungry. [15]I am the LORD your
God. I, the LORD of the Heavens, cause
ocean waves to roar. [16]I have told you what
to say, and you are safe in My hand. I set all
the stars in place and I created the earth,

and I say to Israel 'You are mine.'" {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
17Wake up, Jerusalem. You have drunk from the cup of the LORD's anger, swallowing every drop. And you can't even walk straight. 18No one of your many children can guide you or help you. 19You have experienced death by famine and by the sword, and how can I comfort you? 20On every street corner your children have fainted and lie in the streets, helpless as a deer caught in a net. The LORD is angry with you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
21"You people who are in a stupor from troubles, but not from drinking, 22hear what I, the Sovereign LORD, your Defender, say, 'I am taking from you the cup of My wrath. You will never be forced to drink from it again. 23I will give the cup of My wrath to your tormentors who wanted you to lie down, so they could walk over you and trample on your backs.'"

Isaiah 52

The Watchmen's Response

1"Wake up, O Zion, and be strong. Dress in your best clothes, Jerusalem, the holy city. Foreigners who ruined your city will never enter your city again. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 2Rise from the dust, Jerusalem, and free yourself, from the chains of slavery around your neck. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} 3The LORD also said, "You were sold, but not for money, and you will be freed without any payment. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 4Many years ago you went to Egypt where you lived. Then Assyria oppressed the Egyptians. 5Now why are My people slaves again? And those who rule over them mock them and they curse My name. 6My people, you will know who I am because I am the one who said this would happen.
7"How wonderful are messengers who bring the good news that you are saved and that I, God, reign." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

This chapter predicts the messengers of the LORD who will go into all the world to carry out the Great Commission given by Jesus. Paul quotes Isaiah 52:7 and applies it to missionary evangelism, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things" (Rom. 10:15, KJV). Lord, I want beautiful feet. When I tell someone about Jesus, may that new convert say my feet are beautiful because I brought them the message of salvation. Also Lord, I want You to say my feet are beautiful because I was a soul winner. And just as I polish my shoes on earth to be attractive, may I polish my spiritual shoes and make my feet potentially beautiful by prayer, Bible preparation, holy living, and instant obedience. Amen.

8"You watchmen, sing and shout because they will see Me returning with people to Zion. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 9May the ruins of Jerusalem sing because I the LORD comfort My people and rescue them. 10I will show the nations My great

strength, and everyone will see My saving power. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
[11]"Leave Babylon and don't touch any unclean thing there. Purify yourselves when you carry home My sacred vessels." {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Isaiah exhorts the servants of God, "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD" (52:11, KJV). God wants us to be holy because we have a message that is holy. Lord, cleanse me from sin (1 John 1:9). I will separate myself from everything that I know is sin. I want to be pure so You will use me. Amen.

[12]"You won't need to hurry, because I, the LORD, will lead you and protect you from behind. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[13]"My servant will succeed. He will be highly honored. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [14]Yet many were amazed when they saw him so disfigured that he didn't even look human. [15]He will provide cleansing from sin for many people. Even kings will be silent before him because they will see and hear things they've never seen or heard before." {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4}

Isaiah 53

God's Anointed Suffers

[1]Has anyone believed our message about God's great power? [2]My servant was like a young plant or a root sprouting out of dry ground. He was not handsome looking to make us interested in Him. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [3]In fact He was hated and rejected. He experienced sorrow and suffering. People didn't even want to look at Him. They detested Him and didn't appreciate Him at all. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}
[4]Yet He carried the illness of our souls, and He was burdened down with our grief. People thought He was being punished for His own sins. [5]But He was wounded because of our rebellion and crushed because of our sins. He took the punishment we deserved, but it brought us peace, and amazingly, His wounds healed us. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
[6]We are all like sheep getting off the path and going where we want to go. But the LORD punished Him for our sins, not His. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
[7]Though He was abused and treated cruelly, He didn't say a thing. Like a lamb being quiet when it is slaughtered or a sheep being silent when it is having its wool cut off, so He did not say a word. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [8]After being abused and sentenced to die, He was taken away to His death. Few people realized He was dying for their sins. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} He was killed because of their rebellion. [9]He was buried like a criminal but in a rich man's grave. Yet He never did anything wrong and never deceived anyone. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}
[10]The LORD's plan was to crush Him and cause Him to suffer as a sacrifice for sins. {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} He will live to see many

offspring who will believe in Him, and He will live forever. He will be blessed because He followed the LORD's plan. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [11]After His extensive suffering He will be satisfied. Because He was punished for our sins, He will declare righteous many who will believe. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [12]Because He willingly sacrificed His life, the LORD will honor Him like a general receiving loot after a battle. People thought He was a sinner, but He was suffering for their sins not His. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} And He is now praying for them. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

The passage on Christ suffering extends from 52:13 to 53:12. Christ is called "My Servant" who sprinkles—purifies—many Gentile people (52:13, KJV). Thank You, Christ, for Your purity so You could purify many, including me. Amen.

Christ's suffering was so extreme that His face was marred (disfigured) so that He was unrecognizable. Christ, thank You for suffering for me. Amen.

Christ shall "grow up" from the line of David, that is, a "root out of a dry ground" (53:2, KJV). Christ, thank You for Your perfect earthly life, You came from the line of David. Amen.

Christ did not have beauty and "no form nor comeliness" (53:2, KJV). This doesn't mean He was ugly or homely, but that He was a common man, not regal like a king. Christ, thank You for becoming common for me. Amen.

Christ was "despised" and "rejected" and suffered "grief" (53:3, KJV). Christ, when the world turned its back on You, I turn to You in worship. Amen.

The idea of substitution is introduced because Christ has "borne our grief" (53:4, KJV). Thank You, Christ, for taking my place. Amen.

Christ was wounded (pierced through) for our transgressions (53:5), a picture of His substitution in our place. Christ, thank You for taking my punishment. Amen.

We like sheep have gone astray into sin, but the Father put our "iniquity" on Christ (53:6, KJV). Christ, thank You for taking my place in punishment. Amen.

Christ became like us. He became a substitutionary sheep, taking our punishment for our sin, and "He opened not His mouth" (53:7, KJV). Christ, thank You for Your willingness to die for me. Amen.

Christ was "cut off" and "taken from prison" (53:8, KJV) where He was tried and no guilt was found in Him. Lord, I know You were innocent; I'm glad the records show the same thing. You, the innocent, suffered for me the guilty. Amen.

Christ was taken from "the land of the living," He died. Then "He made His grave with the wicked" (53:8-9, KJV). Christ, I am overwhelmed that You died for my sin and were buried. Amen.

How could the LORD be pleased "to bruise Him?" This is not the Father's pleasure, but the wrath of God against all my sin was satisfied or propitiated (53:10, KJV; 1 John 2:1-2). The Father saw and was "satisfied" (53:11, KJV). Christ, Your death took away all God's judgment against me. Amen.

The chapter ends in the glorification and exaltation of Christ. The Father "divides Him a portion with the great" (53:12). Christ, because You were raised and exalted to Thy Father's right hand, I too have been raised in You and am seated at the Father's right hand (Eph. 2:5-7). Amen.

Isaiah 54

Zion's Song of Joy

1"Sing and shout, barren woman. Even though you have never had children, you will now have more children than anyone else. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 2Enlarge your tent by stretching the curtain wider, and fasten the tent pegs firmly. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} 3You and your descendants will take over the land of other nations and settle in towns that are in ruins.

4"Don't be afraid. You will no longer be ashamed, dishonored, or humiliated. You won't remember the sins of your youth or the shame of being a widow. 5I am your husband, I, the LORD of the Heavens, am your Creator, the Holy One of Israel, {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} who will rescue you. I am the God of the whole world."

Isaiah appeals to us to use our faith to believe God for big things, and to work hard to do more for God than we've ever done before. "Enlarge the place of your tent, and let them stretch out the curtains of your dwellings; do not spare; lengthen your cords, and strengthen your stakes" (54:2, KJV). Lord, sometimes I don't have enough faith to get a bigger tent, and I'm afraid to try to get a bigger piece of ground. Lord, sometimes I hang on to the rope, rather than casting it out to those who are drowning. Lord, I don't drive stakes into the ground, I hide them. Forgive me for my lack of faith. "I believe, help thou mine unbelief" (Mark 9:24, KJV). Amen.

6"I, the LORD, will take you back, you who were a young wife divorced by her husband. True, I rejected you, but now I'm bringing you back with tender love. 7In anger I turned from you for a short while, but now I have mercy and tender love for you forever," says the LORD, who rescues you.

8"In anger I turned from you, but now I, the LORD, who rescues you, will have loyal and tender love for you forever. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 9I promised Noah I would never again destroy the earth with a flood. So now I promise that I will never again get angry and scold you. 10Mountains and hills may be shaken, but My tender love for you won't be shaken. As I promised, I will give you peace. I, the LORD, have tender love for you. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

11"Jerusalem, your troubles are like your being tossed in a storm, and no one comforts you. But I will rebuild your city on foundations of precious stones. 12Your defense towers will be built of rubies, your city gates with jewels, and your walls with precious stones. 13I will teach your children, and they will enjoy peace. 14Your city

will be known for right living, and you will have nothing to fear. [15]I'll never again send any nation to attack you, and you'll defeat whoever attacks you. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

[16]"I created blacksmiths who make weapons over burning coals, and I am the One who caused other nations to cause destruction. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [17]But in the future no blacksmith's weapons will defeat you. And no one's false accusations against you will be a problem. These are the benefits of those who are My servants. Their righteous position is from Me," says the LORD. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

There is a promise of protection to Israel in the future, that we can apply to us in the present; "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper" (54:17, KJV). Just as God will protect Israel in His future kingdom, so God will protect His children today, while not in the same dimension, truly with the same intention. Lord, I know You will protect me from satan's attacks and give me victory. Lord, You can protect me spiritually, so I won't fear the world, the flesh, or the Devil. I may be tortured and martyred, but nothing can take You away from me. Nothing can destroy my soul, because, "Being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ" (Phil. 1:7). Amen.

Isaiah 55

Invitation to Zion and All Nations

[1]"If you are thirsty, come drink water. If you don't have any money, come anyway and eat. You can enjoy wine and milk without paying anything." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Look at the universal invitation to "come" to God. "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters... come ye, buy, and eat" (55:1, KJV). God is looking for those who are not satisfied with this world, He's looking for those who deeply yearn for spiritual meaning. Lord, I want You more than anything this world offers... more than money... more than entertainment... more than thrills. I come just as Jesus said to the fisherman, "Follow me, I will make you" (Mark 1:14). Lord, I'm getting up to come. Lord, I'm moving toward You. Here I come! Amen.

[2]"Why buy food that does you no good? Why work for something that doesn't satisfy? Listen to Me, and I'll help your soul enjoy genuine spiritual food. [3]Listen carefully because this affects your spiritual life. I will make with you an eternal agreement of loyal love that I promised to David. [4]He was a leader and commander of several nations, and he was a witness to them of My plans. [5]You, Israel, will invite nations you haven't known and they will hurry to you because of Me, the LORD your God, the Holy One of Israel, who has blessed you with greatness." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

[6]Turn to the LORD while He can be found, and pray to Him because He is near. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

Every life has open doors and closed doors. Scripture promises and warns in the same breath, "Seek the LORD while He may be found, call upon Him while He is near" (55:6, KJV). Every person has a door of opportunity to come to God, but if he refuses God and chooses sin in a selfish way, there may not be more times when God speaks to him. Lord, I will confess my sin and turn my back on sin, with my face and ears toward You. I want Your intimacy and I need Your guidance. Speak, I'm listening. Direct me, I'm looking for guidance. Amen.

[7]"Wicked people, give up your wicked ways and evil thoughts. If you return to Me, the LORD, I will be merciful and will forgive your sins. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [8]My thoughts and My ways are higher than yours, {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [9]just as the heavens are higher than the earth."

Why do so many people not hear God's voice? For the same reason a thief doesn't look for a policeman. They do not want to know God's ways for their lives. God says, "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways, My ways" (55:8, KJV). God thinks differently about sin than we do. How differently? God answers, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are... My thoughts than your thoughts" (55:9, KJV). Lord, I recognize I think like a fallen human, help me think my thoughts as You think. Help me understand salvation as You planned. Help me walk daily, as You developed a plan for Your followers to follow. Lord, I'm deaf if You don't speak above my hard of hearing. I don't know what to do if You don't speak to me. I'm listening. Amen.

[10]"Rain and snow fall from the sky and water the earth, causing seeds to grow and giving grain to eat. [11]In a similar way My words do what I want them to do. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [12]In the future you will have joy and peace. It will seem as if mountains and hills will sing, and trees will clap. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [13]Pine and myrtle trees will grow where thornbushes grew. This will bring honor to Me, the LORD, and will be an eternal sign of My greatness."

Isaiah 56

The Sabbath

[1]The LORD says, "Be just and fair. I will soon deliver you and everyone will see My saving power. [2]I will bless those who do this consistently and who do not work on the Sabbath and who refuse to sin. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [3]Resident foreigners should not think that I have excluded them, and men unable to become fathers should not call themselves dried-up trees. [4]To them I say, 'Don't work on the Sabbath, and do what pleases Me,

and keep our agreement.' [5]If they do, I will set up a memorial for them in the temple with their names written on it which will be better than having children." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

My name is Elmer Towns. What's yours? Would you like a new name when you get to heaven? Sometimes a name means a new position, or a new relationship, or even a great inheritance. God will give us a new name in glory that means all of the above. Lord, give me the new name in heaven that You want me to have. And with my new name, give me everything that goes with it. Amen.

[6]"Foreign residents who serve, love, and worship Me, and who don't work on the Sabbath, and keep our agreement {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [7]will come to Jerusalem, My holy mountain, and will have joy in My house of prayer. I will accept their offerings, and My house, the temple, will be called a house of prayer for all nations. {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14} [8]I, the Sovereign LORD, will bring back My people with others who have returned. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6}

[9]"Wild animals from the forest come and devour you as victims. [10]Israel's watchmen are blind, and like dogs that don't bark, they are asleep and don't warn My people of coming danger. [11]Yet in another way they are like dogs with greedy appetites, never getting enough. They are like stupid shepherds who are concerned only for themselves and not their sheep. [12]They say, 'Let's get drunk, and tomorrow we'll do the same.'" {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

Isaiah 57

The Righteous Are Rebuked

[1]"Sometimes good people die before their time and no one thinks anything about it. No one understands that God is doing this to keep them from evil.

The LORD talks about our death in this chapter, saying the world doesn't regard the death of His children. This world is not our home, and everything about us is not as important as what we will receive in the next world. Lord, I will not clutch this world to hang on to any wealth, or houses, or belongings I've got. Lord, You've got so much more on the other side of death's river. I'm not anxious to die, but I know there's a better life for me on the other side of the valley of the shadow of death. Amen.

[2]Godly people who die rest in peace. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

You will find on many tombstones the phrase, "Rest in peace." However, only the children of the LORD find rest in death. Lord, thank You for the rest I find in sleep after a hard day of work. In the same way, Lord, I'm looking forward to rest at the end after I've worked hard for You all my life. Amen.

3"You offspring of people who practice witchcraft, you sons and daughters of adulterers and prostitutes, 4who are you making fun of and who are you scoffing, and at whom are you sticking out your tongues? You are a bunch of rebels, offspring of liars. 5You are filled with rust as you worship your idols under every green tree. And you sacrifice your children in valleys and under overhanging rocks. 6Your gods are nothing but smooth stones in the valleys. You pour drink offerings to them and give them grain offerings. Does all this make Me happy?

7"You committed adultery on high mountains where you sacrificed to your idols. 8You have placed pagan symbols behind your doors and on your doorposts. You have forsaken Me and then got in your bed and committed adultery. 9You worshiped the Ammonite god Molech with lots of olive oil and perfumes. Some of your people died who went too far away to worship Molech. 10You got tired but you didn't give up. You gained strength and didn't quit. {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1}

11"Have you been unfaithful to Me because you are afraid of someone? Has My long silence kept you from reverencing Me? 12I will show you that your so-called good deeds will do you no good. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 13When you have problems, ask your idols to help you. The wind or someone's breath can blow them away. But the person who trusts in Me will inherit the land and My holy mountain, Jerusalem."

14The LORD, also says, "Clean the road and remove any obstacles so My people, can return from captivity. 15I, the exalted and Holy One, live forever in heaven, but also with those who are sorrowful and humble. I will refresh the humble and revive the sorrowful." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

God is looking for humility in our life. God says... "I dwell with him... who has a contrite and humble spirit" (57:15, NKJV). Lord, I'm overwhelmed that You—the God of heaven—would come to abide in me and let me abide in You (John 14:20). You never cease to amaze me and humble me. I praise You for Your nearness. Amen.

16"I won't keep on accusing you, My people, and I won't always be angry with you because that would discourage you whom I have created.

17"I was angry because of your greed, and even though I punished you and didn't show My anger, you kept on sinning. 18I know what you are like, but I will heal you anyway. I will guide you, and comfort you 19and help you who are mourning to start singing praise to Me. I will heal them and give them peace. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 20But the wicked are like the sea with waves that never stop and that toss up mud. 21I say there is no peace for them." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Isaiah 58

Fasting

[1]"Shout aloud like a trumpet blast. Tell My people, Israel, they have sinned by rebelling against Me. [2]Every day you seem interested in seeking Me and knowing My ways and doing what is right by obeying My commands. And you seem eager for justice and for Me to be near you. [3]Yet when you go without food {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and belittle yourselves, you wonder why I haven't noticed. Here's why: While you are going without food, you do as you please and you take advantage of your workers. [4]And often going without food you quarrel and fight with each other. So how can you expect Me to answer your prayers? [5]Do you think I want you to give up eating {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} just so you look like a bush that's bent over? And does your giving up food involve nothing more than putting on burlap clothing and lying in ashes? Do you think that is all I want from you?" {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

My bestselling book, Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough, is based on this chapter. Isaiah tells nine different results of fasting and I've given names to each result and how to fast to get those results. They are these:

First, the Disciple's Fast to break addiction or bondage, "Is not this the fast... to loose the bands of wickedness" (58:6, KJV)? Lord, I will discipline my appetite to find freedom over anything that has me captive to sin. Amen.

Second, the Ezra Fast to solve problems, "Is not this the fast... to undo the heavy burdens" (58:6, KJV)? Lord, give me wisdom to solve my problems as I fast and pray. Amen.

Third, the Samuel Fast for revival and evangelism. "Is not this the fast... to let the oppressed go free" (58:6, KJV)? Lord, I abstain from food and pray for revival in my life and ministry, and for people to get saved. Amen.

Fourth, the Elijah Fast to break bad habits and thought patterns, "Is not this the fast... that ye break every yoke" (58:6, KJV)? Lord, I take control of my spirit in prayer; help me control my body and mind. Amen.

Fifth, the Widow's Fast, to give my money for the homeless, hungry, and needy. "Is not this the fast... to deal thy bread to the hungry... bring the poor... to thy house... the naked, that thou cover them" (58:6-7, KJV)? Lord, I will sacrifice and fast for the poor, the hungry, the homeless, and the destitute. Amen.

Sixth, the St. Paul Fast, to gain "spiritual light" to make correct decisions. "Is not this the fast... thy light shall break forth" (58:6, 8, KJV)? Lord, I will fast to find Your truth so I can make better decisions. Amen.

Seventh, the Daniel Fast for health and healing, "Is not this the fast... (so) thine health shall spring forth speedily" (58:6, 8, KJV)? Lord, I fast from food and drink that would harm my health, and I will pray when I need healing. Amen.

Eighth, the John the Baptist Fast, for a good testimony to others. "Is not this the fast... and thy righteousness shall go before thee" (58:6, 8, KJV)? Lord, I have no righteousness in my life and works. Lord, I only have the righteousness of Jesus Christ who justified

me. May Christ in me be a testimony to the world and may they see what Christ has done for me. Amen.
Ninth, the Esther Fast of Spiritual Warfare, for protection from satan. "Is not this the fast... (that) the glory of the LORD shall be thy rear guard" (58:6, 8)? Lord, I fast and pray for spiritual protection from the enemy. Amen.

6"Here's what I prefer as you go without food: Set free the people who have been put in prison unfairly, {119 Disciple Fast and Prayer, Matt. 17:21} free those who have been abused, and set those free who have been mistreated. 7Also share food with those who are hungry, share your home with poor homeless people, provide clothing for those in need, and help your relatives when they are in need. {532 Widow's Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:7} 8When you do these things, I will shed My light, {414 Saint Paul Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8} My protection, on you, and I will heal you. {98 Daniel Fast and Prayer, Dan. 1:8} And I, your righteous One, will lead you, {265 John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8} and My glory will protect you from behind. {144 Esther Fast and Prayer, Est. 4:16} 9When you ask Me for help, I will answer you, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} and I will say, 'Here I am.'
If you avoid mistreating others and falsely accusing them, 10and if you give food to the hungry and help mistreated people, then your light will shine brightly (I will bless you). {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 11I will always guide you and give you strength in the desert. You will be like a well-watered garden and a spring that never seems dry. 12You will rebuild homes that are in ruins, and you will be known as the Repairman of Broken Walls and the Repairman of City Streets. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
13"Don't work or eat on the Sabbath, and don't do whatever you please on the Sabbath. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Call the Sabbath a delight and honor the Lord's Day. Stop doing or saying whatever you please on the Sabbath. 14If you do these things, then I will be your delight and joy, {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} and you will have spiritual blessings by riding on the highest mountains and you will enjoy the blessings I promised to Jacob by feasting on your inheritance."

Isaiah 59

A Deliverer Promised

1"I, the LORD, am not too weak to save you, and I can still hear your prayers. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 2But your sins have come between you and Me {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7} and have caused Me to turn from you. {324 Non-Answer to Prayer, Ps. 18:41} 3Your hands are covered with blood and you have been telling lies and mentioning wicked things. 4Not one of you is interested in being fair and honest. You tell lies, and you think up trouble and carry it out. 5Your actions are like snakes hatching poisonous eggs or like a spider spinning a web to catch insects. 6But you can't make

clothes from those cobwebs. Your actions are all sinful and violent.
7"You are quick to sin and to murder innocent people. All you think about is sin, and you ruin and destroy others. 8You don't know what peace is or what it means to be fair. Everything you do is sinful, like going down a crooked road, and people who follow you on that road have no peace. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
9"You are so unfair and unrighteous that it is like you are walking in darkness, not light. 10You feel your way like a blind person, and you stumble at noon as if it were nighttime. You are as blind as a dead person. 11You growl like bears and mourn like doves, hoping for justice and victory, but there isn't any." {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22}
12We know our sins are many {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} and they condemn us. We admit we have sinned. 13We have rebelled against You, LORD, and have turned away from You. We have treated people harshly and revolted against You, telling lies. 14Fairness and justice are far off. Truth stumbles in the streets, and honesty is nowhere around. 15Truth can't be found, and anyone who rejects evil is attacked. "When I, the LORD, saw there was no justice, I was disappointed. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 16And I was amazed that no one was doing anything about it. So I decided I had to do something about it to bring victory and justice."

God asks why "there was no intercessor" (59:16, KJV)? LORD, I step forward to intercede for lost men and women. I will pray for their salvation. Amen.

17"I put on justice as my body armor and the helmet of salvation on My head. I put on the clothes of vengeance and godly anger.
18"I in My anger will do to My enemies near and far what they have done to My people. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 19Then people in both the east and the west will reverence Me and glorify Me. I will come against My enemies like a flood driven by My Spirit. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1}
20I will rescue Zion and Jacob's descendants who turn from their sins. 21I promise to give you My Spirit, and you and your children and grandchildren will obey My words forever, I, the LORD, have spoken these words." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

Isaiah 60

God's Future Blessing

1"Jerusalem, stand up and shine. Blessings are coming to you, and My glory will shine on you. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}
2Darkness covers the earth and everyone on it, but My glory is over you. 3Nations and kings will come to your light." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Because God's glory has come into our life, we have a new inner transformation from God. Isaiah tells us, "Arise, shine; for thy light is come, and the glory of the LORD is risen upon thee" (60:1, KJV). Lord, You

tell me I have light, "thy light." It is a result of Your indwelling. The only light I have is Christ, the light of the world. I will shine Your glory into the life of my friends and relatives, both saved and unsaved. Enlighten them until they get Your light. Amen.

4"Open your eyes and look around. Everyone is returning home. Your sons and daughters are coming from distant lands. 5When you see them, your faces will shine with joy and your heart will pound with excitement. Merchants from around the world will bring riches to you from many nations. 6Camel caravans will come to you from many places as far away as Arabia; some as far away as Midian and Ephah and they'll bring you gold and incense from Sheba to praise Me, the LORD. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 7Flocks of sheep from Kedar and rams from Nebaioth will be brought to you. They will be given as offerings to Me, and with them I will honor My temple.

8"Who is sailing along like clouds and is flying to their nests like doves? 9They are the ships of Tarshish that are bringing the people of Israel home with silver and gold, which will honor Me, the Holy One of Israel, and you, My people. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

10"Foreigners will come and rebuild your city walls, and even kings of other nations will help. In My anger I punished you, but I will now show you tender love. 11You will be so safe that you will never need to shut your gates. And kings of nations will lead their people to you with their many treasures. 12But any nation that refuses to serve you will be punished. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 13Lumber from Lebanon's pine trees, fir trees, and cypress trees will be brought to you to adorn My temple, the place of My throne. 14Descendants of people who mistreated you and hated you will bow at your feet, and they will say that you, Jerusalem, are My city, Zion, the Holy One of Israel. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

15"People hated and rejected you, and they did not travel to your city. But people of all future generations will be proud of you and glad for you. 16Just as a nursing child gets nourishment from its mother, so you will be nourished by the wealth of foreign nations. This will help you see that I, the LORD, am the one who saved and rescues you, that I am the Mighty One of Israel. 17I will see that they bring you gold and silver, not bronze, wood, stones, or iron. Your "leaders" will be peace and justice. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 18Violence, ruin, and destruction will be gone, and instead you will name your walls 'Victory' and your gates 'Praise.' {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

19"You won't need the light of the sun or the moon because I, the LORD your God, will be your light and will honor you. 20The sun will never set again and the moon will never go down again, because I will light your way forever and your days of sorrow will end. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 21Then your people will live right and you will always own your land. You are like plants I have planted so

you can honor Me. [22]The smallest group of you will be a great nation. I am the LORD, and when the time comes I will do all this quickly." {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

It seems that we Christians are always in the minority. Yet the LORD has promised us, "A little one shall become a thousand" (60:22, KJV). Lord, I look forward to the day when there shall be an abundance of Your followers everywhere. I want all people saved. Lord, I pray for that day. Amen.

Isaiah 61

The Redeemer Blesses

[1]"The Spirit of the Sovereign LORD is on me. He has appointed me to bring good news to those who are suffering, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} to comfort the brokenhearted, and to announce that prisoners will be freed. [2]He also sent Me to tell those who mourn and grieve that the year is coming when He will be kind to them and will punish our enemies." {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4}

When Jesus Christ returned to the synagogue at Nazareth (His boyhood home) to preach, He read the scroll from Isaiah 61:1-2. Notice Jesus didn't include the very last statement of the prediction: "And the day of vengeance of our God" (61:2). That's because what He read related to His first coming and what He left out related to His second coming. LORD Jesus, I'm glad You interpreted the Scriptures correctly. Thank You for the Old Testament predictions of Your first coming that give me confidence in Scripture because they were fulfilled accurately. The predictions of Your second coming motivate me to live godly and anticipate Your return. Amen.

[3]"To those who mourn in Zion He will give beauty in place of ashes, joy in place of mourning, and praise in place of despair. They will be like trees the LORD planted for His honor." {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

The LORD promises "beauty for ashes" (61:3). Our rebellious sin is nothing more than ashes. Every selfish ambition is burned to ashes. But when we turn our lives over to Jesus, He transforms everything we give to Him. Only Jesus can take ashes and turn them into something beautiful. Lord, I give my successes and failures to You. Forgive me all my sin. Give me a new nature and a new purpose in life. Give me beauty for ashes. Make something beautiful out of my life. Amen.

[4]"You, My people will rebuild cities that have been in ruins and desolate for generations. [5]Foreigners will tend sheep and care for crops and vineyards. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [6]But you will be the LORD's priests {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} and servants, and you will enjoy the riches of nations.

[7]"In place of your shame and disgrace you, like a firstborn son, will receive double

honor and inheritance, and you will be joyful forever. [8]I, the LORD, love justice, and I hate robbery and injustice. I will reward you with an eternal promise. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [9]Your descendants will be known everywhere, and everyone who sees you will realize I have blessed you." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[10]I, Isaiah, greatly love You, LORD, and I'm happy because of you. Your giving me victory and justice is like wearing nice clothes, or like a groom wearing a headgear or a bride wearing her jewels. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [11]Just as seeds grow in a garden, so You, the Sovereign LORD will cause nations to exercise justice and give praise to You. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Isaiah 62

Watchmen Called to Be Awake

[1]"I will speak for you, Jerusalem {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} so that your justice will shine and your victory will be bright like a flame. [2]Then the nation will see how upright I am and kings will see My greatness. [3]You, Jerusalem, will be a great, royal crown in My hand." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

The LORD says that Jerusalem will bring glory to Him. "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the LORD" (62:3, KJV). Lord, I know You love Jerusalem and it brings glory to You. I also want to glorify You in my life and through my service. May everything I do glorify You. Amen.

[4]You will be called Hephzibah (meaning "My Delight Is in Her") and your land will be called Beulah (meaning "Married"). (This is because I, the LORD will be married to you and will delight in You.) These names will replace your present names of Deserted and Desolate. [5]Your children will care for you, just as a young man cares for his bride. I'll rejoice over you as a groom rejoices over his bride.

[6]"Jerusalem, I, the LORD, have posted watchmen on your walls. They will speak out day and night for Me to fulfill My promises [7]and to give you no rest till I make you strong and make people everywhere praise Me. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [8]I, the LORD, have given My Word and have promised never again to let our enemies eat your grain and crops and to drink your new wine. [9]Instead those of you who harvest your crops will eat them and praise Me and those who drink My wine will be glad in the temple courtyard. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[10]"Jerusalem, open your gates so people can enter. Remove stones from the highway, and raise your flag for nations to see. [11]I, the LORD, have announced to everyone, 'I, your Deliverer, Jerusalem, am coming to reward those who love Me and punish those who don't.' {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [12]My people will be called 'the Holy People, the People He has Rescued, the City People Desire, and

the City No Longer Deserted.'" {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

Isaiah 63

God's Mercy to Believers

[1]Who is this coming from Bozrah in Edom with his cloths stained red? Who is this in his royal robes marching in His strength? {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}
[2]"It is I, the LORD. I am upright and I will rescue you. Why are your clothes red? They look as if you've been treading on grapes. [3]I stomped on the grapes alone, and no nation helped Me. In My anger I stomped on the nations and my clothing got stained with their blood. [4]I was taking revenge on My enemies and it was time to rescue My people. [5]No one helped Me, and I was amazed that no one gave me any support. But I gained victory by Myself even though I was angry. [6]I trampled on nations in My anger and made them drunk, and their blood spilled on the ground." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

This chapter begins by asking a question, "Who is this that cometh from Edom?" (63:1, KJV). Remember Edomites were descendants of Esau; they hated Jacob and rebelled against God. Edom is representative of all those tribe-nations that hate Israel, and thus they hated the God of Israel. So the one coming from Edom—and Bozrah its capital city—is the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ. He is "red in thine apparel" (63:2, KJV), meaning this is the picture of Jesus' second coming in judgment. "He was clothed with a vesture dipped in blood; and His name is called The Word of God" (Rev. 19:13, KJV). This is Jesus in judgment. Lord, I know You will judge all rebellion and sin. Thank You for judging my sin at Calvary so I don't have to be punished at the end of the age. You are "mighty to save" (63:1, KJV). Amen.

[7] LORD, I will tell of Your many acts of loyal love. You are to be praised for all the good things You have done for Israel in accord with Your tender and loyal love. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [8]You rescued Your people because they are Yours, and they will not be unfaithful to You again. [9]You were concerned because they were distressed, but You rescued them in Your mercy and love, and You sustained them all through many years. [10]But then they turned against You and saddened Your Holy Spirit. So You as their enemy fought against them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[11]Then Your people remembered what happened in Moses' day, when he brought our ancestors through the Red Sea and shepherded them like sheep. You gave them Your Holy Spirit, [12]and Your power strengthened Moses. He became famous when [13]You led Your people through the sea like horses that don't stumble and like cows grazing peacefully. [14]The Holy Spirit gave them rest. By guiding them in this way You became well known. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[15]Look LORD, from Your great and holy throne in heaven. Show us Your concern

and power and your tender love. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} [16]You are our Father, even though Abraham and Jacob didn't know us. As our Father {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} You have rescued us in times past.

Isaiah calls God his Father, "Doubtless You are our father" (63:16). Then he returns to say, "You, O LORD, are our Father" (63:16). Lord, You are my Father, I come to You with my need, just as a child comes to an earthly father with his need. Give me this day my daily bread. Amen.

[17]Why then, do You let us turn from You and let our hearts become stubborn against You? Please return and help us, because we are Your servants who belong to You. [18]For a while Your temple was ours, but then our enemies destroyed it. [19]We have been Yours for centuries, but we sometimes act like You never ruled over us or You never called us Your people. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Isaiah 64

Israel Laments

[1]I, Isaiah, wish You, LORD, would come down from the heavens and shake the mountains. [2]Just as fire burns wood and boils water, so Your enemies will know who You are and will tremble because of You. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [3]You did some amazing things, things we didn't even expect; and even mountains tremble when You reveal Yourself. [4]No one has ever heard or seen any god like You who works for those who trust Him.

[5]You help those who do what is right and who remember and follow You. But when we sinned, you became angry. How then can we be rescued? [6]We are all unclean with sin, {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} and even our good deeds are like filthy rags. We wither and fall like autumn leaves, and our sins are like wind that blows us away.

Isaiah confesses his unworthiness, "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (64:6, KJV). LORD, I agree with Isaiah that any good thing I have done is just "filthy rags." All my righteousness will fade as a leaf and the wind will blow it away. You are my righteousness, You are my reward, You are my perfection. I have nothing but You. Amen.

[7]Not one of us worships You or prays to You. You ignore us, and You let our sins ruin us. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}

[8]You, LORD, are our Father. We are only clay and You are the Potter who shapes us as You wish. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

We must confess with Israel, "We all are the work of Thy hand" (64:8). Lord, work Your beauty in me that I may be beautiful for You. Work Your skill in me that I may serve

You effectively. Work Your faithfulness in me that I may please You. Amen.

9Don't be angry with us, LORD, and don't keep remembering our sins. Please think of us as we pray, because we are Your people. 10Our cities, especially Jerusalem, are desolate like the desert. 11Our holy, wonderful temple where our ancestors worshiped You, has been destroyed by fire, and our beautiful buildings have been ruined. 12After all this, LORD, do You still refuse to help us and to be quiet as You punish us? {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

Isaiah 65

Israel to Be Restored

1The LORD says, "People who never before asked about Me are now seeking Me. My people were not looking for Me, but I told them I am here. 2I held out My hands all day to My stubborn and sinful people who were following their own ideas." {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

God makes a profound statement about the Gentiles, "I was sought by those who did not ask for Me; I was found by those who did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' to a nation that was not called by My name." (65:1, KJV). The Gentiles were not from the root of Abraham, yet they sought salvation. The Jews were called "a rebellious people" (65:2), and "a people who provoke Me" (65:3). So God rejected His people. Then the Gentiles turned to the God of the Jews, and were incorporated into "the body of Christ." Lord, thank You for receiving me and being gracious to me, a Gentile. I have found You and I rejoice in salvation. Amen.

3"They insult Me to My face by offering sacrifices to idols in their sacred gardens and burning incense on brick altars. 4At night they go in the cemeteries and secret places to worship idols. They eat pork, cooked in sauces made of forbidden foods. 5They say to others, 'Keep away from us for we are holier than you.' These people are like smoke that irritates My nostrils, a fire that burns all the time. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

6"All this is written down. I won't keep quiet. I will make them pay 7for their sins and the sins of their ancestors. Because they burned incense on the hills and insulted Me with their idol worship, I will make them pay back for what they have done. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 8If a cluster of grapes has some juice left in it, people don't throw away the grapes. So it is with My people; I won't destroy them all. 9I will keep some of My people to possess the land. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} They will inherit the land and be My servants. 10Sheep will graze in Sharon on the Mediterranean coast, and many herds of cattle will graze in the Achor Valley in the east near Jericho.

11"But if you reject Me and My mountain, and worship the gods of Fate and Destiny, 12then You will be killed by swords. You didn't answer when I called you, and you sinned and did what you know I hate. {268

Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [13]Those who serve Me will eat, but not you; you will be hungry. They will drink, but not you; you will be thirsty. They will be glad, but not you; you will be ashamed. [14]They will sing for joy, but you will cry because of sorrow and pain. [15]Your name will be a curse word among My servants. I will destroy you and give My servants another name. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [16]If you bless someone or make a promise, you must do it in My name, because I am the God of truth. I will forget your past troubles and sins. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

[17]"I will create new heavens and a new earth, and things of the past will be forgotten. [18]Be glad, because I will make Jerusalem a place of joy for My people. [19]I will rejoice for Jerusalem and be glad for My people. There will be no more crying or sorrow in the city. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [20]Infants will not die after living only a few days, and adults will not die young. People who live to be 100 will not be thought of as old. If someone dies younger than that, he'll be considered under a curse.

[21]"People will live in peace in the houses they build, and they will eat grapes from their own vineyards. [22]In the past, enemies destroyed people's houses and took their vineyards. But My people will live to be as old as trees, and will enjoy their work. [23]Their work won't be wasted, and their children won't experience setbacks. That's because I will bless them and their descendants too. [24]When they pray, I will answer before they finish praying. [25]Wolves and lambs will eat together, and lions and oxen will eat straw together. But snakes will eat dirt. And snakes won't bite or hurt anyone on My holy mountain." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Isaiah 66

The New Jerusalem

[1]"Heaven is My throne," the LORD says, "and the earth is My footstool. You could never build Me a temple as good as heaven or a place where I could rest."

God tells all that while we may build a structure to honor Him (tabernacle, Solomon's temple, millennial temple), we may in no way build a house that can contain God. God is immense, "Heaven is My throne" (66:1), so nothing is big enough to contain God. God asks, "Where is the place of My rest?" (66:1). Lord, come dwell in my heart, I want my life to be a living sacrifice for You. I am not perfect, but I will live for You. I am not smart, but I will learn of You. I am not talented, but I will serve You. Use my feeble efforts to glorify You as You live in my body. Amen.

[2]"I made everything and that's how everything came into existence. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} The people I favor are those who are humble and repentant and tremble when I speak."

Who does God accept? "But on this one will I look: on him who is poor and of a contrite spirit, and who trembles at My word"

(66:2). God rejects the sinful, and rebellious, and filthy, but He accepts those who come to Him humbly and meekly. Lord, I come to You knowing I don't deserve Your mercy and grace. I bow in Your presence to worship Your magnitude and kindness. I plead for Your power to help me live holy and without blame. You are everything; I am nothing. Amen.

3"When you sacrifice a bull, that to Me
is like murdering someone. And when
you sacrifice lambs, that's like breaking
a dog's neck. Or when you offer grain to
Me, that's like putting pig's blood on the
altar. When you burn incense, you are
actually worshiping an idol, not Me. These
are your choices in delighting in these dis-
gusting things. 4So I will send trouble on
you, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4,
9} things you have dreaded. You did not
answer when I called you. And you didn't
listen when I spoke. Instead you sinned
before Me and did what you know I hate.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
5"Some of your own relatives hate Me
because you are loyal to Me. {286 Lis-
ten-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} They mock you
and say, 'Let the LORD be honored and
let Him make you happy.' But they will
be ashamed. 6Listen to that noise in the
city and the shouts at the temple. That is
I, the LORD, shouting as I punished My
enemies. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7"Have you ever heard of a woman giving
birth to a child before she has labor pains?
8Who has ever heard of such a thing? Has
a nation ever come into existence in a
single day? But Jerusalem has! She is like
a mother who had her baby as soon as her
labor started. 9I would not bring Israel to
the point of birth and not let her be born.
{74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67;
Matt. 6:9} 10So if you love Jerusalem, {182
Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} then
be glad for her. {396 Rejoicing for Oth-
ers-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} 11She will nurse you,
caring for you, just as a mother nurses her
infant. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb.
13:21}
12"Jerusalem will enjoy peace like a smooth
flowing river and nations will bring their
wealth to her. She will nurse her citizens,
caring for them as a mother carries her
child in her arms and plays with them on
her knees. 13Just as a mother comforts her
child, so I will comfort you. {74 Com-
ing-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
14When you see these things happening,
you will rejoice, and you will be strength-
ened like new sprouting grass. Then you
My servants will know that I have done
this, and you will see My anger against My
enemies. 15I will come with fire, and My
chariots will be swift and destructive like
a whirlwind. I will be furious in anger and
I will punish My enemies with fire. 16I will
punish sinners with fire and the sword,
and I will kill many people. {268 Judgmen-
tal-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
17"Some people got themselves ready and
went to a garden to worship idols and to
eat pork, rats, and other forbidden foods.
But I will see that they come to an awful
end. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4,
9} 18Because of their sins, I will gather all
nations together, and they will see My

glory. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]I will send survivors as messengers to the nations—to Tarshish, Libya, Lydians, who are famous as archers, Tubal, Greece, and distant lands. The survivors will tell them of My glory. [20]They will bring My people from every nation to Jerusalem as an offering to Me, and they will come on horses, mules, camels, and in chariots. They will be like people who bring grain offerings to the temple. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [21]I will make some of those who return priests and Levites. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

[22]"You will always have descendants just as the new heavens and new earth will last forever. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [23]On the first day of every month and on each Sabbath everyone will worship Me. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [24]They will see the dead bodies of those who turned against Me. The worms that feed on them will never die, and the fire that is burning their bodies will never go out. And everyone who sees these bodies will be horrified." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Jeremiah

Ch 1: The Lord Calls Jeremiah 1040
Ch 2: Israel Abandons God 1042
Ch 3: The Unfaithfulness of Israel 1044
Ch 4: Return to God 1045
Ch 5: The Rebellion of Jerusalem 1047
Ch 6: Enemies Surround Jerusalem 1049
Ch 7: The Lord Speaks to Jeremiah 1051
Ch 8: The Word of the Lord Is Rejected 1052
Ch 9: Jeremiah Laments the Sins of the People . 1054
Ch 10: Listen to God, Not to Idols 1055
Ch 11: God's Covenant with His People 1057
Ch 12: Jeremiah Complains to the Lord 1058
Ch 13: The Linen Belt 1060
Ch 14: Drought, Sword, and Famine 1061
Ch 15: The Lord Is Angry with His People 1062
Ch 16: The Lord's Judgment 1064
Ch 17: The Lord's Judgment (continued) 1065
Ch 18: The Potter and the Clay 1067
Ch 19: The Broken Jar 1068
Ch 20: Pashhur the Priest Is Judged 1069
Ch 21: The Way of Life and the Way of Death 1070
Ch 22: A Message to the Kings of Judah 1071
Ch 23: The Righteous Remnant Will Return 1073

Ch 24: Good Figs and Bad Figs 1075
Ch 25: Seventy Years of Destruction 1076
Ch 26: Jeremiah Is Threatened with Death 1078
Ch 27: Do Not Listen to False Prophets 1080
Ch 28: Jeremiah and the False Prophet Hananiah 1081
Ch 29: A Letter from Jeremiah to the Exiles 1082
Ch 30: Israel and Judah Will Be Restored 1084
Ch 31: The Return of God's People 1085
Ch 32: Jeremiah Buys a Field in Anathoth 1088
Ch 33: Hope for God's People 1090
Ch 34: Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah 1091
Ch 35: The Recharbites Used as an Example of Obedience 1092
Ch 36: King Jehoiakim Burns the Scroll 1094
Ch 37: Jeremiah Is Sent to Prison 1095
Ch 38: Jeremiah Is Rescued from the Dungeon .. 1096
Ch 39: Jerusalem Falls 1098
Ch 40: Jeremiah Is Freed 1099
Ch 41: Jeremiah Freed 1100
Ch 42: Jeremiah Prays to God for the People 1102
Ch 43: The People Do Not Listen to Jeremiah 1103
Ch 44: Jeremiah Speaks to the Jews in Egypt 1104
Ch 45: Jeremiah Speaks to Baruch 1106
Ch 46: Jeremiah Speaks about Egypt 1106

Ch 47: Jeremiah Speaks about the Philistines.... 1108
Ch 48: Jeremiah Speaks About the Destruction of Moab 1108
Ch 49: Jeremiah Speaks a Prophetic Judgment against the Ammonites..... 1110
Ch 50: Jeremiah Speaks about Babylon..... 1112
Ch 51: God's Judgment against Babylon..... 1115
Ch 52: Rule of King Zedekiah 1118

JEREMIAH

Key Words: *The Word of the LORD Came (Jeremiah 1:4)*

Key Verse: "Then the word of the LORD came unto me, saying, 'Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations'" (1:4-5).

Theme: Jeremiah came from a priestly family living in Anathoth near Jerusalem. He wrote the longest book in the Bible, and his career spanned more than 40 years—during the reigns of Judah's last five kings. Jeremiah was called by God as a young man, and throughout his long turbulent life, he confronted a people who had rejected God's commands and deliberately chose false gods. He warned them of their eventual destruction. Nevertheless God's people refused to repent, so Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed in 586 B.C., and they were deported to Babylon.

In Jeremiah's famous "Temple Sermon," he had told the people that the temple would be destroyed and for that he nearly lost his life. Thereafter Jeremiah was considered as a traitor and was arrested and jailed.

When the city of Jerusalem fell, Jeremiah was given the privilege of remaining in Judah. He wanted to stay in the Holy Land, but renegade Jews forced him to go to Egypt where tradition has it that he died.

Jeremiah was known as the weeping prophet because his burden was so heavy. The Jews would not listen to him and they opposed him and tried to kill him, leading him to periods of deep depression. His was an example of total faithfulness to God, regardless of failure or circumstances. *Lord, may I be as faithful to You as was Jeremiah when rejected by an unsaved world. Amen.*

Jeremiah 1

The Lord Calls Jeremiah

1 I am Jeremiah, son of Hilkiah, a priest from Anathoth in the tribe of Benjamin. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2 The LORD first gave messages to me in the 13th year of King Josiah's reign in Judah (627 B.C.), 3 and other messages in the reign of Josiah's son, Jehoiakim, and in the reign of Josiah's other son, Zedekiah, when the people

of Jerusalem were taken away as captives in August of 586 B.C. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
4The LORD said to me, "Jeremiah, 5before you were born, I chose you to speak for Me to the nations." {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}

Too often we think life began when we were born, but God had a plan for our lives even before we were conceived in our mother's womb. God is not limited by time. He stands above time and prepares us for His purpose within our limited time. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Lord, I yield to Your divine purpose for my life, and I pray I may find what You want me to do in life and faithfully do it. Amen.

6I said, "But, Sovereign LORD, I can't do that. I'm too young." {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18} 7Then the LORD said, "No, you aren't too young. You must go wherever I send you and say whatever I tell you. 8You don't need to be afraid, because I'll be with you and keep you safe." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
9The LORD touched my mouth and said, "I'll give you the words to say, 10and I'm sending you to speak to the nations to tell them they will be destroyed and then rebuilt." {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

Most of us feel overwhelmed when God calls us to serve Him. We cry out with Jeremiah, "I am only a child." But that's the starting point of success, it's "not I, but Christ." {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} Lord, I can't do what You call me to do. Give me wisdom I don't have, give me strength when I'm weak. Help me make right decisions, and give me courage {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} to never quit. Amen.

11What do you see, Jeremiah?" I said, "I see an almond tree branch." 12The LORD said to me, "Correct. Like the almond, which means 'watchful,' I am watching over my Word to do what I say." {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} 13Again when the LORD asked me what I saw, I said, "I see a boiling pot in the north." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14Then He said, "Calamity will come from the north on everyone. 15I'll lead all nations north of you to approach the gates and walls of Jerusalem and all the cities of Judah. 16But I'll punish them for their sin {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} of forsaking Me and offering sacrifices to idols. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 17So be alert, Jeremiah, and speak what I tell you to say. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} And don't be discouraged. 18I've made you like a strong city with an iron column and bronze walls. And you will oppose everyone in Judah, including their leaders and priests. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 19These leaders will oppose you, but they won't succeed because I'll keep you safe." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Does God have an extremely difficult job for you? {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark

11:23, 24} Jeremiah's job was not only difficult; it would prove to be lonely and overwhelming. Yet God promised, "They will not defeat you." Some will have jobs where they win. Others may lose the battle and apparently lose everything on earth. But if you do God's task you will win, no matter the outcome. Lord, I don't want to be successful; I want to be faithful. I will speak what You tell me to say. I will go where You send me. I will be what You want me to be. Amen.

Jeremiah 2

Israel Abandons God

[1]The LORD told me [2]to go to Jerusalem and tell everyone these words: "I remember how as a young bride you loved Me and followed Me even in the desert.

Throughout, Jeremiah kept saying, "The LORD spoke His Word to me." He probably heard the audible Word of God, but you have the written Word of God available to you. Lord, thank You for speaking to me through Your written Word. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} I will study carefully to know what You said, I will obey carefully to please You. Amen.

[3]"You were Mine completely, like the first fruits of a harvest, and I punished anyone who mistreated you. I, the LORD, have spoken." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

[4]Listen, Israel, [5]to what the LORD says. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} "What fault did your ancestors find in Me {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} that led them to leave Me and become foolish by worshiping foolish idols? [6]You didn't ask Me for help though I had rescued you from Egypt {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} and led you through the desert, a dry, dark land where no one travels or lives.

[7]"I brought you here to this fertile land with its abundant food, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} but you ruined My land by your sins. [8]The priests didn't ask about Me, and your prophets and leaders turned from Me. {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} Your prophets gave messages from Baal, and they worshiped foolish idols. [9]So I am bringing a court case against you and your grandchildren. [10]Go to Cypress and the Arabian Desert and see if [11]any nation has ever exchanged its gods for other gods, even though its gods are nothing. But you, My people, have exchanged Me, your glorious God, for worthless idols. [12]The heavens are shocked and horrified that you did this. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[13]"You, My people, have sinned in two ways. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} You have rejected Me, the source of living water, and you have dug cisterns that can't hold water." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}

The Lord is a cool refreshing artesian spring of pure water. When the Lord renews thirst, He is enjoyable (v. 13). But the people drink from cisterns, holes in the ground that store

dirty water, contaminated water, or stale water. Who wants to drink from a hole in the ground when they can drink fresh cool water? Lord, I come to You to drink; I am tired, thirsty, and bored. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} I drink from Your presence, and I renew myself in Your promises. I want to stay in Your presence and not go into a hot dry world. But I have a task to do and I have obligations to fulfill. But I'll be back. I'll return hot, thirsty and famished. Ah, Your water is good. Amen.

14"You weren't born slaves but you have
been captured. 15Enemies roared against
you like lions {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} and now your land is
destroyed and your towns are burned and
empty. 16Soldiers from the Egyptian towns
of Memphis and Tahpanhes removed your
glory, like shaving your head. 17This all
happened because you rejected Me. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18So why did
you go to Egypt and Assyria for water to
drink? {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1,
2} 19You will be punished because of your
sins. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
Think of how evil and bitter it is for you to
reject Me and to have no respect for Me.
{163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
20"Sometime ago I released you from
slavery, and yet you refused to serve Me.
Instead you bowed down to idols on hilltops and under green trees like a prostitute. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James
4:3} 21When I chose you, you were like the
best grapevine. So how did you become a
useless, wild vine? 22You may use a lot of
soap, but that won't get rid of the stain of
your guilt. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor.
2:10}
23"You say, 'We haven't worshiped the
idols of Baal.' But how can you say that?
{159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} You are
like a restless female camel, 24and a wild
desert donkey sniffing the air and wanting
to mate with anyone. Male donkeys can
easily find her. 25So don't keep running
until you wear yourself out. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} You have fallen
in love with gods of other nations and you
insist on going after them.
26"You are like a thief who feels ashamed
when he's caught. This includes your
kings, officials, priests, and prophets.
27You call a wooden idol your father, {159
False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} and you call
an idol made of stone your mother. {510
Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} You have
rejected Me, but when you are in trouble
you want Me to rescue you. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 28Where are
the idols you made? Let them rescue you
when you are in trouble. You have plenty
of idols, as many as your towns. 29You can't
accuse Me of not rescuing you, because
you have rebelled against Me. 30I punished
you, but it didn't do any good. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} You killed your
prophets like a lion killing its prey."
31You people, listen to the LORD's words:
{286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} "Have I
left you in the desert and in darkness? You
are My people, yet you say you will do what
you want. 32Does a young woman forget
her jewelry, or does a bride forget to wear
her wedding ornaments? Yet for many

years you have forgotten Me. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 33You are good at finding lovers; in fact the most experienced prostitute could learn from you. 34Your clothes are stained with the blood of innocent poor people; you killed them even though they didn't break into your houses. Yet 35you still claim to be innocent and that I am not angry with you. Do you think I'm not angry with you? Wrong. I will punish you because you claim you haven't sinned. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 36You keep changing your ways. You went to Assyria for help, and then you went to Egypt. 37You will be led away from Egypt {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} because I have rejected the nations you trusted. Those nations will not be of any help."

Jeremiah 3

The Unfaithfulness of Israel

1"If a divorced woman remarries, her first husband can't marry her again because that would be like making the land unclean. You, Judah, have had many lovers in your worship of idols. But I still plead for you to come back to Me. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 2Look around you and you won't find any place where you haven't worshiped idols. You sit like a prostitute beside the road waiting for a client, and like a nomad in the desert. Your sins have made the land unclean." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

The Lord uses the picture of an unfaithful wife to show His anger to Israel who has been unfaithful to Him by her idol worship (v. 8). The New Testament pictures the church as the bride of Christ who enjoys intimacy with Him. Lord, I will abide in You as You abide in me. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} I love You with all my heart for what You did for me on Calvary. Amen.

3"That's why it hasn't rained. Like a prostitute, you are unashamed. 4You call Me your Father and your friend, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 5thinking I won't be angry with you. But yet you keep right on sinning in the worst possible ways."
6When Josiah was king of Judah, the LORD said to me, "Notice what Israel does. She has committed adultery against Me by worshiping idols on every hilltop and under every green tree. 7I had hoped that she would come back to me, but she didn't. 8So I divorced her. Her sister Judah saw this, but she too became unfaithful and became a prostitute. 9She wasn't concerned about Israel's sin. And so Judah made the land unclean by worshiping idols of wood and stone. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 10Worse than that, Judah has only pretended to return to Me." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}
11Then the LORD said, "True, Israel is unfaithful, but Judah is worse. 12So give this message to Israel: 'Come back to Me, Israel, and I won't be angry anymore, because I am merciful. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 13Admit that you

turned from Me, the LORD your God, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and that you worshiped foreign idols under every green tree and you disobeyed Me.
14Come back to Me because I'm your husband. I will bring you back to your own land—one from this town, two from this clan. 15I will give you leaders who know Me, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and they will lead you wisely.
16Then in those days when you have increased in numbers, you won't miss the sacred chest, which the Babylonians took away. 17Then Jerusalem will be My throne, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and all nations will come here to worship Me, and they will no longer be stubborn in their sins. 18You people of Judah and Israel will again be united, coming back from Babylon in the north to the land I promised your ancestors.' {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
19"'I want to treat you as My own children {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and give you this beautiful land. I wanted you to call me 'Father' and not turn from Me.'"

The second picture of Israel is of unfaithful children who have not obeyed the Lord (v. 25). Lord, You are my heavenly Father and I will obey You in every small detail. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I know I have been born again, and I have a new nature. Thank You for new life and new desires to please You. Amen.

20"'But you have been unfaithful to Me like a wife who is unfaithful to her husband. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. 21On the hilltops you can hear the Israelites weeping and pleading for Me to help them. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} But they have wandered from the right path and have forgotten Me, the LORD their God. 22If your faithless people will come back to Me, I will cure you of your straying from Me.'" {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
"Yes, we will come back to You because You are the LORD our God. 23We realize now that our worship of idols and our loud noises were false, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} and that only You can save us. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
24Since the days of our ancestors these shameful idols have taken our crops and livestock and our children. 25We now lie down ashamed. We admit that we have sinned against You, the LORD our God, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and that like our ancestors we have not obeyed You."

Jeremiah 4

Return to God

1The LORD said, "Okay, return to Me. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} And if you really mean to, then get rid of your terrible idols. 2Make promises in My name. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} Then you will bless the nations {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and they will praise You." {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
3The LORD says to Judah and Jerusalem, "Plow up the hard ground of your hearts,

and don't let your hearts be like land with thornbushes. [4]Dedicate yourselves to Me. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} If you don't, My anger will burn like fire that no one can put out because of all your sins. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [5]Shout to Judah and Jerusalem and sound the trumpet. [6]Tell them to hurry and run for their lives to Zion or any walled town. Why? Because I am bringing terrible destruction from the north. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]An army will come like a lion. As a destroyer of nations it will leave your towns in ruins with no one in them. [8]So put on burlap clothing and mourn because I am still angry with you. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [9]In that day the king and his officials will be discouraged, and priests and prophets will be shocked and frightened."

[10]Then I, Jeremiah, said, "Sovereign LORD, why have you fooled everyone by promising peace {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} when the sword is at our throats?" [11]The LORD answered, "I am sending a windstorm from the desert. But it won't be like a breeze that winnows grain." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah describes the judgment of God as a scorching wind, that is, the Babylonians are a coming windstorm bringing death (vv. 11-13). Remember God is both a windstorm to judge and He is the breath of God to renew. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} Holy Spirit, breathe on me to give me new life. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Lord, breathe on me in love. I repent of all known sin. I will follow You as closely as possible. Breathe on me, breath of God. Fill me with new life. May my desires be Your desires. Amen.

[12]"It will be a strong gust from Me. Now I will announce your destruction. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [13]Look! The enemy sweeps down like heavy rain, and his chariots are swooping down like a whirlwind. Their horses are swifter than eagles. Then you will say, 'How terrible it will be for us. We are doomed.'[14]Jerusalem, cleanse your hearts of your sin and be saved. Don't keep thinking evil thoughts. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [15]Your destruction is being announced as far north as Dan and in the Ephraim hills.

[16]"Tell the nations and Jerusalem that an army is coming from a distant country against Judah. [17]Because you have rebelled against Me, this army will surround you like laborers guarding a field. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[18]"Your own actions have brought this bitter punishment on you, which will pierce your heart. [19]You will say, 'I feel terrible. I'm in great pain. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} My heart pounds, and I can't keep quiet. I hear the trumpet sound and battle cry.'" {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Lord, I know You will judge people because of their sin, but I'm not like Jeremiah. My heart doesn't pound inside me. Forgive me for not being more concerned for lost people.

I don't weep and I don't intercede for them as I should. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Forgive me. Give me a heart like Jeremiah, the weeping prophet. Give me a burden to pray for the lost. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} Amen.

20"One wave of destruction follows
another till the whole land is in ruins.
Tents and shelters are destroyed instantly.
21How long will I see the enemy flags and
hear the trumpet calls to battle? {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} 22My
people are fools; they don't know Me.
They are like foolish children who don't
understand anything. They are good at
sinning, but they have no idea how to do
good." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
23I, Jeremiah, saw that the earth was formless and empty, and that the sun, moon,
and stars did not shine. 24I saw the mountains and hills shaking. 25All the people
were gone, and birds had flown away. 26The
fertile land was a desert, and towns were in
ruins, because of the LORD's anger. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
27The LORD said, "Your land will be in
ruins but not destroyed completely. 28The
earth will mourn {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} as the sky turns black with
smoke. 29I will not go back on what I said.
Hearing many cavalrymen and archers,
your people will hide in bushes and behind
rocks. Every town is empty. 30Jerusalem,
you lie in ruins. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} So why are you acting like a
prostitute, wearing red clothes, putting on
lots of gold jewelry, and using eye shadow?
All this is of no use because your lovers
hate you and plan to kill you."
31I, Jeremiah, hear screaming and groaning
like a woman in labor. This is Jerusalem
gasping for breath, {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} pleading for help, and
saying, "I'm dying. The enemy has murdered me.

Jeremiah 5

The Rebellion of Jerusalem

1The LORD said, "Search in the streets
and squares of Jerusalem for even one person who is honest and wants to know the
truth. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} If you find one, I will forgive
the city."

God challenges Jeremiah to search Jerusalem to see if there are any who search for truth and live honestly, who love their Lord with all their heart. Lord, I will totally commit myself to You, even if no one else does so. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Lord, search my heart to find any disobedience or sin; reveal it to me. I will repent of all sin and I plead the blood of Christ for cleansing from all sin (1 John 1:9). {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I will live honestly and righteously. Amen

2"Many people may make promises, saying, 'As surely as the LORD lives,' and yet
they are lying." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 3I, Jeremiah, said, "LORD, I
know You look for truth. You punished

Your people because they were untruthful, but in spite of their pain, they became more stubborn, refusing to change their ways." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God accuses the people of being "more stubborn than a rock" (v. 3). Lord, I want to have a tender heart toward You. I will read and obey Your Word to make my heart soft toward You. I will pray for lost people and I will yield my heart to You. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Give me a new heart. Amen.

4The LORD, thought, "These are the poor, foolish people who don't know My ways or what I require of them. 5So I will speak to their leaders because they know what I require. But they too decided not to follow Me, as if that would get them out of slavery. 6So your enemies will attack you like a lion from the forest or a wolf from the desert. Like a leopard they will pounce on and tear to pieces anyone who goes outside. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7"People of Judah, why should I forgive you? {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Even your children turned against Me by worshiping gods that are not really gods. I gave you everything you needed, and yet you still committed adultery and went to prostitutes. 8You are like strong stallions, always wanting someone else's wife. 9Obviously I should punish you for this. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
10"Go through your vineyards and damage the grapevines. But don't destroy them. Cut off the branches because you people, like these branches, don't belong to Me. 11Judah and Israel have been so unfaithful to Me. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
12The prophets have lied, saying I won't harm them, and they won't experience war or famine. 13But these prophets are full of wind and are not speaking My words. So they themselves will experience war and famine." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
14Therefore this is what the LORD, the God of the Heavens, says: "Because the people are talking like this, I will give you words to say that will be like a fire burning up these people like wood being burned. 15Israel, I will bring against you a distant and ancient nation, who speak a language you won't understand. 16The arrows of these warriors bring death. 17They will eat your crops, kill your children, eat your livestock, and eat your grapes and figs. You may feel safe in your walled cities, but they will destroy those cities. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
18"Yet I won't let the enemy destroy you completely. 19When your people ask why the LORD has done all this, tell them, 'Since you left Me to serve idols of foreign gods, you will now serve foreigners in their land.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
20The Lord said: 21You foolish people. You have eyes, but you don't see, and you have ears, but you don't listen. 22Why don't you reverence Me {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and tremble in My presence? After all, I'm the one who made the sandy shore to hold back the oceans. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} The

waves may crash against the beach, but they can't cross it. [23]Yet you stubborn people have turned from Me. [24]You don't say, 'Let's reverence the LORD our God. He's the one who sends rain and gives a good harvest for several weeks each year.' [25]But because of your sin I hold off the rain and your harvesting. Your sin has robbed you of these good things. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[26]"Some of you people trap humans like hunters trapping birds. [27]Just as cages are full of birds, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} so your houses are full of deceit. By cheating you have become rich and powerful [28]and well fed. You sinful ways are unlimited. You refuse justice to orphans and the poor. [29]Obviously you deserve to be punished, so I will take revenge. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [30]Think of the shocking things going on in your country. [31]Prophets are telling lies, and priests assume authority that isn't theirs, and you, My people, seem to love it that way. But when disaster comes, what will you do then" {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

Jeremiah 6

Enemies Surround Jerusalem

[1]"You people of Benjamin, run for your lives. Leave Jerusalem. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} Sound an alarm by trumpet in Tekoa, and send a signal over to Beth-Hakkerem. Disaster, even terrible destruction, is coming from the north. [2]I, the LORD, will destroy Zion, My beautiful daughter. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [3]Enemy shepherds will set up their tents around you and divide your pastures for their flocks. [4]The enemy is prepared for battle to attack at noon. But now that the day is fading and evening shadows are extending, [5]the army will attack at night. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[6]The LORD of the Heavens, said to the enemy, "Cut down trees and build ramps up against Jerusalem's walls. This city is to be punished because of her wickedness. [7]She spouts evil like water from a spring. Sounds of violence and destruction are heard in her. And I see her sickness and wounds. [8]Heed my warning, Jerusalem: If you don't, I will make you empty and no one will live there." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God told Israel, "If you don't listen, I will turn my back on you" (v. 8). Have you ever come to that place where God doesn't hear your prayers? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} Maybe God turns a deaf ear toward you because you stopped listening to Him. Why should God listen to you if you don't listen to Him? Lord, forgive me for not reading Your Word more, and forgive me for not meditating on You more. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} I am guilty of not listening to You. Forgive me. I will listen for Your voice speaking to me through Scripture. I will listen for Your still small voice when I pray. Speak, Lord, for Your servant is listening. Amen.

9The LORD of the Heavens said this:
"You, enemy of Israel may destroy the
few remaining people in Israel much as a
farmer goes over each vine again to gather
the grapes he missed the first time." 10I,
Jeremiah, say, "Who will listen to my warn-
ing? {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} The
people refuse to listen, and they reject the
LORD's Word. 11I am full of the LORD's
wrath, and I can hardly hold it in any lon-
ger." The LORD answered, "I will pour
out My wrath on children playing in the
streets, on young men, and on husbands,
wives, and older adults. 12I will turn over to
others their houses, fields, and wives when
I punish these people. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
13"Everyone is greedy and deceitful, includ-
ing even prophets and priests. 14They treat
My people's wounds as if they aren't seri-
ous, {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and
they speak of peace when there is nothing
but war. 15They are not ashamed of their
disgusting conduct. In fact they don't even
blush. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts
25:11} So when I punish them, they will
fall down with those already killed.
16"I told you to walk in the old, godly
path your ancestors took, {404 Restor-
ative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} and you would find
rest. But you said, 'We won't walk on that
road.' 17I also set watchmen over you to tell
you to listen to the warning of the trum-
pet blast. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
But you said you wouldn't pay attention
to it. 18Therefore, you nations, listen. My
people ignored Me and rejected My laws,
19so now the evil they planned to do will
happen to them. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 20I don't want your incense
from Sheba {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-
23} or perfume from some distant coun-
try. I don't want your burnt offerings, and
I'm not pleased with your sacrifices. {355
Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}
21"I will put obstacles in My people's path,
and fathers and sons will trip over them,
and neighbors and friends will die. {99
Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
22"A great army is marching from the
north, part of a great distant nation. 23Its
soldiers, armed with arrows and spears,
are cruel and show no mercy. Their horses
sound like the roaring of ocean waves as
they attack you, Jerusalem." {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 24The people said,
"Hearing about this enemy makes us feel
weak. Fear and pain make us feel like a
woman in labor." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps.
108:12, 13}

Have you ever felt like a prisoner to your problems and troubles? {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} Lord, help me when I see troubles surrounding me. Don't let me be swallowed by my problems. I look to You for help. Show me what to do; tell me how to solve my dilemma. I will think about life the way You want me to think. I will solve my problems the way You tell me. I will do what You want me to do. Be glorified in my life. Amen.

25The LORD said, "Don't work in your
fields or walk by the roads because the
enemy is everywhere and is well armed.
26Put on burlap clothing and sit in ashes.

{161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} Mourn, My people, as if your only son had died, because the enemy will come against you suddenly.
27"Jeremiah, test and observe My people as if you are testing metals. 28You'll see that as rebels, full of slander, they are as hardened in their ways as bronze and iron. 29Fire in a furnace purifies metals, but My people can't be purified of their sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 30I have rejected them, so they are like rejected silver."

Jeremiah 7

The Lord Speaks to Jeremiah

1The LORD told me 2to stand by the temple gate and tell the people there,

Some people think they are getting closer to God because they walk into a church building. But there's nothing magical about a dwelling. The people of Jeremiah's day were trusting the temple to save them from their enemies. But the answer is not to get into God's house, but to get the God of the house into our lives. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Lord, I will not put my trust in a physical house, even though You dwelt in that house in the past. Lord, come into my heart, make my life Your house. Live in my house, possess my house, and control my house. Amen.

3Hear this message from the LORD of the Heavens: "If you change your ways, I'll let you live in your country. 4But don't think that just because the temple is here I will protect you. 5I'll let you live here if you treat people fairly, 6and stop taking advantage of foreign residents, orphans, and widows; and if you stop killing innocent people and stop worshiping idols. 7Then I will let you live here in the land I gave your ancestors. 8But you are trusting in worthless lies.
9"Do you think you can steal, murder, commit adultery, lie in court, and worship Baal and other gods, 10and then come to My temple and say you are safe and then keep on sinning? 11You have made the temple a place for robbers. I have seen all you've done. 12Go to the place where I had My tabernacle for a while. Because of your sins, I destroyed Shiloh. 13And while I was doing all this, I spoke to you over and over, but you wouldn't listen. 14And I will do the same thing to My temple. I will destroy it, 15and I'll send you away as captives, just as I sent away the people of Ephraim.
16"Jeremiah, don't pray for these people. Don't beg Me to help them because I won't listen. 17Look what they are doing in the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem. 18Children gather firewood, fathers build fires, and mothers mix dough to make bread to offer the Queen of heaven (also known as Astarte). And they pour out drink offerings to other idol gods. 19They are insulting Me, but more than that they are insulting themselves by these shameful things. 20And now, I, the Sovereign LORD, pour out My fierce anger on people, animals, trees, and crops, and everything will be burned and nothing left."

21The LORD of the Heavens, the God of
Israel, also says this: "I won't accept sac-
rifices from you, but go ahead and offer
them and eat the meat yourselves. 22When
I rescued your ancestors out of Egypt, I
wanted more than burnt offerings from
them. 23I told them, 'If you obey Me, I will
be your God, and you will be My people,
and all will go well for you."

The Lord says, "Obey me, and I will be your God, and you will be My people... good things will happen to you" (v. 23). Lord, I pray for good things in my life, but I will go further; I will obey You so good things can come to me. Teach me the truth of that old hymn, "Trust and Obey." When obedience is hard for me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} make me obey. I want good things of life that come only from You. Amen.

24"But your ancestors refused to listen.
They were stubborn in their sinning, and
when I wanted them to go one way, they
went another. 25From the day they left
Egypt until now, I have sent My servants
the prophets to speak for Me. 26But you
didn't listen. You have been stubborn, sin-
ning even more than your ancestors.
27"Jeremiah, when you tell them all this,
they won't listen. 28Therefore say to them,
'You have not obeyed your God and you
haven't changed your ways. You are not
truthful. 29So shave your heads in mourn-
ing, and weep on the mountains. God has
rejected this generation that has made
Him angry.'
30"You people have sinned before My very
eyes. You have set up your terrible idols
right in My temple which has made the
temple disgusting. 31You have built altars
as Topheth in Hinnom Valley, where you
sacrifice your children in fire to other gods.
Obviously I never thought of telling you
to do such an awful thing. 32The time is
coming when that place will be called
Slaughter Valley because you will bury
your dead there till there'll be no more
room for graves. 33Corpses on the ground
will be eaten by birds and wild animals,
and no one will be there to scare them off.
34The sounds of joy at weddings will no
longer be heard in Judah's towns or Jeru-
salem's streets."

Jeremiah 8

The Word of the Lord Is Rejected

1"In that day the enemy will dig up the
bones of dead kings and officials of Judah
along with the bones of the priests, proph-
ets, and everyone in Jerusalem. {160 Fam-
ily-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2They
will be spread out on the ground exposed
to the sun, moon, and stars, which they
loved, served, and worshiped. {159 False-
Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} These bones will be
left lying on the ground like trash. 3Peo-
ple of Judah who survive will want to die
rather than live as captives in some foreign
country. I, the LORD of the Heavens,
have spoken these words.
4"Jeremiah, also give the people of Jeru-
salem these words: 'When someone falls,

he gets up again. And when he realizes he took a wrong road, he turns and goes back. [5]Why then do you refuse to turn back to Me and continue on your false ways? {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [6]I listen carefully to your talk, but no one admits he has done wrong.' {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Everyone rushes down his own path of sin like a horse rushing to a battle. [7]Storks, doves, swifts, and swallows know when to migrate. But you, My people, are ignorant of My laws.

[8]"How can you say, 'We are wise because we have the LORD's laws, when your teachers have turned them into lies?' [9]They think they are wise, but they will be shamed and trapped because they rejected what I say. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} Obviously they aren't so wise after all. [10]I'll give your wives and fields to strangers. Everyone, great or small, prophet or priest, is greedy and dishonest."

The people of God are guilty of being "Greedy for money" (v. 10). That's probably the number-one sin in modern society, people worship the dollar. They give their strength, their lives to get more money. Lord, we pray for money and You give it to us. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} Then we trust in the money You give, rather than trusting in You, the Giver. Forgive me my blindness. Help me control the money You give me, and don't let money control me. Amen.

[11]"You treat My people's wounds as if they aren't serious, {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and you speak of peace when there is only war. [12]You aren't ashamed of your disgusting sins, and you don't even blush. But you will lie dead with other corpses. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [13]I will wipe out your harvests of figs, grapes, and fruit trees. Every good thing I prepared for you will be gone. I, the LORD, have spoken these words." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[14]Then the people will say, "Why are we sitting here? What are we waiting for? Let's go to our walled cities and die there. Because we have sinned against the LORD our God, He has determined to destroy us by our drinking poisoned water. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [15]We had hoped for peace, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} but none came. We hoped for healing, but all we got was terror. [16]We can hear the snorting of enemy horses all the way from Dan, and we tremble with fear. The enemy is coming to destroy Jerusalem and our nations." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [17]The LORD says, "I'll send against you this army like poisonous snakes. You won't be able to charm them, and they'll bite you."

[18]My grief is terrible, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and my heart is broken. [19]All across the land people are asking, {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} "Has the LORD left Zion? Is the king no longer there?" The LORD answered, "You made Me angry by worshiping carved images and foreign idols." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

The people knew enough to cry to God when they got into trouble asking, "Isn't the LORD still in Zion?" (v. 19). Yes, God is still at the place where we walked away from Him. Lord, I come back to the place I left Your presence. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I repent of my sin. I confess I need You and can't go on without You. Forgive me! {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Accept me back! Restore me to fellowship and let me feel Your presence again. Amen.

[20]You people say, "Harvest time and summer are gone, {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} and yet the LORD has not rescued us." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[21]You people are crushed because of God's anger. And I too feel downhearted. I mourn and I'm horrified. [22]Surely there are doctors and medicine in Gilead. Why then are your people not healed? {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

Jeremiah 9

Jeremiah Laments the Sins of the People

[1]If my eyes were a fountain of tears, I would weep day and night for my people who were killed. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

Did you see Jeremiah's heart? He said, "I wish my heart were like a spring of water... then I could cry day and night" (v. 1). Lord, I have a hard heart, and I don't weep over lost people. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} I know there is a hell for those who reject You. I know You offer salvation to all who will come to You in faith, but I also know You will judge all people who reject You and send them to hell. Forgive my hard heart, soften me with Your love and mercy. Teach me to pray for the lost. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Amen.

[2]I wish I could go find a traveler's shack in the desert and get away from you people {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} who are so unfaithful to the LORD. [3]The LORD said, "My people tell lies like they are shooting arrows from a bow. [4]Jeremiah, your friends and relatives are telling this about you, so don't trust them. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [5]People tell lies about their friends, wearing themselves out with their sins. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [6]They deceive each other, and refuse to come to Me."
[7]The LORD of the Heavens also says, "I'll punish My people's hearts like metal is purified in a furnace. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} Because of their sin I have no other choice."

God says, "I will test my people as a person tests metal in fire" (9:7). Lord, I don't like to be tested; it hurts and I'm weak. I don't like testings because they are uncomfortable and disruptive. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} But I know I love You, and I know I'll live for You, no matter what. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} When

I've sinned, forgive me. When I've strayed, restore me. I'm weak, make me strong. But I know I love You and will not deny You. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} *When I'm tested, may I come forth as pure gold. Amen.*

8"'Their tongues 'shout' lies like poisoned arrows. They speak kindly to their neighbors while planning to kill them. 9I will punish them for this, getting even with them for their sins against Me." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10I, Jeremiah, weep for the mountains and pastures because they are now deserted and no one travels there anymore. Cattle are not lowing, and birds and wild animals have all disappeared.

11"I, the LORD, will make Jerusalem and Judah's towns piles of ruins where only wild dogs live." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12I said, "LORD, who can understand {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} why the land has been so ruined: Have you told anyone so he can explain it to others?" 13The LORD replied, "This is because My people disobeyed Me {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and rejected My laws. 14They stubbornly followed their own desires and worshiped images of Baal, as their ancestors did. 15So I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, will feed them bitter food and make them drink poisoned water. 16I will scatter them around the world as strangers in distant lands. And their enemies will kill every one of them with swords." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

17The LORD of the Heavens also says this: "Send for the women who are paid to weep at funerals. 18Tell them to begin weeping quickly {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and to let tears flow from their eyes. 19The people of Jerusalem will weep, saying, 'We are ruined. Our homes have been destroyed so we must leave our land and our homes.'"

20Listen, you women, to what the LORD says. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Teach your daughters and your neighbors to wail at funerals. 21Death has crept in through our windows and has killed our young people. So children, now dead, no longer play in the streets, and young men are not in the city squares. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 22The LORD says, "Dead bodies will be scattered on the fields like dung or stalks of lengthened grain." 23And the LORD says, "Don't brag about your wisdom or strength or riches. 24Instead, boast in the fact that you know and understand Me, {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} the just God, and that My love is steadfast. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 25A time is coming when I will punish pagans whose hearts are not right with Me, including 26Egypt, Edom, Ammon, and Moab. And even Israel is like these pagans."

Jeremiah 10

Listen to God, Not to Idols

1Israel, listen to what the LORD says. 2Here's His message: "Don't be like other

nations who are frightened when they see signs in the sky."

God wants us—His people—to be different. God says, "Don't live like the people from other nations" (v. 2). Today God wants Christians to live differently from unsaved people. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} Lord, I will live differently from the unsaved. Because I have a new nature I will live by the new desires You've put within my heart. I will flee the world, the flesh, and the devil. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} But sometimes I fail to obey You. Forgive my sin. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Give me strength to live differently than sinners. Amen.

3"'Their ways are futile. For example they
cut down a tree and carve an idol, 4and
decorate it with silver and gold, and then
nail it down so it won't fall over. 5Like
scarecrows their idols can't talk, and they
have to be carried because they can't walk.
Don't be afraid of idols because they can't
hurt you or help you."
6LORD, You are great and powerful. {366
Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} No one
is like You. 7Everyone should worship You
because You are King of the nations. {367
Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} No one
anywhere is wise like You. {364 Praise for
God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 8Idols made
of wood are worthless, and so are those
who worship them. 9Skilled workers make
idols by hammering out silver from Tarsh-
ish and gold from Uphaz. Then they dress
the idols in blue and purple. 10But You are
the LORD, the only true and living God,
the eternal King. {366 Praise-Worship of
God, Gal. 1:5} When You are angry, the
earth trembles, and nations perish under
your wrath. 11So-called gods, who did not
create the heavens and the earth, will be
destroyed.
12But God, You made the earth by Your
power {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty,
Gen. 45:5} and wisdom and you spread
out the stars in space. {93 Creation-In-
spired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 13When You
speak, clouds in the heavens roar, and You
send clouds, lightning, rain, and wind.
{363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
14Everyone who worships idols is fool-
ish and stupid, and even goldsmiths are
shamed by their idols because the idols
are a hoax and are not alive. 15Idols are
worthless, and people make fun of them.
The time will come when they will all be
destroyed. 16But You, LORD, the God
of Jacob, are not like them. You created
everything, {93 Creation-Inspired Wor-
ship, Ps. 19:1, 2} and You chose Israel to
be Your very own. You are the LORD of
the Heavens.
17The LORD says, "Gather your things
and get ready to leave. 18The enemy is com-
ing. I will toss you from this land and bring
trouble on you and you will be captured."
19Then I, Jeremiah, said, "How terrible, it
will be because our wound can't be cured,
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} but we
must endure the pain. 20Our homes are
destroyed and our children are dead, and
no one is left to help us rebuild our homes.
21Even our leaders are stupid and don't
follow You, the LORD. Therefore they

fail and their flocks are scattered. [22]Listen. Hear the noise of the armies from the north. Judah's towns will be in ruins and wild dogs will live there. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[23]"LORD, we humans can't plan and control our lives. [24]Correct me, LORD, {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} but don't be angry with me, or I will die."

Jeremiah knows we are weak. He says, "No one can control his own life" (v. 23). So Jeremiah prays, "O LORD, correct me, but be fair" (v. 24). Lord, that's my prayer. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} I'm not perfect, but I try. I try to live above sin, but I have a sinful nature (1 John 1:8, 10). I need Your strength to stand against sin. Make me strong in Your strength. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} Make me pure in Your holiness. Amen.

[25]"Pour out Your wrath on nations that don't believe in You {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and don't worship You. They have wiped out Israel and made the land a desolate wilderness."

Jeremiah 11

God's Covenant with His People

[1]The LORD spoke to Jeremiah again and said, [2]"Remind the people of Judah and Jerusalem of the agreement I made with their ancestors [3]and tell them that I, the God of Israel, will put a curse on anyone who doesn't keep the agreement. [4]When I brought them out of Egypt, which was like a furnace for melting iron, I told them that if they obeyed Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} they would be My people and I would be their God. [5]Then I brought them into the land where you are now." {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} I answered, "Yes, LORD, that's true."

[6]Then the LORD told me to tell everyone in the town of Judah and on the streets of Jerusalem, "Be sure to follow the terms of My agreement with you. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [7]I warned your ancestors over and over to obey Me, [8]but they didn't listen. They were stubborn in their sins, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} so I brought on them all the calamities stated in the agreement."

[9]Then the LORD added, "Jeremiah, the people of Judah and Jerusalem are plotting against Me. [10]They have sinned as their ancestors did, refusing to listen to Me. By worshiping and serving other gods, Israel and Judah have broken our agreement. [11]Therefore I will bring trouble on them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and they won't have any way out. They will plead for Me to relieve them, but I won't listen. [12]Then they will beg their idols to help them, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} but the idols won't be able to save them from disaster. [13]You have as many gods as towns in Judah and as many incense altars to Baal as there are streets in Jerusalem, but they can't help you.

[14]"Jeremiah, don't pray or beg for these people, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} in their time of distress, because I won't listen."

Because of their continued sin and hardened hearts, God will not listen when they call to Him for deliverance. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} But God will listen to any sinner who cries out for salvation. Jesus said, "Him that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37). Lord, I have come to You and was saved. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} Thank You for hearing me when I pray. Thank You for salvation. Amen.

15 The LORD then said to the people,
"What right do you, My beloved people,
have to enter My temple while you are carrying out your evil plans?
Your sacrifices won't protect you from My punishing you
and they won't give you joy when you are sinning.
16 You were like a beautiful olive tree full of fruit,
but in My eyes I will send a noisy enemy to burn it
and break off its branches.
17 I, the LORD of the Heavens, will destroy you, this tree,
because you sinned and burned incense to Baal." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
18 Then the LORD told me that you people were plotting to kill me. But I didn't know it;

The people tried to kill Jeremiah for his prophecies. They said, "Let's destroy the tree and kill its fruit" (v. 19), but God protected him. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Charles Spurgeon, the 19th-century preacher from London, England, said, "God's man is indestructible until God is finished with him." Lord, I live in Your hand (John 10: 27-29) and You protect me. Help me finish the task You've given me on earth. Then when I've done all You want me to do, receive me into glory. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Amen.

19 I was like a gentle lamb being led away to be slaughtered.
They said, "Let's chop him down like a tree,
and kill him so no one will remember him."
20 But, LORD of the Heavens, You always do what is right
and You know what everyone is thinking.
So repay them for what they have done. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
I look to You to help me.
21 The men of the town of Anathoth tell me
they will kill me if I keep on prophesying. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7}
22 But You, LORD of the Heavens, say that You will punish them
by dying in battle or by famine.
23 Not one of them will survive when You punish them. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Jeremiah 12

Jeremiah Complains to the Lord

1 Whenever I complain to You, LORD,
You are fair and just. But here's a concern I have:
Why do wicked people prosper?
Why do they have an easy life?

God gives everyone the choice of life or death. Everyone knows in his heart there is a Creator (Rom. 1:18-21) and they are responsible to Him. They are "without excuse" because they don't worship the Creator as they should (Rom. 1:20-21). Because

everyone sees the sins of others, and accuses them of sinning, they themselves "are without excuse," because they don't follow what they know is right (Rom. 2:1-6). Everyone has a conscience but disobeys his conscience (Rom. 2:14-15. Therefore they are without excuse. Lord, I honestly believed what You said about sin, and I repented of my sin. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} *I knew in my conscience what was right, and I followed my heart; I did the right thing in receiving Christ as my Savior. Thank You for giving me a choice of salvation.* {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} *As for me, I choose to follow You. Amen.*

2You plant them like trees, they grow and
bear fruit, and they praise You but they
don't mean it. {374 Praying against the
Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 3But You
know me, LORD, and You know what
I think. So drag my enemies away like
sheep to be slaughtered. {235 Imprecato-
ry-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 4How long will
the land be dry and parched? Even birds
and animals have died and the people are
saying, "You won't see them sinning." {159
False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}
5"Jeremiah, if you get tired running in a
race, how can you run against horses? If
you fall in an open field, what will you do
in the forest by the Jordan River? That is,
if you find your present situation difficult,
your future will be worse. {427 Self-Con-
trol Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} 6Even your own
family members are against you. {374
Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy,
Ps. 31:18} They may sound friendly, but
don't trust them.
7"I have forsaken My people, My special
possessions. I love them, but their enemies
will defeat them. 8They are like a lion roar-
ing at Me; that's why I hate them. 9My peo-
ple are like a vulture, surrounded by other
vultures ready to attack. Wild animals can
come and eat the corpses. 10Shepherds will
ruin My vineyard and make My land des-
olate. 11The whole land will be desolate,
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and no
one will care. 12Armies march along desert
roads, destroying the land. They are like
My sword, killing people everywhere. No
one will be safe. 13You planted wheat, but
reaped only thorns. You work hard, but
gain nothing. You will harvest only shame
because of My fierce anger." {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
14The LORD also said, "Enemies have
attacked Israel, My special possessions, but
I will uproot them from their lands just as
Judah will be uprooted from them. 15Later
I will have compassion on those nations
and bring them back to their lands." {74
Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt.
6:9}

When God speaks to us, it should humble us and make us different from the unsaved. We should not boast in anything God does for us. We deserve death, but He gives us life. Lord, I will not boast in anything that I am or anything that I have accomplished for You. I will not boast in who I am; but will boast in the fact that I know You and serve You. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant

Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} You are the only thing I can boast of. Amen.

16"If these nations learn to worship Me and reject Baal, then they will also become My people. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} 17But if any nation doesn't obey Me, I will uproot and destroy them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 13

The Linen Belt

1The LORD said to me, "Buy and wear a linen belt, but don't wash it." 2So I did. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 3Then the LORD said, 4"Take the belt and go to Perath, a village a few miles northeast of Jerusalem, and hide the belt in the rocks." 5So I did as the LORD told me.

6Sometime later the LORD said, "Now go get the belt." 7So I dug it up, but it was ruined and useless. 8Then the LORD said, 9"In a similar way I will destroy the pride of Judah and Jerusalem. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10These wicked people who refuse to listen to Me and who stubbornly serve and worship other gods will be completely useless like this belt. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 11Just as a belt clings to a man's waist so I have held you, Israel and Judah, close to Me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} I wanted you to bring Me praise and honor, but you refused to listen.

12"Tell the people of Judah, 'The LORD, the God of Israel, tells you to fill every wineskin with wine.' If they say, 'We know to do that,' 13then say, 'The LORD says that He will make everyone in Jerusalem drunk, including kings, priests, and prophets.' 14Then I will smash them against each other, even parents against their children, and I will have no mercy or compassion on them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

15The LORD has spoken, so don't be so proud to pay attention. 16Honor Him before darkness comes {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} and you stumble. You will want light, but you will have only deep darkness. 17If you are too proud to listen to the LORD, I will weep alone. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Tears will fill my eyes because you, the LORD's sheep, will be taken as captives. 18Say to the king and his mother, "Come off your throne and take off your crowns." 19No one will be able to go in or out of the cities in the Southern Desert. Everyone in Judah will be taken away as prisoners. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 20Look to the north and you'll see the enemy coming toward you. The flock you hoped would help you will not be around. 21The nations that were your allies will now be your enemies, and you will be in pain like a woman in childbirth.

22"If you ask, 'Why has this happened to me?' {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} It's because of your sins. That's why you were raped. 23It's as impossible for you to do good as it is for an Ethiopian to change his skin color or a leopard to remove its spots."

God recognizes a man cannot change his nature. But God can transform a person from

the inside out, "If a man be in Christ, he is a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17). Lord, thank You for changing me inwardly. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} Because I am born again (John 3:1-7), I have new desires and a new nature; because I know You, I am Your child and You dwell in my heart (John 14:23). Thank You for inward riches, {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} while I don't have worldly riches. Amen.

[24]The LORD says, "I will scatter you to foreign nations like a desert wind that blows away grain husks. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [25]This is what I have planned for you because you rejected Me and trusted in false gods. [26]I will expose you to shame because of your adultery and lust and prostitution to idols. [27]I am aware of your disgusting idol worship on hilltops and in the fields. How terrible it will be for you, Jerusalem. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} How long will you continue in your sins?"

Jeremiah 14

Drought, Sword, and Famine

[1]This message came to me from the LORD about the lack of rain: "Judah and Jerusalem mourn {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} as the land dries up. [2]Nobles go to cisterns for water, but the wells are dry. {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} [3]So they return with empty pitchers, and in their depression they lower their heads. [4]The ground is cracked, and farmers too cover their heads. [5]A deer gives birth to a fawn but then leaves it because there is no grass, [6]and wild donkeys pant like thirsty wild dogs, and they go blind from lack of grass." [7]We realize how sinful we've been and how terrible is our backsliding. But, LORD, please do something to defend Your reputation. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [8]You are our hope, and our Savior in times of trouble. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} But why are You like a stranger, stopping only overnight? [9]Why are You taken by surprise and with no ability to rescue us? You are here among us and we are Your people. So don't abandon me. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

[10]The LORD says this about these people: "You love to wander off. So I don't accept you. I'll remember your sins and punish you for them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The Lord says, "They really love to wander from Me" (v. 10). God understands the rebellion of the natural heart. God wants our worship (John 4:23), but man tends to worship everything but God. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Lord, give me hatred against sin. May I hate sin as much as You do. Keep me from the sin I love, and turn my heart toward You. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Amen.

[11]Then the LORD said to me, "Jeremiah, don't pray for these people. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [12]They go without food and they offer burnt offerings and grain offerings, but I won't accept

them. Instead I will destroy them with the sword, starvation, and disease." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13I said, "Prophets keep telling them they won't die in battle or from lack of food, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} and they say I will give them peace." 14Then the LORD said to me, "These prophets are telling lies, based on false visions, fortune-telling, idol worship, and their own imaginations. 15But I did not send them. Yet they insist on saying that battles and shortage of food will not happen. However, those same prophets will in fact die in battles and from lack of food. 16And the bodies of the people who will listen to them will be thrown into the streets of Jerusalem, dying because of the sword and lack of food. No one will be left to bury them. Husbands, wives, sons, and daughters will all be dead. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

17"Jeremiah, tell the people these words: 'My eyes will be filled with tears day and night, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because my daughter, My people, is suffering from a terrible wound. 18In the country I see people killed by the sword, and in the city I see people dying from starvation. Prophets and priests have been taken captives to Babylon.'"

19Have you, LORD rejected Judah? Do you hate Zion? Why have You wounded us so severely? We hoped for peace and healing, {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} but we found only fear and trembling. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

20LORD, we admit our own sin and the sins of our ancestors too. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 21So don't despise us because of Your reputation, and keep the agreement You made with us. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8}

The people pray, "For Your sake, don't hate us" (v. 21). The people are wrong, God doesn't hate them; He loves them (John 3:16). God hates their sin. Do you see the vicious triangle? God loves people, the people love sin, and in turn God hates their sin that keeps them from loving Him. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} Lord, I admit I am a sinner; forgive me my sin. Cleanse me by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). I confess my sin {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} and turn from it (1 John 1:9). Cleanse me from all unrighteousness. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} I will worship You for Your love toward me and Your kind acts. Amen.

22No idols can bring rain, and showers don't fall by themselves. You, O LORD our God, {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} are the one who sends rain. That's why we trust in you.

Jeremiah 15

The Lord Is Angry with His People

1The LORD said to me, "Even if Moses and Samuel were praying for these people, I wouldn't change My mind. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} So send them away. 2If they ask you where to go, tell them I said that some of them will die, others will be killed in battle, some will starve to death, and others will be taken captives.

{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [3]I will destroy them in four kinds of ways: by the sword, dogs, birds, and wild animals. [4]They will be repulsive to all the nations because of the terrible things Manasseh, king of Judah did. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [5]People of Jerusalem, no one will feel sorry for you or mourn because of you or ask how you are."

[6]The LORD says, "You turned from Me and kept on sliding away. So I will destroy you, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} because I'm tired of showing you mercy. [7]I will scatter you like grain at the city gates. Since you haven't changed your ways, I will bring sorrow and death on you. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [8]Your widows will be greater in number than the grains of sand on a beach. At noon I will bring an enemy against the mothers of young men, and the mothers will suddenly feel agony and fright. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]A mother of seven will grow faint and gasp for breath. She will be shamed and humiliated. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} And if any survivors are left, they will be killed. I the LORD have spoken these words." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[10]I said to my mother, "I wish I had never been born. Everyone is against me. I never lend or borrow money, yet everyone speaks against me. [11]Then the LORD said, "I'll protect you, and even your enemies will beg you for help. [12]Just as you can't break iron or bronze, so you can't defeat your enemy. [13]They will take your wealth and valuables because of all your sins. [14]I will make you slaves in a foreign country because My anger is like a fire." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[15]LORD, you know how I am suffering. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} So take revenge on those who persecute me. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} [16]Your words give me strength and joy. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} I belong to You, O LORD, God of the Heavens. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [17]I don't join with party-goers. I keep to myself {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} because I'm angry at their sins. [18]I'm in constant pain {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} with a wound that won't heal. Will You disappoint me like a stream that is dry in the summer? {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}

[19]The LORD replied, "Return to Me and speak worthwhile words, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and I will make you My prophet again. Encourage the people to turn to you, but don't you follow their ways."

God will always hear the honest plea of a sinner who cries for forgiveness and salvation. Lord, thank You for saving me. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} Thank You for receiving me because I repented of my sin and I asked for salvation. I worship You, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} the God of my salvation. Amen.

[20]"I will make you strong like a bronze wall. They will fight against you, but they won't defeat you {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} because I will rescue you. [21]I

will rescue you from wicked people {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and set you free from cruel people." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

God emphasizes the fact, "They will die" (v. 2), predicting disaster will come. God says, "My anger is like a hot fire. And it will burn against you" (v. 14). Even though the world thinks it can get away with sin, and even though the world thinks there is no punishment after death, God who created all things and God who sent Jesus Christ to die for them, will become God the Judge who will punish them for their sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Lord, I believe there is a hell because I believe in You and the things you say in Your Word. I pray for my unsaved family and friends; save them. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} I pray for my testimony to them; use me to point them to You. I pray sincerely and I pray repeatedly, because I believe there is a hell. Amen.

Jeremiah 16

The Lord's Judgment

1Then the LORD said to me, 2"Jeremiah, do not get married and have children."

The book of Jeremiah is filled with symbolic actions. These are events in Jeremiah's life where his actions carry a message to the people of Israel. Jeremiah was told (1) not to get married (v. 2), (2) not to go to a funeral (v. 5), and (3) not to go to a feast (v. 8). He was not to do the things people normally do, warning Israel there was coming a time of crisis when they couldn't perform normal activities. In one sense, Christians do symbolic actions by going to church on Sunday, and taking their Bibles. When a Christian doesn't smoke or drink alcoholic beverages, or curse in God's name, their actions send a message to the unsaved that they serve a holy God. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Lord, speak to unsaved people by my holy life. I realize I am not perfect, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} but use me as a testimony to bring someone to salvation. Amen.

3"Why? Because children born in this land will be left on the ground like trash. 4They will die in battles or by starvation, and birds and wild animals will eat them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5The LORD says, "Don't go to their funerals and express sympathy because I no longer love or pity these people. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 6Rich and poor will die, and they won't be buried, and no one will show sorrow by cutting himself or shaving his head. 7No one will give food or wine to comfort those who mourn the death of their parents. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

8"Don't go to their festivals to eat and drink. 9I the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, will end their parties and songs and wedding celebrations. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10When you tell people this and they ask why I have planned such disasters and what they have done wrong, 11then say, 'This is because your ancestors left Me, and served and

worshiped other gods and disobeyed My laws. 12But you have done worse than that. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} You have stubbornly sinned instead of obeying Me. {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} 13That's why I will send you away into a foreign land, and there you will worship other gods day and night, and you will get no sympathy from Me. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

14"'However, a time is coming when you will no longer refer to Me as the God who rescued you from Egypt, 15but you will refer to Me as the God who rescued you from the north and other nations. I will bring you back to this land. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 16But now your enemies will be like fishermen catching you and hunting you down in the hills and caves. 17I see everything they are doing; their sins are not hidden. 18I will pay you double for your sins because you have defiled the land with lifeless idols.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

19O LORD, You give me strength, and You protect me like a fortress in times of trouble. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} People will come to You from distant nations and will say, "Our ancestors worshiped false gods but they were of no help."

Why don't you cry out like Jeremiah and run to God when you are in trouble? O Lord, here I come for help. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} I need You today. I need You right away. Be my protection. Amen.

20They made their own gods, but they weren't actually gods at all. 21So the LORD said, "I will teach them My power and strength, and then they will know that I am the LORD." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Jeremiah 17

The Lord's Judgment (continued)

1The LORD says, "Judah's sin is as permanent on their hearts as if it were chiseled in iron with a diamond point on the corners of their altars. 2Even their children worship at altars to Baal and Asherah poles beside large trees and on high hills. 3I will give all your wealth and everything you own, including your hilltop shrines, to your enemies because of your sin. 4You will lose the land I gave you, and you will become slaves in a foreign country because you have caused My anger to burn forever." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

5The LORD also says, "You are cursed if you trust in people and turn away from Me. 6You will be dry like a desert bush, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} with no hope for the future, {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} You will live in the dry, salty desert. 7But I will bless those who trust in Me. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 8They will be like a tree beside a stream, {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} with roots that reach to the water. Heat and drought do not bother it, and it always bears fruit. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4}

9"Human hearts are so deceitful they can't change."

Why do people sin when they should know better? Why are people blinded to truth? The answer is the deceitful heart. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} "The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it" (v. 9, NKJV). This verse suggests you can't even know your own heart. Lord, I admit I have an old deceitful heart. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} It tempts me to sin, and it blinds me to Your perfect truth. My heart lies to me, and makes me critical and uncaring. Thank You for salvation. Thank You for giving me a new nature with a new desire for righteousness. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} My new nature tells me the truth. I will say "no" to my old nature and say "yes" to my new nature. I want to know You and do Your will. Amen.

10"I search people's hearts and I know what they think, and I will see that they get what they deserve. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 11If you get wealthy by cheating, you are like a bird that hatches eggs it didn't lay. When a man loses his wealth, everyone will see that he was a fool." {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7}

12LORD, Your temple is a glorious throne. 13LORD, You are Israel's only hope, so anyone who turns from You, the spring of living water, will be ashamed and will be swept away like words written in dust. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} 14LORD, You alone can heal {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and save me. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} You are the one I praise. 15People keep asking me, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} "Why don't the LORD's predictions come true?" 16LORD, You know I have been faithful as a spiritual shepherd to Your people. I have announced upcoming disaster but not because I have wanted to. 17Don't frighten me now because You are my only hope in times of trouble. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} 18Bring shame and fear on people who persecute me, but keep me from shame and fear. Send destruction on them.

19The LORD said, "Jeremiah, stand at each city gate in Jerusalem including the one that the kings use. 20Say to the people, 'Hear God's Word, kings and people of Judah. 21The LORD says not to do any work on the Sabbath: Don't carry anything through the gates 22or out of your houses. But keep the Sabbath holy. I gave this command to your ancestors, 23but they were stubborn and refused to obey and would not respond to discipline. 24But if you obey Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 25then a descendant of David will always be on his throne. The king and his officials will ride through the city gates in chariots and on horses, and the people of Judah and Jerusalem will join them, and people will always be living in Jerusalem. 26People will come here from nearby villages, from Benjamin, the western foothills, the hill country, and the Southern Desert. They will bring burnt offerings, grain offerings, incense, and thank offerings to the temple. {544 Worthy-Worship

Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [27]But if you don't obey Me and don't keep the Sabbath holy {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and you keep on carrying things through the city gates on the Sabbath, then I will set the gates of Jerusalem on fire and it will also burn the fortresses.'"

Lord, I want my life to count for something. I want to do something for You that lasts. Jeremiah tells me, "A person who quits following the LORD will be like a name written in the dust" (v. 13). That means it will be blown away with the wind. Lord, write my name in Your book, I want You to remember me. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} "So a book of remembrance was written before Him for those who fear the LORD and who meditate on His name" (Mal. 3:16, NKJV). Amen.

Jeremiah 18

The Potter and the Clay

[1]The LORD told me to [2]go to where clay jars are made and He would give me a message there. [3]So I did, and I saw the potter working at his wheel. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [4]But the jar he was making didn't turn out the way he wanted, so he shaped it into a different jar.

The Bible says we are like pots or vessels. "If anyone cleanses himself... he will be a vessel for honor, sanctified and useful for the master" (2 Tim. 2:21, NKJV). Jeremiah saw a potter using his hands to shape the pot the way he wanted it to be. Lord, I want to be a vessel that You can use. {432 Service-Response Prayer, Heb. 5:4} Use Your hands to make me what You want me to be. I yield to the pressure of Your fingers. Give me Your eyes to see the lost. Give me Your hands to help people. Give me Your ears to hear the cries of the anguished. Give me Your voice to speak Your Word. Give me Your heart {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} to love You more. Amen.

[5]Then the LORD said, [6]"Israel, I'm like this potter and you are like this clay. [7]If I tell a nation I will destroy it, [8]and it turns from its sin, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} then I won't destroy it as I had planned. [9]Or if I plan to build up a nation [10]but its people sin and don't obey Me, then I won't bless that nation." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The clay didn't yield in the potter's hand, so he crushed the pot and began again. Does God use some people, then comes a time when they refuse to let the divine Potter mold his life? Does God give up on some people? {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} Lord, I want You to use me. Don't give up on me, and don't turn Your back on me if I fall one time. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I will get up and follow You again. I fear the thought of being rejected by You, the divine Potter. Amen.

[11]"Therefore, Jeremiah, tell the people of Judah and Jerusalem, 'The LORD says He will bring disaster on you {267 Judgment

Prayer, Rev. 17:5} unless you turn from your sins and change your ways.' [12]But you people will continue on in your stubborn evil ways." So the LORD says, [13]"Ask the nations and see if they have ever heard of a horrible sin like yours. [14]The snow on Lebanon's mountains never melt, and the streams from those mountains never run dry. [15]Yet you, by contrast, My people, are unreliable. You have deserted Me and burned incense to worthless idols. In fact these idols have caused you to stumble off the right path. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [16]Your land will be ruined, and people will despise you. Everyone who passes by will shake their heads in amazement. [17]I'll scatter you before your enemies like dust blown by an eastern wind. I'll turn My back on you when you are in distress." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[18]Some of the people said, "Let's get rid of Jeremiah. We will always have our priests, wise people, and prophets. Let's accuse him and ignore what he says." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[19]Jeremiah responded, "Hear what my accusers are saying, LORD. {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} [20]I tried to help them, but they are digging a pit to put me in it. I pleaded for You not to be angry with them. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [21]So now I'm asking You to let their children starve or be killed in war. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} And let their wives become widows and their young men be killed. [22]They have dug a pit to put me in it and have set traps for me. Let them scream in fear when enemy troops attack their homes. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [23]LORD, You know they plan to kill me, so don't forgive their sins. Defeat them and deal with them, not us, in Your anger." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Jeremiah 19

The Broken Jar

[1]The LORD said, "Jeremiah, go buy a clay jar from a potter. Then take with you some of the elders and priests [2]and go to the Hinnom Valley near the Potsherd Gate. [3]Then I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, will bring so much trouble on this valley {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} that everyone will be shocked. [4]They have rejected Me, and worshiped foreign gods here, and burned sacrifices to those gods, and they have shed innocent blood. [5]They have built hilltop shrines and burned their children as sacrifices to Baal. This is something I never commanded nor even thought of. [6]People will change the name of this place from Topheth or the Hinnom Valley to Slaughter Valley. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[7]"I'll ruin your plans, Judah and Jerusalem, by letting your people be slaughtered. And your dead bodies will be eaten by birds and wild animals. [8]People who see this city in ruins will be shocked. [9]When the enemy is attacking, people will eat your children and friends. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

10"Jeremiah, after you say these words, break the jar I told you to buy as the people are watching. 11Then say, 'I, the LORD of the Heavens, will smash this nation as I smashed this jar. You will bury bodies in Topheth till there is no more burial room. 12I will make Jerusalem unclean like Topheth by filling it with dead bodies.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

There is a terrible conclusion to the smashed jar. "It cannot be put back together again" (v. 11). Those who refuse to listen to God and do His will, will be smashed as Jeremiah broke the jar. Lord, I forget the finality of eternal decisions. When someone says "no" to You in this life, it means eternal damnation. Forgive me for not praying more for my lost friends and relatives. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Use me to turn some from darkness to Your light. Amen.

13"'This is because you people burned incense on your rooftops to the stars and poured drink offerings to foreign gods.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
14So I went to Topheth and in the temple court I said to the people, 15"'The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says He will bring disaster on Jerusalem and surrounding towns. Why? Because you were stubborn and refused to listen to Him.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah took a jar near a gate to Jerusalem and told the people that God would judge them, then he smashed the jar as a symbolic action. Lord, use my life as a symbolic action to communicate a message to the lost. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} May those who need to hear of your judgment, be convicted of their sin. May some see Christ in me and turn to Him. Lord, use my life as a testimony. Amen.

Jeremiah 20

Pashhur the Priest Is Judged

1Pashhur, son of Immer, was priest and chief officer in the temple. When he heard my words, 2he beat me and put me in chains {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} by the Upper Gate of Benjamin near the temple. 3The next day after Passhur released me, I said to him, "Passhur will no longer be your name. Instead I'll call you Magor-Missabib (meaning 'Terror on Every Side'). 4You will see your own friends killed by the sword. I will let the king of Babylon take everyone in Judah as captives. He will kill some and take others as prisoners. 5And he will take to Babylon all the wealth and valuables of the city. 6You, Passhur, and your relatives will be prisoners in Babylon. And there you'll die and be buried because you told lies." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7O, LORD, I thought people would welcome my message. But not so. They ridicule me all day long. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 8When I tell them destruction is coming, they insult and criticize me. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Jeremiah complained that when he delivered God's message, "This only brings me insults. The people make fun of me all day long" (v. 8). Have you ever had people ridicule you because of your Christian faith? Maybe not to your face, but what about behind your back? Lord, I don't like to be mocked or laughed at. But Jesus took much more than that for me. I will stand for You no matter what people say to me. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} I will gladly identify with Jesus and suffer insults for Your name. Amen.

9When I thought of not giving Your messages to them, Your word sounds intensely like a fire in my bones. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} I can't hold it in.

When Jeremiah decided not to speak any more for God. It was then, "The LORD's message becomes like a burning fire inside me" (v. 9). Have you ever felt God's message was burning you up? {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} Lord, I am different since I've been saved. Your Word burns within me. I must speak for You and I must tell others what You've done for me. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} Use me to be a witness for You. Amen.

10I hear people whispering about reporting me. Even my friends are watching for me to make a mistake so they can get even with me.
11But, LORD, You are like a strong soldier at my side. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} My enemies will stumble and fall {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and be terribly ashamed and dishonored. 12O LORD of the Heavens, You know people who do right; {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} You know what everyone is thinking. Please get even with them for what they have done to me. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 13I sing praises to You, LORD {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} for rescuing needy people like me from the wicked.
14I wish I had never been born. 15I wish my father had never heard the words, "You have a son." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 16May the man who gave my father that news be like towns you defeated. May he hear wailing and battle cries. 17I wish he had killed me in my mother's womb. 18I wish I had not been born because now all I see is trouble and sorrow. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Jeremiah 21

The Way of Life and the Way of Death

1King Zedekiah of Judah sent Pashhur, son of Malkijah, and the priest Zephaniah, son of Maaseiah, to Jeremiah 2to ask him to ask the LORD to work a miracle for them to get Nebuchadnezzar to back off from attacking Jerusalem. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 3But I said, "Tell Zedekiah that 4the LORD, the God of Israel, says that your weapons will be useless against the Babylonians. They are outside the city walls, but they will

break into the city. [5]He'll fight against you in His anger and wrath, [6]and men and animals will die of a plague. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]Some will survive war, hunger, and disease, but Nebuchadnezzar will capture them and Zedekiah and his officials. He will kill you and have no mercy or compassion. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[8]"Also tell the people that I'll let you choose life or death." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

God gives everyone the choice of life or death. Everyone knows in his heart there is a Creator (Rom. 1:18-21) and they are responsible to Him. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:12} They are "without excuse" because they don't worship the Creator as they should (Rom. 1:20-21). Because everyone sees the sins of others, and accuses them of sinning, they themselves "are without excuse," {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} because they don't follow what they know is right (Rom. 2:1-6). Everyone has a conscience but disobeys their conscience (Rom. 2:14-15), therefore they are without excuse. Lord, I honestly believed what You said about sin, and I repented of my sin. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I knew in my conscience what was right, and I followed my heart; I did the right thing in receiving Christ as my Savior. Thank You for giving me a choice of salvation. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} As for me, I choose to follow You. Amen.

[9]"If you stay in the city, you will die by war, hunger, or disease. But you'll live if you surrender to the Babylonians. [10]I will not rescue Jerusalem. Instead the king of Babylon will burn it to the ground." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[11]Tell the royal family that the LORD says, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [12]"Be sure justice is done {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} and rescue those who are being robbed. If you don't, My anger will be like a fire that can't be put out. [13]You people of Jerusalem think you are safe because you are above the valley, [14]but I will punish you {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} with fire that will burn up everything around you."

Jeremiah 22

A Message to the Kings of Judah

[1]The LORD sent me to the king's palace to speak to him, and his officials and his people and [2]to say, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [3]"The LORD says to do what is just and right. Help people who have been robbed, don't mistreat foreign residents, orphans, or widows, and don't murder innocent people. [4]If you obey Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} a descendant of David will continue to rule Judah. They will ride on horses and in chariots. [5]But if you don't obey Me, I promise that this palace will be in ruins."

[6]The LORD also says this: "The king's palace is as pleasant as Gilead with its green hills and as majestic as Mount Lebanon. But it will be like a desert of a ghost town.

7I'll send troops against it, and they'll put
all its cedar beams in the fire. {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 8People from vari-
ous nations will see Jerusalem in ruins, and
they will wonder why I did this to this great
city. 9Others will answer, 'It's because they
broke the agreement the LORD their God
made with them {92 Covenant-Fulfilling
Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and they worshiped and
served other gods.' 10Don't cry for the dead
{430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} King
Josiah or his son King Jehoahaz who was
taken captive and will never see his coun-
try again."
11Then the LORD said this about Shallum
(also known as Jehoahaz): "You will not
return to Jerusalem.

This chapter reveals the terrible anger of God against the kings of Judah, and His people who rebel against Him. It shows God's destructive judgment against the empty religion in Jerusalem and the temple. Not only was empty religion worthless, it was damaging the testimony of God. So God uses a ruthless people to destroy His people. Lord, I know You hate the sin of my nation. You hate its greed, its worship of egotistical "stars," its corrupt politicians, its drunkenness, its uncontrolled sexual deviations, and its atheistic beliefs in evolution, humanism, and worship of science. Lord, forgive our sin. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} The world will not confess its sin to You, so I confess their sin. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} Do not judge my nation. God bless our nation. God save our nation. God, revive our nation. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} Amen.

12"You'll die in the place where they'll lead
you as a captive. 13How terrible it will be
for you, because you were unfair to your
workers. 14You made them work for no
pay in building your big palace with large
upstairs rooms, big windows, cedar pan-
eling, and red paint. 15But lots of cedar
doesn't make you a great king. Your father,
Josiah, always had plenty to eat and drink,
and he did what was right, so I blessed
him."

Jeremiah asks, "Does having a lot of cedar in your house make you a great king?" (22:15). The answer is no. Also beautiful clothes don't make you a beautiful person and expensive cars don't make you important. Inward character makes you beautiful, doing right makes you important, and following God makes you great. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} Lord, I want to be beautiful inwardly, so I will learn Your Word and follow its teaching. I want to be powerful, so I will fellowship with You and let Your strength flow through me. I want to be important so I will fill my life with Your presence and let people see Your life flowing through me. Amen.

16"He helped people who were poor and
needy, and that's what it means to know
Me. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter
1:3} 17But all you think about is cheating,
murdering innocent people, and taking
advantage of others."

[18]The LORD said this about Jehoiakim, Josiah's son: "Your family will not mourn for you when you die. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [19]You will be buried like a dead donkey dragged outside the city gates. [20]All your allies are gone. You can ask Lebanon in the north, {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} Bashan in the northeast, and Abarim in Moab in the southeast, but they can't help you because they are crushed. [21]When you felt safe, I warned you but you refused to listen. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} Ever since you were young, you were like that. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [22]Your leaders will disappear like being blown away by wind, and your allies will be taken as captives. [23]You may live in a palace paneled with cedar from Lebanon, but you'll groan in pain like a woman in child labor. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

[24]"King Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, if you were like a ring I wear as a sign of My power, I would pull you off. [25]I will hand you over to the enemy you fear, Nebuchadnezzar and his army who want to kill you. [26]I will throw you and your mother to a foreign country where you will both die. [27]You will never return to your homeland. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[28]"Jehoiachin, you are as unwanted as a broken clay jar. You and your children will be taken captives to a foreign land. [29]Land of Judah, hear what I say.

[30]"You Jehoiachin will be as if you are childless, because none of your descendants will sit on the throne of David to rule in Judah." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 23

The Righteous Remnant Will Return

[1]The LORD says, "How terrible it will be for leaders who like shepherds are scattering My sheep. [2]Therefore I, the LORD, the God of Israel, say, 'Because you have chased away My flock and haven't cared for them as you should, I'll punish you. [3]I'll bring back to their land the rest of My people {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} from the countries where I've scattered them. And they will grow in number. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [4]I will choose leaders who will care for them, and no one will be afraid or missing. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}

[5]"In a future day I will appoint as king, an honest branch (descendant) of David {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} to sit on his throne. He will be wise and just. [6]When he is king, Judah and Israel will be safe. His name will be 'The LORD is Just.' {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[7]"A time is coming when people will no longer refer to Me as the one who rescued Israel out of Egypt, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [8]but as the one who rescued you from the north and other countries where you were taken captives. Again you'll live in your own land." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[9]My heart is broken when I think of false prophets. I tremble and I stagger like a drunk person when I think of their lies in contrast to Your holy words. {377

Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [10]They are unfaithful to You like prostitutes, and so their pasturelands have become like dry deserts. The prophets do evil and abuse their powers. The LORD says, [11]"The priests are godless, just like the prophets. They even sin right in the temple. [12]They will slip and fall in the darkness when I punish them." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[13]The prophets in Samaria were so disgusting. They voice false predictions as if they were from Baal, and this led the people away from the LORD. [14]And the false prophets in Jerusalem commit adultery, tell lies, and encourage others to sin so that no one turns from his sin. They are like Sodom and Gomorrah. [15]Therefore the LORD says this about them: "Because they have led people everywhere to sin, I will make them eat bitter food and drink poisoned water." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[16]The LORD of the Heavens says, "Don't listen to the lies of these false prophets, because they give you false hopes. They make up their messages; they are not from Me. [17]They keep saying that I say they will have peace, and to those who are stubborn in their sins they say everything will be okay. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [18]But they have never been in heaven to listen to My Word. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [19]Look, My anger will come on them suddenly like a storm or a whirlwind on their heads. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [20]I'll continue in anger until I've finished what I plan to do. [21]I haven't sent these prophets, yet they claim to speak for Me. [22]If they had been in a meeting in heaven with Me and My angels, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} they would have spoken My words to My people, and they would have turned from their evil ways.

God says the false prophets were wrong, but "if they stood in a meeting of My counsel" (v. 22), then they would have spoken the right message. We can speak with assurance because we have been close to the "counsel" of God in His Word. We cannot get any closer to truth than in the Scriptures. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} Lord, I love Your Word because it gives me truth (John 17:17). I will study Your Word to know as much truth as possible. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} I will live according to Your Word so I can walk and speak truthfully. Amen.

[23]"I'm everywhere, both near and far. [24]No one can hide where I can't see him. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} I'm everywhere in heaven and earth."

We see the omnipresence of God in this chapter. God is far from us. God's transcendence means God is great, and boundless. But God is also immanent, meaning God is near or close. As a matter of fact Paul said, "He is not far from each one of us; for in Him we live and move and have our being" (Acts 17:27-28, NKJV). Lord, I come to You, the Lord of the universe, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:12} and I worship You for Your greatness and power. I also come

because You are near to me. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} You indwell my heart and know my thoughts. I worship You as my personal Lord who is as near to me as breath itself. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} Amen.

25"I've heard the lies of these false prophets. They claim to have dreams I gave them. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 26This seems to continue on with their lies and deceptions. 27They think their dreams will get My people to reject Me, just as their ancestors did by worshiping Baal. 28Compared with My words, their dreams are as different as straw and wheat. Anyone who has My Word must tell it faithfully. 29My Word penetrates like a fire {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} and is strong like a hammer breaking a rock in pieces.

30"Therefore I am against these prophets who get their messages from each other and not from Me. 31They say I gave them these prophecies, but I am against them. 32I oppose anyone who prophesies by false dreams which leads My people away from Me. I didn't send them, and no one benefits at all from them.

33"Jeremiah, if a prophet or a priest or someone else asks if you have a message from me, the LORD, just say, 'You people are a bother. I will forsake you.' {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 34Or if a prophet or priest or anyone else says, 'Here is a message from the LORD,' I will punish him. 35You may ask him, 'What answer has the LORD given?' or 'What has the LORD said?' 36But don't use the words 'prophesy from the LORD' because this twists My words into a lie. 37You may say to a prophet, 'What answer has the LORD given you?' or 'What has the LORD said?' 38If someone says, 'Here is a message from the LORD,' 39I'll forget him and cast him away from Me, and I'll desert Jerusalem, which I gave to you and your ancestors. 40You'll be ridiculed, and your shame will never be forgotten." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 24

Good Figs and Bad Figs

1Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon took King Jehoiachin, his officials, and skilled workers as captives to Babylon. Then the LORD gave me a vision of two baskets of figs. 2One was filled with ripe figs, and the other was filled with rotten figs that couldn't be eaten. 3When the LORD asked me what I saw, I said, "I see some very good figs and some that are very bad." 4Then the LORD told me to tell this to the people of Judah: 5"The good figs stand for those of you who were taken captives to Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6I will watch over them and bring them back here. I'll build them up, not tear them down, and I'll plant them, not uproot them. 7They'll want to know Me, {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} and they'll be My people and I'll be their God. They'll finally turn back to Me with all their heart. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[8]"But the bad figs stand for King Zedekiah, his officials, and those who were left in Jerusalem or went to Egypt. [9]Nations will be horrified at them. They will be ridiculed and cursed, wherever I send them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]War and hunger and disease will be against them until they are completely destroyed from their land." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The good figs represent the "saved" Jewish people of that day. God promises He will look after them in captivity, and in the future will bring them back into the land. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} "They will know that I am the LORD. They will be My people, and I will be their God" (v. 7). This is a picture of the future resurrection when Israel will be brought back to the land in righteousness. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Lord, I believe in the resurrection. I believe You will raise the believing Jews to live with Jesus Christ in the millennium. I believe I will be raised at the rapture to go live with Christ. He promised, "Where I am, there you may be also" (John 14:3, NKJV). I worship You {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} because You have the power of resurrection. Amen.

Jeremiah 25

Seventy Years of Destruction

[1]This message came to me in Jehoiakim's fourth year as king of Judah and Nebuchadnezzar's first year as king of Babylonia (605 B.C.). [2]I told the people of Judah, "For 23 years now, [3]ever since Josiah's 13th year as king of Judah to today, I've told you what the LORD said for me to say to you. But you refused to listen. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [4]The LORD sent you other prophets, but you didn't listen to them either. [5]These prophets told you that if you turn away from your sinful practices, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} you may stay in the land. [6]And if you refuse to serve and worship other gods and don't make Him angry, then He won't harm you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]But you didn't listen to Him and so your hand-made idols made Him angry. So you brought on yourselves all the problems you now face. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[8]Therefore the LORD of the Heavens says, "Because you didn't listen to Me, [9]I will order armies from the north and Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylonia to attack you. I will destroy you and nearby nations, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and others will be horrified when they see you in ruins. [10]The happy voices {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} of brides and bridegrooms will not be heard. No one will grind grain, and your homes will be dark.

[11]"This country will be a dry desert, and all of you will be slaves of the king of Babylon for 70 years. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[12]"Then after the 70 years I will punish Babylonia and her king. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} And that country will be a barren desert. [13]I will bring against

them all the problems I've mentioned in this book. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14They made slaves of other people, and now they will be slaves of other nations and kings. This will be repayment for what they have done to others."

God predicted Israel would be in captivity for 70 years. Nebuchadnezzar took a few captives in 607 B.C. (including Daniel) and 70 years later when Cyrus defeated the Babylonians, he allowed the first return to the land in 531 B.C. under Zerubbabel (a total of 70 years). Nebuchadnezzar destroyed Jerusalem in 587 B.C. and 70 years later Ezra returned with more captives and reinstituted sacrifice and worship in 517 B.C. (a total of 70 years). God who lives in the future, tells Jeremiah the Jews "will be slaves to the king of Babylon for 70 years" (v. 11). Lord, You know my future, so guide me this day. Don't allow more pressure to be put upon me than I can stand. With each trial make me stronger. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} You know the good things that will happen to me, be glorified in all of them. I worship You, {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} the one who lives yesterday, today, and tomorrow (Rev. 1:8). Amen.

15The LORD, the God of Israel, then said to me, "Jeremiah, take this cup filled with the wine of My anger and make the nations to whom I send you drink it. 16When they drink it, they will stagger and go crazy because of the war I'll send against them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 17So I took the cup and made various nations drink it. In this way they experienced God's wrath. 18These nations included Jerusalem and Judah and her kings and officials, which became an object of horror and cursing. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19Also included were Pharaoh king of Egypt and his officials and people 20and foreigners living there; the kings of Uz, the Philistines (those of Ashkelon, Gaza, Ekron, and Ashdod), 21Edom, Moab, Ammon, 22kings of Tyre and Sidon, and the coast lands; 23Dedan, Tema, and Buz, in tribes in the Arabian Desert, and others in distant places, 24kings of Arabia and of foreigners in the desert; 25kings of Zimri, Elam, and Media; and 26kings of the north, near and far, all the kingdoms of the world. And then the king of Sheshach (that is, Babylon) drank it too." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

27Then the LORD said to me, "The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says to get drunk and vomit and when I send war against you, you'll be completely defeated. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God describes His judgment on sin as, "The cup of My anger" (v. 27). When Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, "Let this cup pass from me" (Matt. 26:39, NKJV), He was anticipating the physical agony He had to suffer when He suffered the sin of the world. But Jesus, knowing the torment, nevertheless prayed, "Your will be done" (Matt. 26:42, NKJV). Lord, I know Your holiness hates sin, and I know Your judgment punishes sin. Now I know the extent of Your love because Jesus suffered for my sin, "the

just for the unjust" (1 Peter. 3:18, NKJV). Because You loved me, You drank the "cup of God's anger." I don't deserve forgiveness, I worship You {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} because "the blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7, NKJV). Amen.

28 If they refuse to drink it, tell them they must. 29 I'll bring disaster on Jerusalem, where my name is honored, so I can't let these other nations not be punished. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
30 "Prophesy this message to them: 'The LORD will roar loudly from heaven like thunder against His land. He will shout against everyone, like those who tread grapes or a winepress. 31 His voice will be heard everywhere as He brings charges against all nations, and He brings charges against everyone, and kills the wicked.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
32 The LORD of the Heavens says, "Disaster is spreading from nation to nation like a terrible storm. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 33 I will kill many people everywhere No one will mourn for them or bury them. Their bodies will cover the ground like trash. 34 Weep and moan, you leaders. In your grief roll in the dust. Your time to be slaughtered like sheep has arrived, and you will be shattered like clay pottery. 35 You'll have no place to hide, and no way to escape. 36 Listen to the cries of the shepherds as I am destroying your pasturelands. 37 Your peaceful meadows will be like deserts. 38 I've left you like a lion leaves its den. The land will be made desolate by the enemy's swords and because of My fierce anger." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 26

Jeremiah Is Threatened with Death

1 Early in the reign of Jehoiakim son of Josiah, king of Judah, the LORD gave me this message. 2 He told me to stand in front of the temple and to speak His words to everyone who came there to worship. 3 Hopefully they will listen this time and turn from their sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} If they do, then I won't punish them as I've planned. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4 Tell them this is what I say: "If you don't listen to Me and obey Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 5 and if you don't listen to My prophets whom I've sent to you over and over, 6 then I will destroy this temple just as I destroyed the town of Shiloh, and people everywhere will curse Jerusalem.
7 The priests, prophets, and all the people heard what I said. 8 And as soon as I finished, the priests, prophets, and people grabbed me and said, "You ought to die for saying this about Jerusalem. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 9 How dare you say the temple will be like Shiloh and Jerusalem will be empty." And they crowded in on me.

Because Jeremiah was faithful to preach God's message that the temple would be destroyed, He was grabbed and they said, "You must die" (v. 8). Jeremiah was faithful to preach the message of the Lord and

was willing to die. Jeremiah embodied what Jesus later challenged, "Be faithful until death" (Rev. 2:10, NKJV). Lord, I know I am weak, but I will be faithful to You, {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} I know I am not bold, but I will not deny You. I will not rebel against You. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} I will not embarrass You. See the determination of my heart and give me strength to be faithful unto death. Amen.

10When the officials of Judah heard about this, they went to the temple by the New Gate. 11Then the priests and prophets told the officials that I should die because I had prophesied against Jerusalem. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 12Then I said, "This isn't my message. This is from the LORD. 13So if you change your ways {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and obey the LORD your God, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} He'll not bring the disaster He announced. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14As for me, do what you think is right. 15But if you put me to death, you and everyone in Jerusalem will be killing an innocent person because what I preached is from the LORD." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

16The officials and others told the priests and prophets that I should not be put to death because my messages are from the LORD. 17Some elders said to the people, 18"Years ago when Hezekiah was our king, Micah of Moresheth said, 'Zion will be plowed like a field and will become a pile of junk, and the temple mount will be covered with thorns.' {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19No one put Micah to death for saying that. Instead Hezekiah prayed and the LORD did not bring the disaster He had announced. So if we kill Jeremiah, we'll bring a terrible disaster on ourselves." {375 Pre-Answer to Prayer, Isa. 65:24}

20Uriah son of Shemaiah from Kiriath-Jearim prophesied the same things Jeremiah did. 21When King Jehoiakim and his officials heard Uriah, the king tried to arrest and kill him. But Uriah escaped to Egypt. 22So Jehoiakim sent Elnathan son of Acbor and some other men to Egypt, 23and they brought him back to Jehoiakim, who had Uriah killed and his body buried in an unmarked grave.

There was a previously unknown prophet Uriah the son of Shemaiah who also preached against Jerusalem (v. 20). He was one of the many unsung martyrs who was a faithful witness, {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} who suffered and died by the sword under King Jehoiakim. Lord, teach me the lesson of total surrender from Uriah, {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} help me be as faithful to You as he was. I know You have an eternal reward for me, {409 Reward for Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} just as You had for Uriah. Amen.

24Ahikam son of Shaphan supported me, and so I was not killed.

Some die for their faith as did Uriah. Some escape martyrdom as did Jeremiah. Lord, whether I live or die, my life is in Your hands. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

You know whether I shall die by accident, or peacefully, or as a martyr. I yield {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} my future to You. Amen.

Jeremiah 27

Do Not Listen to False Prophets

1Soon after Zedekiah son of Josiah became king of Judah, the LORD gave me this message: 2"Jeremiah, make a wooden yoke with leather straps, and put it on your neck. 3Then send a message to the kings of Edom, Moab, Ammon, Tyre, and Sidon through their ambassadors who are meeting with Zedekiah. 4Give them this word for their masters: 'The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says for you to tell your masters that 5in My great power I created the earth and its people and animals, and I give these things to anyone I please. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} 6I will give your countries over to Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon. He will even rule over wild animals. 7All the nations will serve him, his son, and his grandson. Then many nations and their kings will conquer Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
8'This yoke stands for Nebuchadnezzar, and any nation that doesn't serve him will be punished with war, starvation, and disease.

It is senseless to rebel against God, since He has ordained what shall come to pass. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} It was useless for Israel to revolt against Nebuchadnezzar since God had decreed Israel's judgment. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} Lord, I will not fight Your will for my life. I submit to Your plans. Use me to accomplish Your will. When I've fought against You in the past, I've always lost. I again surrender {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} to You for this day. Amen.

9Don't listen to false prophets, fortune-tellers, dream interpreters, psychics, or anyone who seeks to talk with the dead, and who say, "Don't worry. You won't be taken captive to Babylon." 10If you listen to these lies, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} I'll remove you from your lands and you will die. 11But if you submit to the yoke of the king of Babylon, I'll let you stay in your country and farm your land. I, the LORD, have spoken these words."
12I gave this same message to Zedekiah. I said to him, "If you want to live, then be under the yoke of the king of Babylon. 13But if you don't, you'll die by war, starvation, or disease. 14Those prophets who say you won't be slaves in Babylon are lying. 15I didn't send them. So if you follow them, you and they will be thrown out of your country and will die." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
16Then I told the priests and the people not to listen to the prophets who are saying that the Babylonians will soon return to our temple the gold utensils they stole. They are lying. 17Don't listen to them. Instead serve the king of Babylon and you

will live. If you don't, the city will be a trash heap. [18]If they really are My prophets, they should pray that I let not anything else be taken from the temple and the king's palace. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [19]The bronze columns, the bronze water tank, the bronze water carts, and other articles in the temple and the city [20]were not taken by Nebuchadnezzar when he took Jehoiachin son of Jehoaikim and other leaders to Babylon. [21]I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, say that the items left in the temple and the palace [22]will later be taken to Babylon. They will remain there till I decide to bring them back.

Nebuchadnezzar took the smaller vessels from the temple the first time captives were taken to Babylon. Jeremiah predicts the large vessels would be taken the second time (v. 19-21). But Jeremiah's predictions didn't stop there. The Lord said, "I will bring them back and return them to this place" (v. 22). Lord, I believe Your Word, because everything You have predicted in the past has come true. So what You say about today is true. And what You promise about the future will happen. Amen.

Jeremiah 28

Jeremiah and the False Prophet Hananiah

[1]Later in the summer of that same year, Zedekiah's fourth year as king of Judah, Hananiah son of Azzur from Gibeon, a prophet, said to me while the priests and people were listening, [2]"The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, will break the yoke that Nebuchadnezzar put on you. [3]In two years He will bring back all the temple treasures that he took. [4]And Jehoiachin son of Jehoiakim and all the captives taken to Babylon will be allowed to return. I will break the yoke of the king of Babylon."

There will always be false prophets who speak contrary to God's Word. Hananiah predicted that in two years God would break the yoke of Nebuchadnezzar on Judah. Also, that the stolen vessels would be returned to the temple. This was the opposite of Jeremiah's prophecy (22:26-27; 27:16). There will be false prophets today who say something like, "All religions lead to heaven," or, "There are mistakes in the Bible so we can't trust it." Lord, keep the influence of false prophets away from me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} I believe everything You said in Your Word. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} I believe You will do exactly what You said, and I believe You will do it in Your way and in Your time. Amen.

[5]Then I, Jeremiah, said, as the priests and peoples were listening, [6]"Amen. May this be so. I hope the temple articles will be returned and the captives released. [7]However, listen to my words. [8]Long ago prophets before us predicted war, disaster, and disease against many countries. [9]So if you are predicting peace, we will know you are

a true prophet only if that comes true." {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}
10Then Hananiah took the yoke off my neck and broke it, 11and he said, "In two years the LORD says He will break the yoke of Babylon in this way." Then I left the temple. 12Soon after that the LORD said to me, 13"Go tell Hananiah, you broke this wooden yoke, but I'll put a yoke of iron {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14on the necks of many nations to make them serve as slaves of Nebuchadnezzar. And as I said before, I will even let him rule over wild animals."
15Then I said to Hananiah, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} "I know the LORD didn't send you to speak to us. But you urged the people to believe your lies. 16So the LORD says, 'This very year you will die {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} because you rebelled against the LORD.'" 17Two months later Hananiah died.

God condemned Hananiah because, "You have made the people of Judah trust in lies" (v. 15). Therefore Jeremiah predicted, "You will die this year" (v. 16). Then the prediction was vindicated, "Hananiah died... that same year" (v. 17). Lord, seal Your Holy Spirit to guide my study. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Help me accurately teach the Bible so that I tell the people what You've said. I want to be as truthful as Your Word. {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1} Keep me from error. Amen.

Jeremiah 29

A Letter from Jeremiah to the Exiles

1I sent a letter to the Jewish captives in Babylon, including the priests, prophets, and others Nebuchadnezzar took from royal officials, leaders, craftsmen, and other workers who were captives in Babylon. 2This was after King Jehoiachin, his mother, and court officials, leaders, and workmen were taken captives. 3I gave this letter to Elasah son of Shaphan and Gemariah son of Hilkiah, when they were sent to Babylon by King Zedekiah. The letter said:
4"'The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says to all the captives in Babylon. 5Build houses and settle there. Plant gardens and eat food you grow. 6Marry and have children, and help your sons find wives and your daughters husbands so you will have grandchildren. Increase in numbers; don't get smaller in number. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 7Work for Babylon to be peaceful and prosperous. If it prospers, so will you. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 8I say, Don't let prophets and fortune-tellers trick you.

Jeremiah wrote a letter to the exiles in Babylon, gathered in their own settlements. Jeremiah told them to settle down, and to "pray for the peace of Babylon," because, "if there is peace in that city, you will have peace also" (v. 7). Loyalty to country by the Jews has been a guiding principle wherever the Jews have gone. That principle has preserved the

Jews through the centuries. Lord, help me to learn the principle of praying for my nation and its leaders. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} I will be loyal to my nation and pay my taxes. Bless me {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} and bless my nation. Amen.

9"Don't listen to their dreams because they will tell you lies. Remember that I haven't sent them.

10"After you've been in Babylon 70 years, I'll keep My promise and bring you back to your land. 11My plans are to help you prosper, not to harm you, {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} and to give you a future filled with hope. 12When you pray to Me, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} I will answer. 13And when you seek Me with all your heart, {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 14I will respond. I will bring you back to your land from being captives {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} in nations where I scattered you.

15"You may say I sent prophets to you in Babylon. 16But 17I'll send war, starvation, and disease against the king on David's throne and the people left in Jerusalem and Judah, and they'll be like rotten figs. 18I'll pursue them, as I said, with war, starvation, and disease As a result nations will be horrified at you, and will curse, scorn, and mock you. 19All this will happen because you've not obeyed Me, even though I sent My servants the prophets to you again and again. And you captives didn't listen either. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

20"You captives in Babylon, 21listen to what I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, say about the false prophets Ahab son of Kolaiah and Zedekiah son of Maaseiah. I'll have Nebuchadnezzar put them to death while you look on. 22Then when you captives curse someone, you will say, 'May the LORD treat you like Zedekiah and Ahab, whom Nebuchadnezzar burned alive.' 23They did terrible things, such as committing adultery with their neighbor's wives and telling lies." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

24The LORD said to me, "Tell Shemaiah the Nehelamite, 25the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says you sent letters to the people in Jerusalem and to Zephaniah son of Maaseiah the priest and all the other priests 26that the LORD had appointed Zephaniah to be priest in place of Jehoiada. So you should put in stocks and iron collars anyone who claims to be a prophet. 27Jeremiah from Anathoth says he is a prophet, so why haven't you done anything about him? 28Jeremiah wrote to the people here in Babylonia, saying we would be here a long time and we should build homes and plant gardens and grow our own food." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

29When Zephaniah received Shemaiah's letter, he read it to me, Jeremiah. 30Then the LORD told me 31to write another letter to the captives, which said, "I, the LORD, say this about Shemaiah the Nehelamite: He has prophesied to you, but I didn't send him. He has tricked you into believing a lie. 32So I will punish him and his family. They will not live to see what good things

I will do for My people because he has encouraged you to rebel against Me." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 30

Israel and Judah Will Be Restored

[1]Again the LORD said to me, [2]"I the LORD, the God of Israel, want you to write on a scroll everything I have told you. [3]In the future I'll bring My people Israel and Judah back home from captivity {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} to the land I gave their ancestors." [4]Then the LORD told me to give them this message: [5]"I, the LORD, say, 'I hear the people crying terror, {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} and there is no peace. [6]A man can't give birth to children, so why is every man pressing his hands against his stomach like a woman in child labor, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} with their faces pale? [7]A time of trouble is coming for Israel, and nothing like it has ever happened before. But I will rescue My people.

The Lord promises both punishment and redemption to His people. But this prediction was not Israel's present punishment, but a future punishment that will be worse than Babylon's destruction. God promises, "The time of Jacob's trouble" (v. 7), which is the coming tribulation promised by Jesus (Matt. 24:4-26). Jesus called it "the great tribulation" (Matt. 24:29). It will be followed by 1,000 years of peace when Israel returns to the land. "I will bring again the captivity of My people Israel and Judah" (v. 3). David will rule over Israel (v. 9). Lord, I believe You have a great plan for Israel. I don't understand why, but I marvel at Your love for the Jews when they were so hard-hearted and rebellious. That means You will be kind to me and deal with me in mercy. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} Lord, be gracious to me. Amen.

[8]"In that future day," says the LORD of the Heavens, "I'll break off your yokes and chains and you'll no longer be slaves of other nations. [9]You'll serve Me your God and David your king whom I'll raise up. [10]So Israel, don't be afraid or discouraged. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. I'll bring you back home from a distant land, and you will again be at peace and have no fears. [11]I'm with you. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} I'll completely destroy the nations where I'll scatter you, but I won't completely destroy you. Yet I will punish you as necessary." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[12]The LORD said, "Your wound can't be cured, {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [13]and no one can defend you just as no one has a remedy for your sore. [14]Your allies don't remember you and don't care for you. I've wounded you as if I were your enemy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Why? Because of your great guilt and many sins. [15]Why cry about your pain when there is no cure? {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} I've done all this to you because of your great guilt and many sins. [16]Those who destroy you will themselves

be destroyed, and I'll rob those who rob you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 17I'll restore you to health even though you Jerusalem are like an outcast no one cares about."

18The LORD also says, "I'll bring you home from being captives and I'll be kind to you. Jerusalem, in ruins, will be rebuilt and the king's palace reconstructed. {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} 19You'll sing and rejoice, {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} your numbers will increase, and other people will honor you and you'll not be despised. 20Your children will prosper, and your nation will be well established. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} I'll punish anyone who hurts You. 21One of your own people, not some foreigner, will be your ruler. When I invite him to come worship Me, he will respond. 22So you'll be My people, and I'll be your God. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 23Remember that My anger can be like a strong storm, or a driving wind on those who are wicked. 24My anger will continue until I've finished all I plan to do. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Someday you'll understand all this."

Jeremiah 31

The Return of God's People

1"In that first day," the LORD says, "I'll be the God of all the families in Israel and they'll be My people. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} 2In the desert I helped those who escaped death by the sword." 3Long ago the LORD appeared to me and said, "I'll always love you and be kind to you. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 4I'll rebuild your nation, {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} and you'll dance for joy and play your tambourines. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}

What a lovely promise. God promises, "I will build you up." Then, "You will be rebuilt." Lord, build me up in the faith, make me a strong believer. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} I don't want to be weak, so I will study to learn Your Word. I will obey Your commands {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} so I will be strong. Then I claim Your promise, "You will be rebuilt." Amen.

5You'll plant vineyards on the hills of Samaria and you'll enjoy the grapes. 6Those who guard Ephraim will say, 'Let's go to Jerusalem to worship the LORD.'" {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

7The LORD says, "Sing for joy for Israel, {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} the greatest of the nations. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} Say, 'O LORD, save what is left of Your people.' {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 8I'll bring them from the north and from distant places on the earth. A great many will return, including the blind and the lame and expectant mothers. 9They'll weep with joy {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} as I lead them home. {106 Definition of Prayer, Heb. 11:6} I will lead them beside pleasant streams, and they'll walk on a level road and not stumble. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} I'm like a

father to Israel, and I love Ephraim as if he were my oldest son.
10"Listen to Me, you nations and tell My message in distant coastlands. I scattered My people, but I'll gather them together again {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} and watch over them as a shepherd watches his flock. 11I'll rescue them from strong enemies. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 12They'll come home and sing for joy {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} in Jerusalem because I'll give them {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} much wine and olive oil, and many flocks and herds. They'll be refreshed like a garden with plenty of water, {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} and their sorrows will be gone. 13Young women, young men, and older people will dance with joy because I'll comfort them and turn their mourning into joy {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and their sorrow into rejoicing. 14I'll see that the priests have many offerings, and I'll bless My people with everything they need. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} I, the LORD, have spoken these words."
15The LORD says, "In Ramah Rachel is weeping for her children who have died, and she refuses to be comforted.

A picture is seen of "Rachel's weeping for her children" (v. 15). Although Rachel's exact burial place is unconfirmed, when I first visited a stone marking her grave outside Bethlehem, it was surrounded by shepherds' fields. Today, there's a fast food restaurant next to it, and it's surrounded by condos and apartments. Rachel is weeping prophetically from her grave over descendants who are slaughtered. This was fulfilled when Herod slaughtered the children two years and younger in and around Bethlehem (Matt. 2:16). Herod was trying to kill the Christ-Child born to Mary (Matt. 2:1-11). Then Matthew added, "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, weeping, and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, refusing to be comforted, because they are no more" (Matt. 2:18, NKJV). Lord, give me a sad heart over the death of Your martyrs, and give me crying eyes over the slaughter of Your children. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} May I weep in prayer for the protection of Your people. Teach me to intercede for all. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Amen.

16But the LORD says, "Don't weep anymore {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because your children will come home from captivity. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 17So there is hope," {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} says the LORD.
18"The people of Israel moaned when I disciplined them {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} for being like an unruly calf, and they said, 'Restore us, LORD, {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} for You alone are the LORD our God: 19We turned from you, and then were sorry. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} We were ashamed of all the things we did in our youth.' 20Israel, you are My dear son, My delightful child. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} I often

make threats against you, but I still love you. I long for you, and I'll have mercy on you. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}
21"As you go into captivity, put up guideposts on the highway to guide you as you return. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 22Don't keep wandering away from Me, because someday I'll make things different, like a woman courting a man."
23The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says, "I'll bring the people of Judah back to their hometowns. And when I do, they'll say, 'May the LORD bless you, {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} O sacred hill where My temple stands.'
24People in Jerusalem and farmers and shepherds will live together, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 25for I'll give rest to those who are tired." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
26Then I, Jeremiah, woke up and looked around. I had had a pleasant sleep. 27Then the LORD said, "The day will come when the people of Israel and Judah and their livestock will grow in numbers like a plant. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 28In the past I uprooted and tore you down by a terrible disaster. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But in the future I'll plant you and build you up. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 29People have said, 'Parents eat sour grapes and their children have a sour taste in their mouths.' 30But in the future everyone will die for his own sins. Those who eat sour grapes, not someone else, will have a sour taste."
31The LORD also said, "The day will come when I'll make a new agreement with Israel {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and Judah. 32This agreement will differ from the one I made with our ancestors after I recused them from Egypt. They broke that agreement, though I was committed to them like a husband is committed to his bride. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 33This is the agreement I'll make with them. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} I'll put My laws on their hearts and minds. I'll be their God, and they'll be My people. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 34No one will need to teach someone to know and obey Me, {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} because everyone, both rulers and common people, will know and obey Me. I'll forgive them their wickedness {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and never again think of their sins."
35The LORD provides the sun to light the day and the moon and stars to light the night. He who stirs up the sea and makes its waves roar is the LORD of the Heavens.
36The LORD says, "Just as these things in nature will not vanish, so My people Israel will continue as a nation. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 37I would reject you, Israel, only if the heavens can be measured and the depths of the earth explored {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} in spite of your sins.
38"'The day will come," the LORD says, "when Jerusalem will be rebuilt {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} from the Hananel Tower to the Corner Gate. 39From there the city boundary will go to Gareb Hill and then toward Goah. 40Even the Hinnom Valley, with its corpses and ashes, and the hills that slope down

to the Kidron Valley on the east as far as the Horse Gate will be sacred to Me. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} And the people of Jerusalem will never again be captured or the city destroyed."

Jeremiah 32

Jeremiah Buys a Field in Anathoth

[1]In the 10th year of Zedekiah king of Judah, which was the 18th year that Nebuchadnezzar was king of Babylonia, the LORD spoke to me again. [2]The Babylonian army had surrounded Jerusalem, and I was in prison in the courtyard of the royal guards. [3]Zedekiah had put me there because I had said, "The LORD says, 'I'll soon hand over this city to the king of Babylonia. [4]He'll capture Zedekiah and the two of them will speak face to face. [5]Nebuchadnezzar will take Zedekiah to Babylon, and I'll deal with him there. If you fight against the Babylonians, you will lose.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[6]Then when I was in prison the LORD said, [7]"'Your cousin Hanamel, son of your uncle Shallum, will come see you, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and he'll say, 'Buy my field in Anathoth. You have the right to do it because you are my nearest relative.'" [8]Then as the LORD had said, Hanamel came to see me and asked me to buy his fields in Anathoth in Benjamin. I knew the LORD wanted me to do this, so [9]I bought the field for 17 pieces of silver. [10]I signed and sealed the deed of sale and had it witnessed. [11]I took the sealed copy of the deed and an unsealed copy, [12]and gave them to Baruch, son of Neriah, and grandson of Mahseiah, as witnesses and Jews who were sitting in the temple courtyard looked on. [13]I told Baruch, [14]"'The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says for you to put the sealed and unsealed copies of the deed in a clay jar. That way they'll last a long time.'" [15]The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says, "This purchase, Jeremiah, was a good idea because in the future houses, fields, and vineyards will again be purchased here." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
[16]I gave the deed to Baruch, and then I prayed, {106 Definition of Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [17]"O Sovereign LORD, You've made the heavens and the earth by Your great power. Nothing is too difficult for You. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [18]You show steadfast love to thousands, and yet the fathers' sins affect their children. You are the great and powerful God, the LORD of the Heavens. [19]Your plans and Your works are great. You see what everyone does, and You reward them. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [20]You performed amazing miracles in Egypt, and You continue to do so in Israel and elsewhere, which has made You famous. [21]You rescued Your people from Egypt by performing great miracles with Your great power and You brought terror on all the Egyptians. [22]You gave Your people this land {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} that You had promised to our ancestors. [23]They conquered the land, but they didn't obey You {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and Your laws. Since

they didn't do what You told them to do, You brought this disaster on them. [24]The Babylonians have built siege ramps against Jerusalem's walls, and the Babylonians will defeat the city, and people will die by the sword, starvation, and disease. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} [25]Though the Babylonians will conquer the city, You, O Sovereign LORD, told me to buy Hanamel's field."

[26]Then the LORD spoke to me {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} saying, [27]"I am the LORD, the God of the whole world. Nothing is too difficult for Me."

Jeremiah prayed, "There is nothing too wonderful for You to do" (v. 17, NKJV). Then God repeats Jeremiah's words in a question, "I am the LORD, the God of all flesh. Is there anything too hard for Me" (v. 27, NKJV)? Lord, I believe You are all-powerful, therefore I worship You for what You've done in the past. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} I praise You for what You will do in the future. Although Jerusalem was destroyed, You allowed the Jews to return and build the walls under Nehemiah's leadership. And You will do it again in the future. There's nothing too hard for You. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} So, do something wonderful in my life today. Amen.

[28]"I will hand this city over to the Babylonians and their king Nebuchadnezzar. [29]They will attack it and enter the city and set it on fire. They will burn down the houses where the people made Me angry by burning incense on the rooftop to Baal and pouring out drink offerings to other gods. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [30]From their earliest years Israel and Judah have done nothing but evil. And the idols they have made have made Me angry. [31]So I have decided to get rid of the city. [32]The sins of the kings, officials, priests, prophets, and everyone in Jerusalem have made Me very angry. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [33]They turned from Me. I tried over and over to teach them to obey Me, but they wouldn't listen and wouldn't respond to My discipline. {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} [34]They even set up their disgusting idols in My temple, [35]and they built altars to Baal in the Hinnom Valley where they sacrificed their children to Molech. I never told them to do that, and such a terrible thing never entered My mind. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[36]"Jeremiah, you are correct in saying that the city will fall to the king of Babylon by war, starvation, and disease. However, that's not the full story. [37]I will bring My people back from the places where I scattered them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and they'll be safe again. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [38]They'll be My people, and I'll be their God. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [39]I'll give them a new heart and a new mind so that they will reverence and worship Me {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} for their own good and the good of their children. [40]I will make an agreement that will last forever, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and I'll continue doing good for them and I'll encourage them to

worship Me and not turn from Me. 41I'll bless them and plant them in their land again." {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
42The LORD says, "Just as I sent terrible calamities on them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} so I'll prosper them as I promised. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 43You have said, 'This land is like a desert, destroyed by the Babylonians.' 44But you will buy land in Benjamin, and villages around Jerusalem, in the towns of Judah, and the hill country, the western foothills, and the Southern Desert, and deeds of purchase will be signed, sealed, and witnessed. In this way I'll make them rich again." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Jeremiah 33

Hope for God's People

1While I was still being held prisoner in the courtyard of the palace guards, the LORD said to me, 2"I am the LORD, who created the world. The LORD is My name. 3Ask Me and I'll show you some mighty things {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} that are about to happen."

The phrase, "You have never heard these things before" (v. 3) means I don't realize all the things God does for me when He arranges small details to answer my prayers. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Also God does mighty miracles to answer my prayers, when I don't even know He is working. Lord, I call on You today for Your mighty work in my life. You know the small and large things for which I pray. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} I rest in Your promise, "I will answer You" (v. 3). Amen.

4"Many of the houses in Jerusalem and the king's palace have been torn down to use materials to strengthen the city walls against the siege ramps 5of the Babylonians. But they will enter the city anyway, and I'll fill the city with dead bodies of the men of this city in My anger. I will ignore the prayers of My people because of their evil. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}
6"But the time will come when I'll heal this place and My people, and they'll enjoy peace and security. 7I'll bring Judah and Israel back from being captives, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} and rebuild their cities. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 8I'll forgive them of their rebelling against Me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 9Then Jerusalem will bring Me joy and honor. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} All the nations will see the good things I'll do for My people, including giving them peace and prosperity, and they'll tremble with fear. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4}
10"You say this land is a dry desert with no people or animals in it. But in the deserted towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem, you'll again hear 11happy voices and the joyful sounds of brides and grooms and songs of people bringing thank offerings to the temple. They'll say, 'Thank the LORD of the Heavens, for He is good, {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant

Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} and His steadfast love will last forever.' I will make the land prosperous, as it was in the past." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

12The LORD of the Heavens says, "This land is now desolate with no people or animals, but the time is coming when shepherds will take care of their flocks 13near towns in the hill country, the western foothills, the Southern Desert, the land of Benjamin, and villages around Jerusalem and in Judah. I the LORD have spoken these words. 14The time is coming when I will keep the promise I made {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} to Israel and Judah. 15At that time I'll appoint a king from David's family {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} who will do what is right and fair. 16In those days Judah will be safe and Jerusalem will be at peace, {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} and Jerusalem will be named 'The LORD Is Just.' 17A branch (descendant) of David will always be king, 18and priests of the tribe of Levi will always offer sacrifices to Me." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

19The LORD then gave me this message: 20"I made an agreement with the day and the night. But if the sun and moon fail to shine, 21only then will I break the agreement I made with David and with the priests who serve in the temple. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 22In fact the descendants of David and the priests who serve Me will be more in number {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} than the stars in the sky {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} or the grains of sand on the seashore."

23The LORD also said, "No doubt you've heard people say, 24'How strange. The LORD chose the two nations of Judah and Israel and then rejected them.' So they are now saying they are no longer a nation. 25But I say, 'Just as I'll never change My agreement with the sun and the moon, 26so I'll never reject My people and David My servant or change My plans to have a descendant of David rule as king over the descendants of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. I'll be king of My people and bring them back to their land.'" {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}

The mysteries of eternity that I don't know yet are available to me only when I call. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} ***Lord,*** *I call boldly; give me bold answers. I call patiently; teach me to wait on You. I call in emergencies; answer quickly. I call when discouraged; give me courage. I call when scared; let me hear, "Fear not, for I am with you" (Isa. 41:10, NKJV). Amen.*

Jeremiah 34

Jeremiah Warns Zedekiah

1When Nebuchadnezzar king of Babylon and his army and the armies of every nation in his kingdom were attacking Jerusalem and towns, the LORD gave me this message: 2"Go to King Zedekiah of Judah and tell him that I, the LORD, the God of Israel, will let the king of

Babylon capture Jerusalem and burn it to the ground. 3You'll be taken captive, and he'll speak with you personally, and he'll take you over to Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4Yet I won't let you be killed in battle. 5You'll die peacefully. People will burn a fire in your honor, just as they did for your ancestors. They'll mourn your death saying, 'How terrible. Our king is dead.'" {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 6I told this to Zedekiah in Jerusalem, 7while Nebuchadnezzar was fighting against three remaining cities in Judah—Jerusalem, Lachish, and Azekah.

8Zedekiah had made an agreement with everyone in Jerusalem 9that they should free all Hebrew men and women who were slaves. No Jew was to keep another as a slave. 10So the officials and all the people freed their slaves. 11But then they changed their minds and made them slaves again. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 12So the LORD gave me this message: 13"I, the LORD, the God of Israel, made an agreement with your ancestors when I rescued them from slavery in Egypt. 14I told them they were to set slaves free after six years. But you didn't do this. 15Recently you decided to do the right things and you set your slaves free. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 16But now you have disgraced My name {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} by taking back the slaves you had set free.

17"Since you haven't obeyed Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I'll now give you 'freedom'—freedom to die in war or by starvation or disease. And nations will be disgusted with you. 18Since you haven't kept the agreement we had, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll cut you apart just as you cut apart a calf and then walk between the two parts. 19All those who walk between the pieces of the calf—leaders, court officials, priests, and all the people—20will be taken captives by your enemies. The wild birds and wild beasts will eat their dead bodies. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 21The army of the Babylonian king will capture Zedekiah and his officials. If Nebuchadnezzar leaves the city, 22I'll have him and his army come back. They'll conquer the city, burn it down, and they'll destroy all the towns of Judah and leave them completely empty." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 35

The Rechabites Used as an Example of Obedience

1When Jehoiakim, son of Josiah, was king of Judah, the LORD told me, 2"Invite the Recabite clan to meet you in one of the temple side rooms and offer them wine." 3So I went to Jaazaniah, son of Jeremiah, and grandson of Habazziniah, and all his brothers and sons, 4and took them to the temple to the room of Hanan, son of Igdaliah, a prophet. This room was next to the room of the officials, which was directly above the room of Maaseiah, son of Shallum. 5I set out large bowls of wine and some cups for them to have some wine. 6But they said, "No, we don't drink wine. Why? Because Jonadab, son of Rechab, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt.

1:1-17} our ancestor, told us, 'Don't ever drink wine.'"

There will always be a godly remnant that will obey God, who separate themselves from sin, and live according to the Scriptures, as did the Rechabites. Lord, I will be one of the godly remnant who live for You. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} I will separate myself from sin and I will not compromise. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} What I learn from the Scriptures, I will live according to the Scriptures. Be glorified in my life. Amen.

7"Never build houses or plant crops or vineyards. Instead live in tents. And if you follow these commands, you'll live a long time." 8So we have never drunk wine, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

The Rechabites were offered wine. They refused based on their obedience to God. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} So God used their faithfulness as an example to Judah. God would punish Judah for their disobedience. Lord, while the world around me gets drunk on alcohol, I will be sober in body and sober in soul. I will be a clean vessel as a testimony to You of my faithfulness. I want to be filled with the Holy Spirit, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} I will not be filled with wine (Eph. 5:18). Amen.

9"or built houses, or had vineyards, farms, or crops. 10We have lived in tents and have obeyed our ancestor Rechab. 11But when Nebuchadnezzar invaded this land, with the armies from Babylonia and northeast Mesopotamia, we decided to move to Jerusalem."

12Then the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, said, 13"'Tell the people of Judah and Jerusalem, 'Come learn a lesson about obeying Me. 14Jonadab son of Rechab told his sons not to drink wine, and they haven't. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} And yet I have spoken to you over and over, and you haven't obeyed Me. 15I've sent you one prophet after another to tell you to turn from your sinful ways {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and not serve false gods, so that you may live in the land. But you've not listened. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 16The Rechabites have obeyed their ancestor Jonadab, but you have not obeyed Me.'"

God is looking for obedient followers today just like the Rechabites. Lord, I desire to obey Your commands inwardly and outwardly—bless me. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} I desire to keep Your precepts in thought and deed—bless me. I desire to do according to all Your principles with intent and actions—bless me. Amen.

17"'Therefore, I'll bring on you all the disasters I've mentioned, all because you didn't listen to Me or respond to My call.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

18Then I said to the Rechabites, "The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says to you, 'You have obeyed the command of Jonadab, following all his instructions. 19Therefore his descendants

will always serve Me faithfully.'" {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

Jeremiah 36

King Jehoiakim Burns the Scroll

[1]In the fourth year that Jehoiakim son of Josiah was king in Judah the LORD gave me this message: [2]"Write down on a scroll all My messages about Israel, Judah, and other nations beginning with My messages in the days of Josiah. [3]Perhaps when you read these to Judah, and they hear about the terrible things I plan to bring on them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} they will turn from their sin. If they do, I'll forgive their wickedness." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

[4]So I dictated to Baruch, son of Neraiah, everything the LORD had told me, and Baruch wrote it all down. [5]Then I said to Baruch, "Since I'm a prisoner here in the courtyard of the king's guard, I can't go to the temple. [6]So you go instead on the next day of fasting {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and read aloud these words on the scroll to the people of Judah. [7]Maybe they'll realize how angry the LORD is with them, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and they'll ask Him to forgive them." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[8]Baruch read these messages from the LORD to the people who were at the temple. [9]This happened in the fall of Jehoiakim's fifth year as king of Judah. This was a time of fasting {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} when people came from all the towns of Judah to Jerusalem. [10]Baruch read my words from the scroll to the people who were at the temple. He then read in the room of Gemariah, son of Shaphan, the secretary, which was near the upper courtyard, near the New Gate entrance. [11]Gemariah's son, Micaiah, heard Baruch read what the LORD said. [12]Then he went to his father's room in the king's palace, where he was meeting with his officials, including Elishama the secretary, Delaiah son of Shemaiah, Elnathan son of Acbor, Gemariah son of Shaphan, and Zedekiah son of Hananiah. [13]Micaiah told them what Baruch was reading to the people. [14]Then the officials sent Jehudi, son of Nethaniah, and Shelemiah, son of Cushi, to tell Baruch to bring the scroll. So he did, [15]and they asked him to sit down and read the scroll to them, {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} and Baruch did. [16]After hearing these words, they were worried and they said, "We must tell the king what we've heard. [17]But first, Baruch, how did you get these messages?" [18]Baruch answered, "Jeremiah dictated the words, and I wrote them down." [19]Then the officials said, "Baruch, you and Jeremiah should go hide somewhere."

[20]The officials put the scroll in Elishama's room and then told the king about it. [21]When the king heard this, he had Jehudi get the scroll, and Jehudi got it and read it to the king and his officials. [22]This was late fall and the king was sitting in front of a fire to keep warm. [23]Every time Jehudi finished reading three or four columns of the scroll, the king cut them off and threw them into the fire until the whole scroll was burned up.

What a terrible thing to reject God's Word, cut it to pieces, and then burn it in the fire. No wonder King Jehoiakim was punished. Lord, I love Your Word, {40 Bible-Comforting Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:18} I will defend Your Word, and I will oppose those who reject the Scriptures. There are some who don't actually cut up Bibles, nor do they burn Bibles, but their criticism of Scripture is just as bad. I will oppose them with all my ability. Amen.

24 The king and his attendants showed no fear {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} about what they had read. 25 Elnathan, Delaiah, and Gemariah begged the king not to burn the scroll, but he did anyway. 26 Then the king told Jerahmeel, a son of the king, Seraiah son of Azriel, and Shelemiah son of Abdeel to arrest Baruch and me. But the LORD kept us hidden.

27 Since Jehoiakim had burned the scroll, the LORD told me to 28 make another scroll and write on it everything that was on the first scroll. 29 "Also tell Jehoiakim, 'You burned the scroll because it said that the king of Babylonia would destroy the land and people and animals in it. 30 Therefore because you questioned the LORD, He says that no descendant of yours will sit on David's throne. And your body, Jehoiakim, will not be buried. It will be exposed to the heat of the day and the cold of the night. 31 I'll punish you and your children and your servants because they are all evil. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll bring on you all the disaster I promised, because you would not obey Me.'"

32 I gave Baruch another scroll and dictated to him again all the words on the first scroll that Jehoiakim had burned and I added other words to it.

Many have denied the Bible, and many teach there are mistakes in the Bible. Others have attacked the Bible with no results. But the Bible has bigger sales today than at any other time in history. The Bible is read by more people than ever, and more people accept it as the accurate authority of God. The Word of God will continue forever! Lord, I will believe the Bible, love the Bible, read the Bible, and will memorize its words. {39 Bible-Bless Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} But most importantly, I will obey the Bible and live according to its commands. Amen.

Jeremiah 37

Jeremiah Is Sent to Prison

1 King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia had removed Jehoiachin, son of Jehoiakim, from being king of Judah, and made Zedekiah, son of Josiah, king of Judah. 2 But Zedekiah, his officials, and all the people ignored everything the LORD told me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Jeremiah, to tell them. 3 Yet Zedekiah, sent Jehucal, son of Shelemiah, and Zephaniah, the priest, son of Maaseiah, to ask me to pray for them. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 4 This was before I was imprisoned.

5At that time Pharaoh's army from Egypt marched toward Judah. When the Babylonians heard this, they withdrew from surrounding Jerusalem. 6Then the LORD said to me, "Tell the king of Judah, who sent you to ask Me what will happen, 7that Pharaoh's army will soon return to Egypt. 8Then the Babylonians will come back and capture Jerusalem and burn it down. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9Don't think the Babylonians will leave again as they did before, because they won't. 10Even if you were to defeat the entire Babylonian army, their wounded soldiers would get up and burn this city down." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

11After the Babylonian army left Jerusalem because of Pharaoh's army, 12I started to leave Jerusalem to go to the land of Benjamin to see the property I had bought. 13But when I got to the Benjamin Gate in Jerusalem, Irijah, son of Shelemiah, and grandson of Hananiah, the guard captain, arrested me, because he thought I was joining the Babylonians. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 14I told him that wasn't true, but he wouldn't listen. He brought me to the officials 15who were angry with me and had some soldiers beat me, and he put me in the home of Jonathan the secretary, which they made into a prison. 16I was put into a cell in a basement room, where I was kept for a long time.

17Later Zedekiah had me brought to the palace where the king asked me, "Do you have any messages from the LORD?" I said, "Yes, I do. You'll be captured by the king of Babylonia. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18What crime have I committed against you and your officials or other that I've been imprisoned? 19Where are the prophets who told you Babylon will not attack this land? 20I have a request: Please don't send me back to the prison cell in the basement, or I'll die there." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

There is a time to be a martyr, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and there is a time to avoid martyrdom. Some have died for the Lord, such as Zacharias (Matt. 23:25) and Antipas (Rev. 2:13). On this occasion Jeremiah begged the king not to let him die (Jer. 37:18-20). On another occasion Jesus said, "When they persecute you in this city, flee to another" (Matt. 10:22-23). Lord, if I'm privileged to die for You, be glorified in the hour of my death. If I should run away from my persecution, guide my flight, and hide me from my enemies. May I die well. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Amen.

21So King Zedekiah had me taken to the courtyard of the king's guards. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} And he told officials to give me a loaf of fresh bread every day until the city ran out of grain. So I was there in the courtyard prison.

Jeremiah 38

Jeremiah Is Rescued from the Dungeon

1Four of the king's officials—Shephatiah, son of Mattan, Gedaliah, son of Pashhur, Jucal, son of Shelemiah, and Pashhur, son

of Malkijah—heard what I was telling the people: 2"If you stay here in Jerusalem, you'll die in battle or by starvation or disease, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} but whoever surrenders to the Babylonians will live. 3This city will certainly be captured by the Babylonians." 4These four men went to King Zedekiah and said, "This man should be put to death. He is discouraging the soldiers and everyone else. He's trying to harm us, not help us." 5Zedekiah said, "Okay. Do with him what you want. I won't stop you."

6So the officials lowered me with ropes into an empty well that belonged to Malkijah, the king's son. Now water was in the well, but I sank down in the mud. 7Ebed-Melech from Ethiopia, an official in the king's palace, heard what they had done to me. He went to speak with the king who was sitting by the Benjamin Gate. 8He said to the king, 9"These men have done a terrible thing by putting Jeremiah in Malkijah's well. He will starve to death {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} down there when the city runs out of bread." 10So the king said, "Take 30 men and lift Jeremiah out." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

11Eded-Melech and 30 men went to a room in the palace below the treasury and got some old rags and worn-out clothes. He lowered these on a rope to me, 12and he said, "Put these old rags and clothes under your armpits so the ropes won't hurt you. I did this, 13and they pulled me up out of the well. Then I was kept in the courtyard of the palace guards. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

God has His servants who suffer, and God has His servants who help those who are suffering. Because Jeremiah predicted the fall of Jerusalem, the leaders accused Jeremiah, "He weakens the hands of the men of war" (v. 4). So they cast Jeremiah into a cistern (a place where water was stored). But Jeremiah sank in the mud for there was no water. He would have died, but Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian went to the king to get Jeremiah freed. He asked the privilege of releasing Jeremiah, "Before he died." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Lord, thank You for Jeremiah's willingness to suffer. I am also willing to suffer for You. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} Lord, thank You for Ebed-Melech who delivered him. Let me be one who delivers those who are suffering. Whether I suffer or I am in good health, I will serve You with worship {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and praise. Amen.

14Then King Zedekiah had me brought to his private entrance to the temple, and he said, "I want to ask you something. Don't hide anything from me." 15I said, "If I tell you the truth, you'll kill me. And will you listen to my advice?" 16But the king said, "As surely as the LORD lives, I won't kill you." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

17Then I said, "The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says, 'If you surrender to Babylon, you won't be killed and Jerusalem won't be burned. 18But if you won't surrender, the Babylonians will capture Jerusalem and burn it down, {267

Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and you'll not escape.'"
19Zedekiah then said to me, "I'm afraid to surrender because the Babylonians may hand me over to the Judeans, {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} and they may torture me." 20I said, "The Babylonians won't do that. Just obey the LORD, and then your life will be spared. 21But if you don't surrender, 22all the women in your palace will be given to officers of the Babylonian army. 23The women will make fun of you and say, 'The friends you trusted in have misled you. You are trapped in mud, and they have left you.' The Babylonians will take your wives and children captives, and you'll be captured and not escape, and the city will be burned down." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
24Then Zedekiah said to me, "Don't tell anyone what we talked about, or you might die. 25If my officials hear that I talked with you, they may ask what we talked about. 'If you don't tell us, we'll kill you.' {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 26Then tell them that you were begging me not to send me back to the basement cell in Jonathan's house where I would die."
27Soon the king's officials did come and asked me what I and the king talked about. I told them what the king said for me to tell them about the basement cell. So nothing more was said, and they left. 28I remained a prisoner in the courtyard of the king's guard until Jerusalem was captured.

Jeremiah 39
Jerusalem Falls

1In January (588 B.C.) of Zedekiah's ninth year Nebuchadnezzar returned to attack Jerusalem. They surrounded the city for a year and a half. 2Then on July 18, 586 B.C., in Zedekiah's 11th year, the Babylonians broke through the wall and captured the city. 3The Babylonian king's officers sat in the city's Middle Gate. These included Nergal-Sharezer of Samgar, Nebo-Sarsekim, a chief officer, Nergal-Sharezer, a high official and others.
4When King Zedekiah and his soldiers saw them, they tried to escape that night. They went by the king's garden through a gate between two walls and headed toward the Jordan Valley. 5But the Babylonian army chased them and caught up with them near Jericho. They arrested Zedekiah and took him to Nebuchadnezzar at the town of Riblah in the land of Hamath. The king of Babylonia sentenced Zedekiah to die. 6Then at Riblah the king of Babylonia killed Zedekiah's sons as he looked on, and Nebuchadnezzar also killed all the leaders of Judah's ruling families. 7Then he blinded Zedekiah and put him in bronze chains and sent him off to Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
8The Babylonians burned the royal palace and people's houses, and broke down Jerusalem's walls. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9Then Nebuzaradan, commander of the guards, led everyone away as captives, people who remained in the city along with others who had deserted to Nebuchadnezzar. 10But Nebuchadnezzar left

in Judah some of the poor people who owned no land, and he gave them vineyards and fields.
[11]Nebuchadnezzar told Nebuzaradan [12]to take care of me and give me whatever I want. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

God did not forget His promise to deliver Jeremiah (1:8). So Nebuchadnezzar gave orders, "Take him, look well to him, and do him no harm" (v. 12, KJV). Lord, I know You will protect me until I've finished Your task for me on earth. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} When it's done, receive my soul, Lord Jesus. Amen.

[13]So Nebuzaradan and other officers of the king, including Nebushazban and Nergal-Sharezer, [14]had me taken from the courtyard prison and turned me over to Gedaliah, son of Ahikam, and grandson of Shaphan, who took me home. So I stayed in Jerusalem with my people. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
[15]While I was still in prison in the courtyard of the palace guard, the LORD said to me, [16]"Tell Ebed-Melech the Ethiopian that I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, will soon do to Jerusalem everything I have predicted, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} and you'll see it happen. [17]But, I'll rescue you from those you fear. [18]Because you trust in Me, I will keep you alive." {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Jeremiah 40

Jeremiah Is Freed

[1]I was taken in chains with other captives from Judah who were being taken to Babylon. When we arrived in Ramah, [2]Nebuzaradan said to me, "The LORD your God has brought this disaster on your land [3]as He said He would. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But your people continued to disobey Him, and that's why this happened. [4]I'll now take off your chains {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and set you free. If you want, you can come to Babylon. Or if you don't want to, you can go wherever you wish."

Jeremiah was released from prison and freed by order of Nebuchadnezzar. But when the deportees were rounded up in Ramah, Jeremiah was caught up in the crowd and chained. When the captain realized Jeremiah was in shackles (vv. 2-3), he announced, "I loose thee this day from the chains which were upon thy hand" (v. 4, KJV). Lord, thank You for honoring the promise made to Jeremiah, thank You for working through the memory of the captain of the guard. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Lord, work through my memory so I always do the things I promise. Work through the memory of others so they will perform the things You want me to experience or have. Thank You for our recessive-memory where secrets of yesteryears are stored. When I need facts

hidden away in my mind, bring them to remembrance. Amen.

5"Nebuchadnezzar appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah, so you can stay here near him or wherever you wish." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} Then Nebuzaradan gave me some food and money and let me go. 6So I lived near Gedaliah in Mizpah with others who were left in the land. {325 Non-Anxiety Prayer, Phil. 4:6, 7}

7The officers of the army of Judah in the countryside heard that Nebuchadnezzar had appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah and that poor people had not been taken to Babylonia. 8So several leaders went to see Gedaliah. They were Ishmael son of Nethaniah, Johanan and Jonathan sons of Kareah, Seraiah son of Tanhumeth, the sons of Ephai the Netophathite, and Jaazaniah son of the Maacathite, and all their men. 9Gedaliah told them, "It's okay to surrender to the Babylonians. If you settle down here, all will go well. 10I'll stay here at Mizpah and meet with the Babylonians when they come visit us. But you are to harvest grapes, summer fruits, and olives."

11Many Jews had escaped to Moab, Ammon, Edom, and elsewhere. Then when they heard that the king of Babylonia had appointed Gedaliah governor of Judah, 12they returned to Judah and harvested a lot of grapes and summer fruit.

13Johanan, son of Kareah, and some army officers went to see Gedaliah. 14They said, "Did you know that Baal is king of the Ammonites sent Ishmael son of Nethaniah to kill you?" But Gedaliah didn't believe them. 15So Johanan said to Gedaliah, "Let me kill Ishmael. Why should we let him take your life and cause us to be scattered and perish?" {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8} 16But Gedaliah said, "Don't kill Ishmael. What you said about him can't be true." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

Jeremiah 41

Jeremiah Freed

1In the fall Ishmael, one of the king's officials, went to Mizpah with ten men to visit with Gedaliah. While they were eating together, 2Ishmael and the ten men killed Gedaliah, the one the kings of Babylonia had appointed governor.

Jonathan, one of Israel's guerilla leaders went to Gedaliah to warn him of a plot by Ishmael to assassinate him. Gedaliah didn't believe it and wouldn't let Jonathan help him. So Gedaliah was assassinated. Lord, give me wisdom to understand the truth in rumors brought to me. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8} Give me wisdom to act properly, as You would have me respond to "reported" dangers. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} Protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

3Then they killed the Jews who were with Gedaliah and Babylonian soldiers who were there.

[4]The next day, before anyone knew about the murders, [5]80 men came from Shechem, Shiloh, and Samaria with grain offerings and incense to the temple. They had shaved their heads, torn their clothes, and cut themselves in mourning. [6]Ishmael, pretending to be weeping, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} went out to meet them and said, "Come meet with Gedaliah." [7]When they got to town, Ishmael and men with him killed them and put their bodies in a pit.

The assassination came in October, that is, on the Day of Atonement, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} or the Feast of Tabernacles. Ishmael had royal blood in his veins, so maybe he was avenging the injustice done to his relative Zedekiah. But his treacherous acts don't justify killing 70 pilgrims. Lord, many have wrongly thought they served You with blinded zeal. Deliver me from foolish zeal, may I serve you with eyes wide open to obey the Word of God exactly. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8} Give me wisdom and common sense {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} to do all things wisely in Your name. Amen.

[8]Ten of them then offered him wheat, barley, oil, and honey hidden in a field. So Ishmael didn't kill them. [9]The well where Ishmael dumped the bodies of the men he killed was the well King Asa had made years earlier to protect himself against King Baasha of Israel.

[10]Ishmael took as captives King Zedekiah's daughters and others in Mizpah under Gedaliah, and he headed toward Ammon. [11]Johanan and the army officers with him heard what Ishmael had done. [12]They chased him and caught up with him at the pool of Gibeon. [13]When Ishmael's prisoners saw Johanan and the army officers with him, they were glad, [14]and they left Ishmael and went to be with Johanan. [15]Then Ishmael and only eight of his men escaped and went to Ammon.

[16]Johanan and his officers rescued the soldiers, women, children, and court officials. [17]They took them to the village of Geruth-Kimham near Bethlehem and went on from there to Egypt.

Hospitality was sacred in Bible cultures; therefore Ishmael violated the laws of hospitality when he killed Gedaliah. Ishmael's warped patriotism caused him to break God's law, commit murder, and leave God's remnant without wise leadership. As a result, the remnant went to Egypt, and eventually disappeared. Lord, help me see the ramification of all the things I do. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:8} Help me make good choices in life and keep me from doing stupid things that hurt Your work. I want to do right, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} and do those things that bless Your work. Amen.

[18]They were afraid of what the Babylonians might do when they found out that Ishmael had killed Gedaliah, the ruler appointed by Nebuchadnezzar.

Jeremiah 42

Jeremiah Prays to God for the People

[1]All the army officers, including Johanan, son of Kareah, and Jezaniah, son of Hoshaiah, and everyone else came [2]to me and said, "Please pray to the LORD your God for us. We used to have many people, but now only a few of us are left. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [3]Ask the LORD to tell us what we should do." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [4]I said, "I'll pray to the LORD {106 Definition of Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and then tell you everything He says."

[5]Then they said to me, "The LORD will witness against us if we don't do what He says. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]Whether we like it or not, we will obey the LORD our God so that all will go well for us." {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [7]Ten days later the LORD gave me an answer.

The people came to Jeremiah, "Pray to the LORD your God" (v. 4, NKJV) and they then promised, "We will obey the voice of the LORD our God" (v. 6, NKJV). Notice this principle about prayer. God doesn't always answer immediately. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} "And it happened after ten days that the Word of the LORD came to Jeremiah" (v. 7, NKJV). Why doesn't God always answer immediately? Perhaps God wants to see our sincerity. Lord, teach me patience in prayer. {345 Patience Prayer, James 5:7-8} When You don't answer immediately, give me patience to wait for Your answer, and give me faith to continue to trust You for answers. Amen.

[8]So I called for Johanan and the army officers and all the people [9]and told them, "This is the LORD's reply: {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [10]"If you stay here in the land, I'll build you up and plant you. I'm sorry I had to bring disaster on you. [11]But don't be afraid of the King of Babylonia. I'm with you {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and I'll rescue you from him. [12]I'll force him to be king to you and give back your farms.'" {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

The Lord told the people, "If you will still remain in this land,... I will show you mercy" (vv. 10-12, NKJV). Even though the people promised to obey God, "All the people would not obey the voice of the LORD, to remain in the land of Judah" (43:4, NKJV). Isn't that one of the reasons God doesn't answer our prayers? {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} God knows we won't do what we promise Him. Lord, forgive me when I did not do what You told me to do. Forgive me for the times I promised to do Your will, but I didn't do what I promised. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Now I understand why You haven't always answered my prayers, because You know what would happen in the future. {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} You know my deceitful heart. Forgive me and make me strong to obey. Amen.

[13]"But if you disobey Me by not staying in Judah [14]and going to Egypt to try to be free from war and hunger, [15]then you'll face [16]war and starvation there and you'll die there. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [17]If you insist on going to Egypt, you'll all die there by war, starvation, or disease. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[18]"I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, say that if you go to Egypt, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} My wrath will be on you just as it was on those in Jerusalem. People will be horrified at your situation and will mock and curse you. And you'll never see your homeland again." [19]Judah, the LORD has told you not to go to Egypt. [20]You asked me to pray and ask the LORD what He wants you to do. But that was a mistake. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [21]I told you what He said, and You said you would do it, but you are still not obeying Him. [22]And so in Egypt, where you insist on going, you will die from war, starvation, and disease. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Jeremiah 43

The People Do Not Listen to Jeremiah

[1]When I finished telling the people what the LORD told me to tell them, [2]Azariah, son of Hoshaiah, and Johanan, son of Kareah, and some proud men said to me, "You are lying. The LORD didn't tell you to say we can't go live in Egypt. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [3]Baruch, son of Neriah, has encouraged you to say this so the Babylonians will kill us or take us captives to Babylonia." {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[4]So Johanan and his army officers and all the people disobeyed the LORD's command to stay in Judah. [5]Johanan and his officers led to Egypt the captives who were now back in Judah. [6]They also led to Egypt everyone whom Nebuzaradan had left with Gedaliah and me and Baruch.

This chapter has a graphic lesson on obeying the Word of God. God had previously told Jeremiah and the people, "Do not go to Egypt" (42:19, NKJV). If they stayed in Judah, God promised, {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} "Do not be afraid of the King of Babylon... for I... will deliver you from his hand" (42:11, NKJV). But, "They went to the land of Egypt" (43:7, NKJV). Lord, teach me to obey You exactly, and to obey You quickly. Amen.

[7]So in disobedience to the LORD they went to Egypt as far as Tahpanhes. [8]In Tahpanhes the LORD told me, [9]"Take some large stones to the entrance to Pharaoh's palace and bury them under the brick pavement."

God instructed Jeremiah to do another symbolic action. Jeremiah buried large stones in the pavement of Pharaoh's headquarters at Tahpanhes in the sight of the people of Judah. Then Jeremiah announced Nebuchadnezzar would set his throne on those stones. A fragmentary inscription in the British Museum records Nebuchadnezzar

actually invading Egypt in 568 B.C., killing many Jews and taking others to Babylon. Lord, teach me to listen carefully to Your commands, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} and give me insight to know Your will. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Then give me strength to obey You. Now I know that You punish disobedience, because You punished Jewish disobedience in Egypt, and You've punished disobedience in my life. Help me understand the bitter consequences of disobedience, {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} and always obey You totally. Amen.

10"'Then tell the people that I, the LORD of the Heavens, to the God of Israel, will bring My servant Nebuchadnezzar here to Egypt, and he will set his throne and his royal tent right over the stones you buried. 11He'll attack Egypt, and kill many Egyptians; {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and take others captive. 12He'll burn the temples of Egypt's gods and carry off the idols. Just as the shepherd wraps his garment around himself, so Nebuchadnezzar will wrap Egypt around himself and will return to Babylonia unharmed. 13He will demolish the columns in the temple of the sun-god and burn down the temples of Egypt's gods."

Jeremiah 44

Jeremiah Speaks to the Jews in Egypt

1The LORD gave me this message to the Jews living in Northern Egypt in the cities of Migdol, Tahpanhes, and Memphis and those in Southern Egypt: 2The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says, "You saw Jerusalem and all the towns of Judah. They are now empty and in ruins 3because of the evil they did. They burned incense and worshiped other gods that neither they nor your ancestors knew, and this angered Me greatly. 4I repeatedly sent My servants the prophets to urge them not to do these terrible things that I hate. 5But they wouldn't listen or turn from their wicked ways. And they kept right on burning incense to these gods. 6Therefore My fierce anger raged against the towns of Judah and the streets of Jerusalem so that they are in ruins today. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

7"Now I, the LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, ask why are you destroying yourselves? This coming disaster will destroy you and every man, woman, child, and baby who has come here from Judah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 8Why have you insisted on making Me angry by burning incense to idols you've made here in Egypt? You'll destroy yourselves, and people of other nations will curse and mock you. 9Don't forget all the sins of your kings and queens and the sins you and your wives committed. 10Even now you haven't humbled yourselves before Me or reverenced Me, and no one follows My laws and teachings I gave you and your ancestors. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

11"Therefore I've decided to destroy every one of you. 12You were determined to come settle here in Egypt, but you'll all die here by war or starvation. And people will be

horrified at your situation and will curse and mock you. [13]I'll punish you in Egypt just as I punished those in Jerusalem, with war, starvation, and disease. [14]None of you who have gone to live in Egypt will escape or return to Judah, except for a few of the fugitives." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[15]A large number of Jews from both northern and southern Egypt listened to me, including many wives who were burning incense to idols. They said to me, [16]"We won't listen to your message. [17]We'll continue to burn incense to Astarte, the Queen of heaven, and pour out sacrifices of wine to her {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} just as we, our ancestors, our kings, and officials did in Judah. When we did that, we had plenty of food and were well off and had no problems. [18]But ever since we stopped burning incense to the Queen of heaven and stopped giving her drink offerings, we've had nothing and have been dying from war and famine." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23}

God had destroyed Jerusalem and the temple because of the people's idolatry. Yet theirs is an example of the blindness and rebellion in this chapter. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} But now in Egypt the Israelites were saying, "Since we stopped burning incense to the queen of heaven...we have...been consumed by the sword and by famine" (44:18, NKJV). Isn't that like many in our nation today? They blame the church or God when things go wrong. Lord, forgive me when I am blinded by my sin and blame You for the hardships in my life. Help me see that it's my sin {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} that causes me problems. Forgive me my sin. Amen.

[19]The women added, "When we worshiped the Queen of heaven and offered her drink offerings and made cakes shaped like her, our husbands knew about it." {378 Pretend-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [20]Then I said to all of them, [21]"Do you think the LORD didn't know that you, your ancestors, your kings, officials, and everyone was burning incense to idols in Judah and Jerusalem? [22]When He could no longer stand your disgusting actions, He placed a curse on your land and turned it into an empty desert, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} as it is now. [23]This disaster happened because you sinned against the Lord {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} by burning incense, and disobeying His laws, teachings, and regulations." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

[24]Then I said to everyone, including the women, [25]"Hear what the LORD says, you people of Judah in Egypt. The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel says, 'You said you would continue to burn incense and pour out drink offerings to the Queen of heaven. So go right ahead and do what you promised. [26]But remember that I've said no Jew living here in Egypt {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} will ever be able to make promises in My name by saying, "As surely as the Sovereign LORD lives." {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} [27]I'll watch over you for opportunities to

bring you harm and not good. You'll suffer war and starvation until all of you are dead, [28]except for a very few who will be able to return to Egypt. Then you'll know whose word is true—Mine or theirs. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

[29]"'Here's how you'll know that what I've said will happen. [30]I'll hand over King Hophra of Egypt to those who want to kill him, just as I handed Zedekiah over to Nebuchadnezzar.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jeremiah 45

Jeremiah Speaks to Baruch

[1]In Jehoiakim's fourth year as king of Judah, Baruch, son of Neraiah, wrote down on a scroll everything I told him to write. Then I said, [2]"Baruch, the LORD, the God of Israel, says [3]'You, Baruch, are feeling terrible {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} because of your sorrows and pains and that you can't get any rest.'" {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Baruch, Jeremiah's secretary, became discouraged in the work of God. So, God rebuked Baruch, "You said, 'Woe is me now. For the Lord has added grief {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} to my sorrow'" (v. 3, NKJV). Lord, keep me from discouragement; help me see Your plan for my life. I yield to Your will for today. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Help me be encouraged by Your encouragement. Amen.

[4]"'The LORD says, 'I'll tear down what I've built, and I'll uproot what I planted. [5]So don't think of making big plans for yourself. True, I'll bring disaster on My people, but you'll escape with your life.'" {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

God told Baruch, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} "Seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not" (v. 5, KJV). Perhaps we get discouraged because we are self-consumed and things don't go the way we plan. Lord, teach me to seek Your glory and not my own. Teach me to seek great things for You {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} and not for selfish reasons. Amen.

Jeremiah 46

Jeremiah Speaks about Egypt

[1]The LORD gave me several messages to give to various nations. [2]Concerning Egypt He gave me these words about the army of Pharaoh Neco of Egypt who was defeated by Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylonia at Carchemish on the Euphrates River, in the fourth year of Jehoiakim's reign over Judah.

This chapter introduces Jeremiah "a prophet against the Gentiles" (nations, v. 1). Jeremiah predicts the defeat of Egypt "by the River Euphrates" (v. 10, NKJV). This was the battle of Carchemish, an important city at the ford of the Euphrates, where Nebuchadnezzar defeated Pharaoh-Necho in one of the most decisive battles in Near

Eastern history. Never again was Egypt a world power. Lord, You hold the nations in Your hand and You accomplish Your plan through pagan leaders and nations. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} I worship Your majesty and power. I marvel at the "things" You use to accomplish Your will. Amen.

3"Grab your shields and go into battle.
4Harness your horses and get ready to
mount them. Put on your helmets, sharpen
your spears, and put on your armor. 5Look!
The Egyptians are running away in terror
and they aren't looking back. 6They are
fast but not fast enough, and being strong
is no help. They stumble and fall in bat-
tle by the Euphrates River. 7What nation
rises like the Nile River at flood time? 8It
is Egypt rising like roaring waters and say-
ing, 'I'll cover the earth and destroy many
cities.' 9Tell your horses and charioteers to
charge ahead with your allies from Ethio-
pia, Libya, and Lydia who are armed with
shields, and bows and arrows. 10In this day
the LORD, the LORD of the Heavens,
will take revenge on His enemies. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Many will
die by the sword, and they will be like a
sacrifice to the LORD, the LORD of the
Heavens, in the north near the Euphrates.
11"You, Egypt, may go to Gilead for oint-
ment, but it and no other remedy can heal
you. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
12Nations will hear of your disgrace and
tears. Soldiers will stumble over each other
in battle."
13The LORD gave me these words {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14to announce
in Migdol, Memphis, and Tahpanhes
about Nebuchadnezzar's attack on Egypt:
"Get ready to defend yourselves, because
people everywhere are dying. 15Your sol-
diers are being killed because the LORD
is defeating them. 16These hired soldiers
from other countries keep tripping over
each other, and they want to go home. 17Yet
they say Pharaoh talks big but has missed
his opportunity to defeat Nebuchadnez-
zar. 18Egypt, I am King, the LORD of the
Heavens, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer,
Ps. 96:8} but you need to know that the
one coming against you is as tall as Mount
Tabor or Mount Carmel by the sea. 19So
pack up and get ready to leave as captives.
Memphis will be empty and in ruins. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
20"An enemy from the north will attack
you, Egypt, like a fly biting a cow. 21Sol-
diers hired from other countries are like
calves fattened for a slaughter. They turn
and run because they know disaster is
coming. 22Egypt can only run like a snake
crawling away as the enemy comes against
her with axes to cut down trees. 23The
enemy soldiers will be more in number
than the swarm of locusts. 24Egypt will be
ashamed when it is captured by the enemy
from the north.
25"The LORD of the Heavens, said, "I'll
soon punish Amon, god of the city of
Thebes, and I'll punish Pharaoh and all
Egypt's gods and kings and those who
trust in Pharaoh. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 26I'll hand them over to Nebu-
chadnezzar and his army officers. Yet later

Egypt will recover. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}
27"But Israel, My servant, don't be afraid or discouraged. I'll bring you home from distant lands. You and your descendants will return from captivity, and you'll again enjoy peace and security with no need to fear. 28Don't be afraid, Israel, because I, the LORD, am with you. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} I'll destroy the nations {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} that have taken you captive, but I won't destroy you. Yet I must discipline you."

But in the midst of the nations that rise and fall, God promises to protect His people, the Jews. "Do not fear... I am with you... I will not make a complete end of you" (v. 28). Lord, You deal specially with the small, and Your focus is not on the multitude. Look to me, I'm small. Protect me and help me. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Bless me and use me. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} I want my life to make a difference. Amen.

Jeremiah 47

Jeremiah Speaks about the Philistines

1This is the message from the LORD concerning the Philistines before Pharaoh attacked Gaza: 2"An army is coming from the north like a flood. It will destroy the land and towns and people in them. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 3People will cry in terror as they hear the hooves of galloping horses and the noise of enemy chariots. Fathers will be so frightened that they will run and won't turn to help their children. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}
4"'The time has come for the Philistines to be destroyed, and no one will be able to help Tyre and Sidon. I'll destroy the Philistines, who've come from Crete. 5People of Gaza will shave their heads and Ashkelon will be silenced in grief, and others will cut themselves as they mourn. 6Now will My sword rest? Sword, I'd like for you to go back to your scabbard. 7But I know you can't rest until I destroy Ashkelon on the seacoast." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Judgment is predicted against the Philistines, Gaza, Tyre, Sidon, and Ashkelon. "How can God's sword of judgment be quiet, seeing the LORD has given it a charge" (v. 7, NKJV)? Lord, I know judgment is inevitable without repentance, so I repent of my sins; {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} forgive me, cleanse me, and protect me in Your care. Amen.

Jeremiah 48

Jeremiah Speaks About the Destruction of Moab

1The LORD of the Heavens gave me this message concerning Moab: "How terrible it will be for you Nebo and Kiriath-Aim, for they will be ruined and shamed, and the fortress will be broken down. 2No one

will ever brag about Moab again, and men in Heshbon will plot her downfall. The town Madmen (meaning 'Silence') will be silenced because of the sword killing so many people. 3When Horonaim is being attacked, people will cry for help. 4Moab will be shattered, and even her little ones will weep bitterly {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 5on the way to Luhith on the road to Horonaim. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 6Run for your lives and hide in the desert. 7Your power and wealth won't save you. You'll be taken captives along with your God Chemosh and your priests and officials. 8Every town will be destroyed, the valleys will be ruined, and the flatlands destroyed because I have spoken. 9Spread salt on the ground to keep crops from growing, Her towns will be in ruins and empty.

10"If anyone refuses to do the work I've given you, I'll put a curse on you. 11Moab has always lived in peace. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} She is like wine left to settle, never poured from one jar to another, and her aroma is the same. 12But I'll send men to pour out the wine and smash the jars. 13Then Moab will be ashamed because Chemosh can't save her, just as the God of Bethel couldn't save Israel.

14"You claim that your soldiers are strong and brave, 15but I the King, the LORD of the Heavens, will destroy Moab and your fine young men will be slaughtered. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 16Moab's fall will happen soon. 17You who know Moab, weep for her. See how her scepter is broken and her staff is shattered. 18You people of Dibon, sit on the packed ground and mourn, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because those who destroy Moab will destroy you too. 19The people of Aroer will see people fleeing, and they'll ask why. 20They'll answer, 'Moab has been defeated.' Weep in shame {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} as you tell everyone by the Arnon River that Moab is destroyed. 21The cities of the flatland lie in ruins, including Holon, Jahzah, Mephaath, 22Dibon, Nebo, Beth-Diblathaim, 23Kiriath-Aim, Beth-Gamul, Beth-Meon, 24Kerioth, and Bozrah. 25Moab's strength is broken like an animal's horn; and her arms have been broken." The LORD has spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

26"You nations make Moab drunk because she has defied Me. She will wallow in her vomit {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and be laughed at. 27You made fun of Israel and you treated them like thieves caught in the act. 28Go live in the caves like doves making their nests in rocks. 29We've heard of Moab's pride and conceit, her arrogance and haughtiness. 30I know her pride but it is useless, 31and accomplishes nothing."

32So I, Jeremiah, weep for Moab {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and the men of Kir-Hareseth. You people of Sibmah were like a vineyard with lots of grapes. Your branches spread to the sea and north to the town of Jazer. But your enemy has destroyed your fruit and grapes. 33Your joy is gone, and no one is happy. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} You can no longer tread grapes in the winepress. 34Weeping {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} in Heshbon can be heard as far away as Elealeh and

Jahaz, and weeping in Zoar can be heard as far away as Horonaim and Eglath-Shelishiyah. And even the Nimrim River is dried up.
35"I'll punish Moab," says the Lord, "because they offer sacrifices at their shrines and burn incense to their gods. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 36I groan for Moab and Kir-Hareseth like playing a flute, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because all their wealth is gone. 37In mourning people there shave their heads and cut their hands and wear burlap clothing. 38Crying is heard in every home in Moab {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} and on every street, because I have shattered Moab like breaking a jar no one wants. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 39Moab is broken and you can hear the wailing. Nations are horrified at what has happened and they make fun of her." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}
40The LORD says, "An enemy is swooping down over Moab 41to capture its cities. Moab's soldiers will be weak like a woman in child labor. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 42Because Moab defied Me, I'll destroy her. 43So you people of Moab will experience terror and a trap. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 44If someone runs from terror, he will fall into a pit. And if he climbs out of the pit, he will be caught in a trap. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
45"You'll experience traps near Heshbon. A fire burns in Heshbon and a blaze from Sihon to devour the entire land with its rebellious people. 46Moab, your destruction is certain. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 47But in the days to come I'll restore your good days even though you worshiped your god Chemosh." This is the end of God's words of judgment on Moab.

Jeremiah delivers a prophecy against Moab because they had constantly fought God's people, and rejoiced every time persecution or destruction fell to God's people. The city Nebo was named on the Moabite stone erected by King Mesha of Moab (around 840 B.C.) to commemorate his victory over Israel (2 Kings 3:4-27). Lord, You will judge those nations who persecuted Your people Israel. I don't relish in their punishment, I pray for their salvation. I pray for those who attack Christianity and try to destroy Your work. Lord, save. Amen.

Jeremiah 49

Jeremiah Speaks a Prophetic Judgment against the Ammonites

1The LORD of the Heavens gave me this message concerning the Ammonites: The LORD says, 2"The people of Ammon worship the god, Molech, so I'll destroy the town of Rabbah and it will become a pile of ruins, and villages around it will be burned. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
3"Wail, Heshbon, because Ai and Rabbah are destroyed. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} So people should wear burlap clothing in mourning. And

those people who worship the false god Molech will be taken captives with their priests and officials. [4]So don't boast of your beautiful valleys with all their good fruits. [5]People all around you will make you afraid, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} but in the future I'll bring you back to your land." [6]The LORD has spoken these words.

[7]The LORD Almighty gave me this message concerning Edom: "Where are all the wise men of Teman? Is there no advice from the wise counselors? Is their wisdom fading away? [8]You people in Dedan, run and hide in caves because I'll bring disaster on Edom as a way of punishing them. [9]People who harvest grapes leave a few on the vines for poor people. And thieves at night don't take everything. [10]But I'll make the land of Edom so desolate that no one will be able to find a place to hide. Everyone in Edom, including your children, relatives, and neighbors, will perish. [11]But I'll take care of your orphans and widows. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[12]"Innocent people often suffer, so you'll certainly be punished, like drinking a cup of wrath. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [13]I affirm by Myself that your city of Bozrah and its nearby towns will become a heap of trash forever and people will be horrified." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[14]The LORD told me He sent a messenger to say to the nations, "Prepare for battle against Edom." [15]The LORD also said, "Edom, you will be a weak nation, and everyone will hate you. [16]You're proud that you make others afraid, but your pride tricks you. And you are proud that you live in rock cliffs and high in the mountains. You build your nest as high as the eagle's, but I'll bring you down. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [17]People who pass by Edom will be horrified and shocked, and they'll ridicule you because of all your wounds. [18]Your destruction will be like that of Sodom and Gomorrah and nearby towns. No one will live there anymore.

[19]"I'll come on Edom like a lion leaping from near the Jordan suddenly attacking sheep. I'll chase Edom from its land, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and I'll not choose just anyone to attack you. I'll do it Myself, because no leader can oppose Me. [20]This is what I've planned for Edom, including those who live in Teman. Little children, like lambs, will be dragged off, and I'll destroy their homes, like a sheep's pasture. [21]When Edom falls, the whole earth will shake and your wailing will be heard hundreds of miles away at the Red Sea. [22]Like an eagle, the enemy will swoop down over Bozrah, and your strong soldiers will be terrified like a woman in labor." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

[23]The LORD gave me this message concerning Damascus: "Hamath and Arpad are afraid because of the bad news they have heard. They are discouraged and are troubled like raging waves. [24]The people of Damascus have lost their courage, and in a panic they turn and run gripped by anxiety {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} and pain like a woman in labor. [25]Your famous city is now empty, the town I enjoyed. [26]Your young men will fall dead

in the streets, and your soldiers will all be killed," says the LORD Almighty. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 27"I'll start a fire at the city walls, and it'll burn down the fortresses of King Ben-Hadad."

28The LORD gave me this message concerning Kedar and Hazor which Nebuchadnezzar attacked: "Advance against Kedar and kill the people of the East. 29Take their tents and flocks and camels and all their goods. Everywhere people will hear shouts of terror. 30You people will run for your lives and stay in caves," says the LORD. "Nebuchadnezzar has plotted against you and is getting ready to destroy you. 31You live alone, self-confident that you are safe, even though you have no city gates or walls. 32But Nebuchadnezzar will take all your camels and cattle, and people living in distant deserts will be scattered and will face disaster from every direction. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 33Wild dogs will live in Hazor, which will be desolated forever."

34Early in the reign of Zedekiah king of Judah the LORD Almighty gave me this message concerning Elam: 35"I'll kill your archers, the best of your marksmen. 36I'll bring enemies from all directions to attack you, and I'll scatter you in every direction, and you'll be captives to every nation on earth. 37I'll shatter you before your enemies, and in My fierce anger {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll bring disaster on you. Your enemies will chase you with swords until everyone of you is killed. 38I'll kill your king and officials, and I'll rule over you. 39But in the future I'll bring your descendants back to your land."

This chapter begins with a prediction against the Ammonites. Like the Moabites, they were the product of an incestuous relationship (Gen. 19:38 ff.) and constantly plagued Israel. Jeremiah predicts God's judgment on the Ammonites (the territory east of the Jordan River). Lord, I know You will eventually judge Your enemies; give me patience to see Your plan on this earth. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} Give me wisdom to always act right and may I always bring glory to You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} Amen.

Jeremiah 50

Jeremiah Speaks about Babylon

1The LORD gave me this message concerning Babylon and the land of the Babylonians: 2"Announce what will happen and leave nothing out. Raise a flag and say, 'Babylon will be captured and her God Marduk (also called Balthazar) will be shamed and terrified.' 3A nation will attack her from the north and devastate the land. People and animals will run away, leaving the land empty. 4Then the people of Israel and Judah will weep and seek Me. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 5They'll ask the way to Jerusalem, and they'll join with Me in an everlasting covenant that will never be forgotten. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

6"My people, you are like lost sheep; your shepherds have led you astray in the

mountains. And you've even forgotten where your field is located. 7When your enemies found you and destroyed you, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} they said, 'We're not guilty for attacking them, because they sinned against the LORD, their hope of their ancestors.'"

8"Israel and Judah escape from Babylonia and lead the way home. 9I'm raising against Babylonia a group of nations from the north who'll attack and capture her people. The arrows of their skilled soldiers hit their target every time. 10Babylonia will be defeated, and soldiers will carry off anything they want. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11You people of Babylonia were glad to rob My people. You jumped around like a calf threshing grain and made noises like a horse. 12Babylon was like a mother to you, but she'll be the least of nations and a dry, desolate desert. 13No one will live there because of the LORD's anger. All who pass by her will be horrified, and they'll ridicule you because of all your wounds. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

14"All you nations around Babylonia, get ready to attack. Archers, shoot your arrows and don't spare any, because she has sinned against Me. 15Shout on every side. She is surrendering, her towers are falling, and her enemies are tearing down her walls. I am taking revenge on Babylon {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} by doing to her what she did to others. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 16No one will be left in Babylon to plant or harvest crops. Let the captives hurry back to their homelands to avoid being killed by the attacking armies. 17Israel is like a flock of sheep scattered by lions. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} The king of Assyria ate them up, and then Nebuchadnezzar crushed their bones. 18Therefore I, the LORD Almighty, the God of Israel will punish the king of Babylon just as I punished the king of Assyria. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19I'll bring Israel back to their homeland, and like sheep they'll graze on Mount Carmel and in Bashan and in the hill country of Ephraim and Gilead. 20In those future days I'll forgive them, and their sin and guilt will be gone. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

21"My warriors, attack the towns of Merathaim and Pekod. Chase them and kill them all. 22Sounds and the noise of destruction are heard in the land. 23Babylon was like a hammer pounding all the earth, but now it is broken and shattered. Babylon is desolate among the nations. 24Babylon, you opposed Me, so I have set a trap for you and you are caught. 25I have brought out My weapons to pour out My wrath on you. This is the work of Myself, the Sovereign LORD of the Heavens. 26You enemies of Babylon come against her. Pile up the grain in her storehouses and destroy it completely with everything else. And leave no survivors. 27Kill her young bulls. How terrible it will be for them too. For the time has come for them to be slaughtered. 28Listen to the refugees, My people, who have escaped from Babylon. They'll tell everyone in Jerusalem how the LORD took revenge against Babylon for destroying My temple. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

29"Call for archers to attack Babylon and
to surround the city so no one can escape.
She has defied Me, the Holy One of Israel,
so do to her what she has done to oth-
ers. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8
ff.} 30Her soldiers, all young men, will die
in the streets. 31You proud people, I am
against you. The time has arrived for you
to be punished. 32You will stumble and
fall, and no one will be able to help you up.
A fire in your towns will burn up every-
thing in them." {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5}
33The LORD of the Heavens also says,
"The people of Israel and Judah have been
mistreated by their captors who refuse to
let them go. 34But I, your Redeemer, am
strong. {395 Redemptive Prayer for the
Lost, Rom. 10:1} I am the LORD of the
Heavens. I'll defend your case and give you
rest again in Israel. {403 Restoration of
Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} But for
the people of Babylon there'll be no rest.
35A sword will kill the people of Babylon
and her officials, wise men, 36false prophets
who'll be shown to be fools, and soldiers
who'll be filled with terror, 37horses and
chariots, and foreigners who'll be weak as
women. Also all her treasures will be taken
away. 38Your rivers and canals will dry up.
All this will happen because Babylon is
filled with idols, and the people are madly
in love with them. 39No one will live in the
city from generation to generation. Only
desert creatures, hyenas, and owls will live
there. 40The city will be destroyed just as
I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah and
neighboring towns. No one will live there
anymore.
41"Look! An army is marching from the
north with its allies from many parts of
the world. 42They have bows and arrows
and spears, and they are cruel and show no
mercy. As they ride their horses, the many
soldiers sound like the roaring sea. They
are lined up for battle to attack you, Bab-
ylon. 43Your king has heard reports about
them, and he is weak with fear. His anxiety
and pain are like that of a woman in labor.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
44"I'll come like a lion leaping from near
the Jordan suddenly attacking sheep. I'll
chase Babylon from its land, {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and I'll appoint
the leader I choose. No one can oppose
Me. 45Listen to My plans against Babylon
and the land of the Babylonians. Young
children will be dragged off and their
homes destroyed. 46When Babylon is cap-
tured, the earth will shake, and her cry will
be heard among many nations."

Jeremiah originally exhorted Judah to submit to Babylon. Now he predicts judgment against the Babylonians. Jeremiah is not a politician, but a prophet. He explains why God used the evil nation Babylon to judge the sins of His people in Jerusalem. Why? Because God hates the lesser sins of His people. Because God's people sin with greater light; they sin against God. Lord, give me godly terror when I sin against You. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} Forgive me, cleanse me, and cast my sin away from You, as far as the East is from the West. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Don't judge me in Your anger. I plead the blood of Jesus.

{264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} *Look on me in love. Amen.*

Jeremiah 51

God's Judgment against Babylon

1The LORD also says this about Babylon:
"I'll send a destroyer against Babylonia
and its capital Babylon (also called Leb Kamar).
2These foreigners will winnow her,
blowing her away like chaff.
They'll come from every direction in her day of trouble.
3Don't let Babylonian archers string their bows
or soldiers put on their armor.
Don't let anyone live; kill all her soldiers.
4Their soldiers will fall dead in Babylon's streets.
5"Israel and Judah, you are guilty before the Holy One of Israel,
and yet I, their God, the LORD of the Heavens, have not forsaken you.
6"Escape from Babylon. Run for your lives.
Don't stay and be killed along with Babylon
because of her sins when I take revenge on her. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7Babylon has been like My gold cup from which I made nations drink the wine of My wrath
and caused them to go insane.
8Babylon will fall suddenly. Weep for her,
and give her medicine for her pain. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
Perhaps she can be healed.
9The foreigners answered, 'We would have helped her if we could,
but nothing can help her now.
We may as well go home because her judgment will be so great.'
10The people of Israel say, 'The LORD has taken revenge on Babylon for what she did to us.
Let's tell everyone in Jerusalem what the LORD our God has done.' {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}
11"Kings of Media, sharpen your arrows and take up your shields.
The LORD will use you to destroy Babylon {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
because she destroyed My temple.
12Raise the flag and attack the city walls.
Post more guards and prepare for an ambush.
I'll use you to carry out My plans against Babylon.
13Your city, Babylon, is by the Euphrates River and you have many canals.
You are a wealthy city.
But your end has come.
14I, the LORD of the Heavens, affirm by My own name
that your city will be filled with enemy soldiers,
like locusts filling a field,
and they will shout their victory over you." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
15God, You made the earth by Your power {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
and wisdom, and You spread out the stars in space.
16When You speak, clouds in the heavens roar,
and You send clouds, lightning, rain, and wind.
17Everyone who worships idols is foolish and stupid,
and even goldsmiths are shamed by their idols
because their idols are a hoax and are not alive.
18Idols are worthless and are lies.
The time is coming when they will all be destroyed.
19But You, LORD, the God of Jacob, are not like them.
You created everything, {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5}
and You chose Israel to be Your very own,
and You are the LORD of the Heavens.
20Then the LORD says to Babylonia, "You were my battle ax and sword.
I used you to

shatter nations and destroy kingdoms. [21]I used you to destroy horses and riders and to shatter chariots and drivers. [22]I used you to shatter adult men and women, old men and young people, and young men and women. [23]I used you to shatter shepherd and flock, farmer and oxen, and governors and officials. [24]But now I'll repay you for what you did to My people in Jerusalem. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[25]"Babylon, you are strong like a mountain in destroying the earth. But I'm your enemy. I'll raise My fist against you to roll you off cliffs and leave you a burned-out mountain. [26]You will be desolate forever. Even your stone blocks will never be used again for cornerstones or foundations.

[27]"Signal the nations to get ready to attack Babylon; and blow a trumpet. Bring out the armies of Ararat, Minni, and Ashkenaz. Appoint a commander and gather horses for battle like a swarm of locusts. [28]Bring against Babylon the kings of the Medes with their generals and the armies of all the countries they rule.

[29]"Babylon trembles and is in pain because I won't change My mind about My purposes against you. I plan to make your land a desert where no one can live. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [30]Babylon's soldiers have stopped fighting. They stay in their fortresses, and they are weak like women. Houses in the city have been set on fire, and soldiers broke down her city gates. [31]One messenger after another runs to the king to tell him his city is captured, [32]the escape routes are closed, the marshes are set on fire, and the soldiers are terrified."

[33]The LORD of the Heavens, the God of Israel, says this: "The people of Babylon will soon be like wheat being trampled on in a threshing place." [34]Jerusalem says, "King Nebuchadnezzar has stuffed himself with our treasures, made us confused, and left us with nothing like an empty jar. Like a snake he gobbled down our riches and then spit out what he didn't want. [35]May Babylon be repaid for all the violence she brought on us and the blood she shed." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

[36]The LORD, says to Jerusalem, "I'll take revenge on Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll dry up her river and her water supply, and [37]Babylon will become a pile of rubbish, haunted by wild dogs. People will be horrified and will sneer at her where no one lives. [38]The Babylonians will roar like hungry lions. [39]So I'll give them a banquet and make them so drunk they'll fall asleep and never wake up. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[40]"I'll bring them like lambs to the slaughter or like rams and goats to be sacrificed. [41]Babylon (also called Sheshach) will be captured. Babylon was praised everywhere, but nations will be horrified when they see her downfall. [42]Her enemies will rise over her like ocean waves and flood the city. [43]Babylonia's cities will be a desolate, dry desert where no one lives or even travels there. [44]I'll punish your god Marduk (also called Bel), and make him vomit everything he swallowed from other nations. The nations will no longer worship him for Babylon's walls will crumble.

[45]"My people, run for your lives before I strike the city in My anger. [46]Don't be

afraid when you hear rumors of armies fighting to defeat Babylon. Rumors keep coming each year. [47]But the time will come when I'll punish the idols of Babylon. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} The whole land will be disgraced and her dead will lie in the streets. [48]Then the heavens and the earth will be glad that Babylon will be attacked by armies from the north. [49]Babylon has killed many people of Israel and others throughout the world. So now her people will be killed. [50]Go, you who escaped Babylon's sword. Run while you have a chance. Think about the LORD and Jerusalem even though you're in a distant land.

[51]"You feel ashamed and disgraced because foreigners entered My temple. [52]But days are coming when I'll punish her idols, and the groans of the wounded will be heard throughout the land. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [53]Even if Babylon's walls reach the sky and she fortifies her strongholds, I'll send destroyers against her. I, the LORD spoke these words."

[54]The LORD also said, "Hear the cry of Babylon and the sound of destruction throughout the land. I am destroying Babylon and silencing her. [55]Enemies are coming against her like ocean waves, and the noise of battle is heard throughout the city. [56]An enemy is attacking and destroying Babylon, capturing her soldiers and breaking their bows. I am a just God and I take revenge on nations that do not obey Me. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [57]I, the LORD, am the King, the LORD of the Heavens who will make drunk her officials, wise men, governors, officers, and soldiers, and they'll fall asleep and never wake up again."

[58]This too is what the LORD of the Heavens says: "The wide walls of Babylon will be torn down and its huge gates burned. The builders from other countries worked for nothing because their work will be destroyed by fire."

This chapter continues Jeremiah's prediction of God's judgment against Babylon. Lord, I know every sin will one day be judged. I don't rejoice in punishment of evil people. I pray for myself. Thank You that my sin was punished at Calvary {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} and now I am free from my guilt. I rejoice in Your salvation. Amen.

[59]I, Jeremiah, gave this message to Zedekiah's staff officer Seraiah son of Neriah and grandson of Mahseiah when he went to Babylon in the fourth year of Zedekiah's reign. [60]I had recorded on a scroll all the terrible things that would happen to Babylon. [61]So I said to Seraiah, "When you get to Babylon, read aloud everything on this scroll. [62]Then say, 'The LORD has said He'll destroy Babylon so that neither people or animals will remain there. It will be like an empty desert forever.' [63]After you've read the scroll, tie it to a stone, and throw it in the Euphrates River. [64]Then say, 'In this same way Babylon and her people will sink, never again to rise because of the disasters I'll bring on her.'" This ends Jeremiah's messages.

Jeremiah 52

Rule of King Zedekiah

[1]Zedekiah was 21 years old when he became king of Judah and he reigned in Jerusalem 11 years. His mother was Hamutal, daughter of Jeremiah from Libnah. [2]But Zedekiah disobeyed the LORD, just as Jehoiakim had done. [3]The LORD in His anger turned His back on the people of Jerusalem and Judah and caused them to be taken into captivity. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then Zedekiah rebelled against the king of Babylon. [4]So on January 15, in Zedekiah's ninth year of his reign, Nebuchadnezzar led his army against Jerusalem. They surrounded the city and built siege ramps against its walls. [5]Jerusalem was under siege for a year and a half.

[6]By July 18 of Zedekiah's 11th year, the food in Jerusalem was gone. [7]Then the Babylonians broke down a section of the wall, and Zedekiah and the soldiers in Jerusalem left the city at night through the gate between the two walls behind the king's garden, though they knew the city was surrounded. They ran toward the Jordan River valley.

[8]But the Babylonians chased them and caught Zedekiah in the Jericho plains, but Zedekiah's men had scattered in various directions. [9]The Babylonians brought Zedekiah to Nebuchadnezzar at Riblah in the land of Hamath, where Zedekiah was put on trial and found guilty. [10]At Riblah the king of Babylon made Zedekiah watch while his sons and leaders of Judah were killed. [11]Then they gouged out Zedekiah's eyes, bound him in bronze chains, and took him to Babylon and kept him in prison till he died. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

We see "the wages of sin" in this chapter. There are consequences whenever a people reject God, or rebel against Him. Yes, God is merciful to forgive when we repent and ask for forgiveness. That's because God is a loving God. But God is also holy and He must punish all sin—whether in wicked people or in His children—so Israel was punished. Many were killed in battle, or by disease, or by execution. Only a few went into captivity. Lord, give me a holy horror for any sin in my life. I will repent and beg Your forgiveness. Lord, I fear You and worship You because Christ died for my sin. Amen.

[12]On August 17 of that year (586 B.C.), which was Nebuchadnezzar's 19th year as king of Babylon, Nebuzaradan, captain of the guard, arrived in Jerusalem [13]and burned down the temple, the royal palace, and every house and important building in Jerusalem. [14]The army then tore down all the walls around the city. [15]Nebuzaradan took some of the poorest people into captivity and others who with craftsmen and troops had said they would be loyal to Nebuchadnezzar. [16]But Nebuchadnezzar left in Jerusalem some of the poorest people to work the fields and vineyards.

[17]The Babylonians broke up the bronze columns, movable stones, and the bronze water tank at the temple and took the bronze to Babylon. [18]They also took away

the pots, shovels, wick trimmers, sprinkling bowls, dishes, and other bronze utensils used in making sacrifices. [19]They also took the bowls, fire pans, pots, lampstands, ladles, and bowls used for drink offerings, and all other utensils made of gold or silver. [20]They also took the two bronze columns in front of the temple, the water carts, and the water basin with the 12 bulls beneath it, which King Solomon had made. All this bronze was more than could be weighed. [21]Each column was 27 feet tall and 18 feet around. They were hollow with the walls 3 inches thick. [22]The bronze capital on top of each column was 7 and a half feet high and was decorated with bronze pomegranates all the way around. [23]Ninety-six pomegranates were on the sides, and 100 pomegranates were on the network around the top.

[24]Nebuzaradan took captive Seraiah the chief priest, his assistant Zephaniah, and the three gatekeepers. [25]Then he arrested the army commander, seven of Zedekiah's advisers, and an army officer in charge of recruitment, and 60 other citizens. [26]Nebuzaradan took all of them to the king of Babylon at Riblah. [27]And at Riblah, the king had them all killed. So the people of Judah were taken as captives from their land.

[28]The number of captives taken to Babylon in Nebuchadnezzar's 7th year (597 B.C.) was 3,023. [29]In his 18th year (586 B.C.) he took 832 more, and [30]in his 23rd year he sent his captain of the guard, Nebuzaradan, to take 745 more. This was a total of 4,600.

Chapter 52 is nearly identical to 2 Kings 24:18-25:30. It demonstrates the prophecies of Jeremiah were fulfilled verbally, accurately, and within a short period of time. God says what He means, and God means what He promises. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} Lord, You've promised me eternal life, and I enjoy it. You promised me a new nature, and I praise You for an inward compass to live for You. Thank You for all you've promised and for its performance. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} You are surely great! Amen.

[31]In King Jehoiachin's 37th year as a captive in Babylon, Evil-Merodach became king of Babylonia. He was kind to Jehoiachin and released him from prison on March 31 of that year (561 B.C.). [32]He was kind to Jehoiachin and treated him better than the other kings who were captives. [33]He even gave him new clothes to wear in place of his prison uniform, and he was allowed to eat at the king's table every day. [34]And each day until he died, Jehoiachin was given a daily allowance.

Lamentations

Ch 1: The Sorrows and Desolation of Jerusalem 1121
Ch 2: God Punches His People 1123
Ch 3: Turn Back to God for Hope 1125
Ch 4: The Aftermath of the Fall of Jerusalem .. 1127
Ch 5: A Prayer of Jeremiah 1129

LAMENTATIONS

Key Word: *Affliction* found 9 times (see Lamentations 1:12)

Key Verse: "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed, because His compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is thy faithfulness" (3:22, 23).

Theme: This book was written within three months after the fall of Jerusalem in the summer of 586 B.C., before the remnant departed for Egypt (Jer. 39:2, 41:1, 18, 43:7). Jeremiah sat on a Judean hill and watched the city smolder while the few remaining inhabitants scavenged through garbage and trash looking for food. The tears of the weeping prophet are never more evident than in his crying over the destruction of the temple, the priestly sacrificial system, the Jewish culture and life as it once prospered in Jerusalem.

In the midst of the gloom, the author framed the chapters with a beautiful literary acrostic style. Chapters 1, 2, and 4 each has 22 verses, corresponding to the 22 letters of the Hebrew alphabet. The first word of each verse begins with a Hebrew letter, progressing in order through the entire alphabet. Lamentations 3 does the same thing in blocks of three verses, for a total of 66 verses (22x3 = 66). Although Lamentations 5 also has 22 verses, no acrostic mechanism is present.

The Septuagint (a Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, 285-247 B.C.) has this introduction, "It came to pass that after Israel was taken captive and Jerusalem was made desolate, Jeremiah sat weeping and lamented with this lamentation over Jerusalem, and said..."

Jeremiah realized it was God's mercy that the remnant was not destroyed, even when God afflicted (keyword) His children for their sin and rebellion. He thanks God that His mercies are "new every morning." Then Jeremiah praised God, "Great is thy faithfulness." *Lord, thank You for Your faithfulness to draw me to Yourself. Amen.*

Lamentations 1

The Sorrows and Desolation of Jerusalem

1 Jerusalem used to be crowded with people, but it is now empty. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} Known all over the

world, the city is now lonely and in grief like a widow. Once queen of the nations, she is now a slave. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} [2]Every night she cries, and tears run down her cheeks. Her former lovers offer her no comfort, and her friends have betrayed her and are now her enemies. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [3]The people of Judah are slaves, suffering in captivity. She has no rest in foreign nations. Her enemies have chased her and defeated her. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[4]Even roads leading to Zion mourn because no one is traveling on them to celebrate her festivals. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} Her city gates are deserted, her priests mourn, her young women grieve, and she is bitter. [5]Here enemies are now her masters and they prosper. She is grieving because You, the LORD, are punishing her for her sins. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Her children are captives to her enemies.

[6]Jerusalem's glory is gone. Her leaders are like starving deer that can't find pasture, and they are too weak to run. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [7]In her sadness and wandering she remembers the good life she had. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} Now that she is in the hands of her enemies, she has no one to help her. In fact her enemies even laughed when their city was defeated. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [8]Jerusalem's terrible sins have resulted in her being spiritually unclean. People who used to respect her now hate her because they have seen her nakedness. And she groans and hides her face. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [9]Her sins have made her clothes filthy, and she doesn't think about what will happen. When Jerusalem fell to her enemies, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} no one comforted her. She prayed, "LORD, see my problem. {112-+ Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} The enemy has defeated us."

[10]The enemy stole her treasures, and she saw pagan nations enter the temple, which You, LORD, had forbidden. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [11]Everyone in Jerusalem groans as they search for food. And they even trade their treasures for food to stay alive. They pray "LORD, {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} see how despised I am." [12]Your people who pass by Jerusalem don't care about her suffering which the LORD brought on her in His anger. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

[13]You, LORD, sent a fire that burns in my bones. You set a trap for my feet and turned me back. You have left me miserable {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and weak all day. [14]You bound my sins around my neck like a yoke. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} You have sapped my strength and handed me over to my enemies, and I'm helpless to do anything about it. [15]You have rejected all Jerusalem's soldiers, and You have called for a foreign army to defeat her young men. And they trampled on Jerusalem, the Virgin Daughter of Judah like grapes in a winepress. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[16]I weep and tears flow down my cheeks because no one comforts or encourages me. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28,

KJV} My children are in distress because the enemy has defeated us. [17]Zion pleads for help, but no one offers comfort. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} You, LORD, have planned that Judah's neighbors become our enemies. To them Jerusalem is like a filthy rag. [18]You, LORD, are right, but Jerusalem did not obey commands. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Everyone, look on Jerusalem's suffering because her young people have been taken away as captives. [19]Jerusalem asked her allies for help, but they betrayed her. Her priests and elders died of starvation while they were searching for food. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [20]Jerusalem says, "LORD, see my misery and torment. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} My heart is broken because I turned from You. In the streets people are dying by the sword and at home there is death. [21]People have heard my groaning, {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} but no one offered comfort. My enemies know of my trouble and are glad for what You have done. You have promised to destroy them just as You destroyed me. [22]Look on their sins {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} and punish them just as You punished me for my sins. I groan continually, and I've lost all hope." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Jeremiah is grieved over the sin and rebellion of God's people. It's not their loss of gold, or fine clothing, or food, or earthly things. Israel has lost the blessing of God, and Jeremiah weeps for Israel's spiritual emptiness. Lord, I've never prayed as deeply as Jeremiah; give me a burden for my lost family and friends who are destroying themselves. Teach me to cry inwardly for my sin and the sins of Christians I know. Break my heart so I will intercede for others. Amen.

Lamentations 2

God Punishes His People

[1]LORD, You have cast a cloud of anger over Jerusalem, the Daughter of Zion. You have tossed Israel's beautiful city down from heaven to earth, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and in Your anger You no longer think of it as a city over which You rule. [2]Without mercy You have destroyed all Israel's homes. In Your wrath You have broken down every fortress wall of Jerusalem and have tossed to the ground Jerusalem, the Daughter of Judah, and her leaders, leaving them in shame. [3]In Your intense anger You have killed every leader in Israel by not protecting them when the enemy attacked. You consumed everything in Israel like a raging fire. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [4]You were like an enemy shooting arrows at us, killing our loved ones. You poured out Your wrath like fire on the tent of the Daughter of Zion. [5]You defeated us as if You were our enemy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} You destroyed our palaces and fortresses. And everyone in Jerusalem, the Daughter of Judah, is moaning and sobbing. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [6]You destroyed the temple, Your meeting place,

{182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} as if it were a mere hut in a garden. Your people forgot its festivals and Sabbaths, and in Your anger You rejected both king and priests. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
7You abandoned Your altar and temple. You let Jerusalem's enemies capture her palaces. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} And Your people shouted so loudly in agony that it sounded like they were celebrating at an annual festival. 8You were determined to tear down the wall around Jerusalem, the Daughter of Zion, measuring it carefully to be sure it was all demolished, including ever fortress and every part of the wall. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 9Jerusalem's gates have fallen, and the bars to the gates are smashed. The city's king and royal family have been taken away as captives. The law is not followed, and no prophetic vision guides them. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 10In grief Jerusalem's leaders sit on the ground in silence, have sprinkled dust on their heads, and wear coarse clothing. Young woman hang their heads in sorrow. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
11My eyes are filled with tears {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} because of my inner pain, and I am drained emotionally {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} because many of my people are killed, and children and babies are fainting in the streets. 12They cry to their mothers for something to eat and drink, but they faint like wounded soldiers {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} and they die in their mothers' arms. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 13How can I comfort you, O Daughter of Jerusalem? To what can I compare your agony? Who can heal your wounds that are as deep as the sea? {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 14Your prophets have had visions that are false and useless. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} They did not point out your sins in order to keep you from being taken captives. Instead they gave you false and deceptive messages. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 15People who pass by make fun of you, Jerusalem, and shake their heads and say, "Is this the city people called "the Most Beautiful in All the World" and "the Joy of All the Earth?" {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16}
16Your enemies curse you and scoff and grind their teeth and say, "At last we have defeated Jerusalem. This is the day we've been waiting for." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
17LORD, this is what You did just as You planned long ago. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} You destroyed Jerusalem without showing any mercy, and You let our enemy boast that they were able to be strong against us, like a bull with its horns. 18LORD, our people of Jerusalem, the Daughter of Zion, cry out to You and their tears flow in sorrow like a river {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} with no relief or rest. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}
19"Jerusalem, pray during the night {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and pour out your hearts to the LORD like pouring out water from a jar. Pray for your children {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} who are starving at every street corner." 20LORD, have You ever done this to anyone else? Is it right

for mothers to kill and eat their own children? Is it right for priests and prophets to be killed right in the temple? {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [21]Young and old lie dead in the streets, and boys and girls have been killed by the sword. You have killed them, LORD in Your anger, slaughtering them without mercy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [22]You invited our enemies to come destroy us like inviting them to a festival. In Your anger no one escaped or survived. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} The enemy has killed all our children.

Israel thought she enjoyed a protected and privileged place in the world because of her covenant relationship with God. But in her sin, she forgot her spiritual obligation to God. Now Israel has reaped a whirlwind, because she sowed to the wind (Hos. 8:7). Lord, my nation has forgotten all that You've done for her in the past. We've won wars, we've prospered financially, and we've given to missionary endeavors around the world. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} But we've sinned against You. We've forgotten personal integrity and holiness. We've forgotten marriage fidelity and sexual purity. We've thrown public Bible reading out of the public schools, and we've forced the recognition of Christianity out of public places and our text-books. God, forgive us. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} May my nation repent before You judge her, as You judged Jerusalem. God be merciful to my nation and send a revival of Christianity {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} before it's too late. Amen.

Lamentations 3

Turn Back to God for Hope

[1]I, Jeremiah, have seen much trouble because of Your wrath, God. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [2]You have put me in the dark, [3]and You have turned against me over and over again. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [4]You made me grow old and You broke my bones. [5]You attacked me and were bitter toward me. [6]You forced me to sit in darkness like a dead person. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}

[7]You built a wall around me so that I can't escape, and You held me down with chains. [8]When I prayed for help, You didn't listen. [9]You put large stones in my way so that I had to follow a crooked path. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [10]You even waited for me like a bear or lion, [11]and then dragged me from the road and tore at me, leaving me helpless. [12]And You treated me as target practice, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [13]piercing my heart with arrows. [14]My people laugh at me, and all day long they sing mocking songs. [15]You have filled me with bitterness, and made my life sour. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

[16]You have even made me eat gravel, which has broken my teeth, and You have rolled me in dust. [17]I have no peace and I can't remember what it's like to be successful. [18]Everything I had hoped for from You is

gone. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}
19As I think of my suffering and bitterness,
20I am emotionally discouraged, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
21but then on the other hand I do have hope.
22Because of Your steadfast love we are not destroyed completely, and Your tender love never fails, {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
23and it is fresh every morning. How great is Your faithfulness. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

In the middle of Jeremiah's lamentation (his cry of grief), he realizes that afflictions serve to keep him humble. Jeremiah turns his thoughts to the faithfulness of God by worshiping God with the phrase, "Great is Thy faithfulness" (v. 23). Lord, focus my prayers to hope in Your faithfulness. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} May I always remember the great things You've done for me in the past. May I survey the good things I have now because of Your gifts to me. So, I will look to the future with hope because "Great is Your faithfulness." Amen.

24I say to myself, "You, God, are what I possess, and therefore I can depend on You." {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}
25You are good to everyone who trusts You and who turns to You. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
26Therefore I will wait patiently for You to rescue me."

The only thing the inhabitants of Jerusalem have left is their life. "It is of the LORD's mercies that we are not consumed" (v. 22, KJV). They are not dead. Why? "Because His compassions they fail not" (v. 22, KJV). "LORD, thank You for life; I will live it for You. My life with You is more important than houses, clothes, food, even health. Thank You for Your compassion toward me. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} Help me to put first my relationship to You. Let things be second. Amen.

27It is good for young men to be disciplined {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}
28and to be silent before You.
29After lying in humility in the dust, they may have hope.
30They should let their enemies strike them on their cheeks and experience shame.
31But You don't desert Your people forever. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21}
32You bring grief, but You also show tender love. Your steadfast love is so great. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
33You don't enjoy bringing trouble and grief to anyone.
34Some people mistreat prisoners,
35and deprive them of their rights in Your sight,
36and refuse to be fair to them. But You, LORD, see such things. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
37Only what You have planned will happen,
38including both calamities and good things. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
39No one then should complain when he is being punished for his sins.
40We should think about how we are living and turn back to You,
41lifting our hearts and hands to You, God of Heaven. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13}
42And we should admit that we have sinned and rebelled against You

{399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and that You have not forgiven us.
43You have pursued us in Your anger and have killed many of us without any mercy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 44You have hidden behind a cloud so that our prayers can't get through to You. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 45And foreign nations treat us like garbage, 46and they speak against us. 47We are afraid and trapped, and are desolate and destroyed. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 48And because of this, my eyes are filled with tears. 49I will get no relief from my tears {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 50until You, LORD, look down from heaven and respond. 51My heart is breaking because of what enemies are doing to the young women of my city. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}
52My enemies, whom I never harmed, hunted me down like a bird. 53They tried to kill me by putting me in a pit and throwing rocks at me. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 54Water in the bottom of the pit covered my head, and I thought I would die. 55But I prayed to You, LORD, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 56and You heard me say, "Listen to my plea for help. Save me." 57Then You answered my prayer {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} and You said, "Don't be afraid."
58LORD, I'm glad You answered me. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 59You saw how they abused me, and You made things right. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 60You saw how they plotted against me, 61and You heard their insults and evil plans against me, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 62and their verbal attacks against me all day long. 63No matter what they are doing, they make fun of me in their songs.
64Pay them back, LORD, {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} for everything they have done. 65Harden their hearts and put a curse on them. 66Chase them in Your anger and destroy them completely beneath Your heavens. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lamentations 4

The Aftermath of the Fall of Jerusalem

1The finest gold has lost its shine and is dull, and jewels are scattered at every street corner. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 2In a similar way the people of Zion, valuable as fine gold, are treated like pots of clay.

Jeremiah reminds us that gold loses its shine, and jewels can be lost, but people are precious. Lord, remind me again of the preciousness of life. Jesus died for every unbeliever so each lost person is precious to You. You have a wonderful plan for each individual, but so many miss Your goodness and blessing. Lord, I pray for the salvation of all unsaved because they are precious to You. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} I pray for Your full blessing on all believers because they are precious to You. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} Amen.

[3]Wild dogs nurse their young, but my people are like ostriches that ignore their babies' cries. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [4]Babies' tongues stick to the roofs of their mouths, and when children beg for bread, no one gives them any. [5]People who ate expensive foods are now begging in the streets. They used to be dressed in royal clothing, but now they lie in piles of ashes. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[6]You punished my people worse than You punished Sodom, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} which was destroyed in a moment without anyone to help.

The sins of Sodom and Gomorrah were so great that God rained down brimstone and fire upon them in judgment (Gen. 19:24). But the sin of Judah—idolatry—was worse in God's sight. "The evil of my people's city was worse than the sin of Sodom" (v. 6). God hates the sin of Christians more than the sin of unbelievers because Christians sin against more light, they know what they are doing; they sin personally against God. Lord, I will never justify my sin because it is just a "little thing." All sin is offensive in Your sight. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} Forgive me. Give me a passion for purity and obedience. Keep me from sin. Make me righteous in Your sight. Amen.

[7]Our princes were healthy with skin as bright as snow and bodies that were shining like jewels. [8]But now they are blacker than soot and no one recognizes them. Their skin sticks to their bones and is dry and withered. [9]Being killed by the sword is better than slowly dying of starvation. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]Tenderhearted mothers have even cooked and eaten their own children.

[11]You, the LORD, were so angry that You burned the city of Zion to the ground. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [12]No one, including even kings, believed that enemies could break through Jerusalem's gates. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [13]But it happened. Why? Because the prophets and priests had sinned against You, even killing innocent people. [14]Now these prophets and priests wander blindly through the streets. They are so covered with blood that no one dares touch them. [15]People tell them to go away and not to touch them because they are unclean. So if they go to some foreign country, people there will say, "You can't stay here." {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [16]You, LORD, have scattered Your people, and You don't help them. No one respects the priests and leaders. [17]We keep looking for some nation to come rescue us, {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} but none comes. [18]We couldn't even walk in our streets because enemies were following us. We knew our end was near and our days were up. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[19]Our enemies swoop down on us faster than eagles. They hunt us in the hills, and they try to catch us in the desert. [20]We had hoped that Your leader could help us, but he was caught in their trap. We had thought he would keep us safe no matter

where we were. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[21]You people of Edom who live in the land of Uz may rejoice now. But you will suffer under God's wrath and be drunk and go around naked. [22]Daughter of Zion, you have paid for your sins, and the LORD will let you return home from captivity. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} But you people of Edom will be punished and your sins will be made known.

Lamentations 5

A Prayer of Jeremiah

[1]Remember, O LORD, what has happened to us and see our disgrace. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [2]Foreigners have taken our land and homes. [3]We are orphans and have no fathers, and all our mothers are widows. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [4]We have to buy water to drink and wood to burn. [5]Our enemies are right behind us, and we are tired out. [6]We begged for bread from Egypt and Assyria.
[7]Our fathers sinned, but we are left to pay for their sins. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} [8]Slaves are now our rulers, and no one can rescue us. [9]We went into the desert to get food, but we risked death from our enemies.
[10]Our skin is black from fever and hunger. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4}
[11]Women and girls in Zion and all Judah have been raped, [12]our rulers are hung up by their arms, and no one respects our leaders. [13]Young men are forced to grind grain at the millstone, and boys are forced to carry heavy loads of wood. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [14]Old men no longer sit at the city gate to decide court cases, and young people no longer play music.
[15]We have no joy. We moan instead of dance. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [16]Our glory is gone, and how terrible it is for us all, because of our sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Jeremiah voices the heart cry of the people of Israel after Jerusalem is destroyed. This is a cry of suffering people who are sorry for their sin, "We have sinned" (v. 16). Learn four lessons from this prayer:
First, suffering has done its work. God allows His people to suffer to bring them back to Himself. Lord, I have suffered because of my sin. Sometimes my suffering is slight; sometimes it's almost too much to bear. I've learned my lesson. Forgive me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Amen. Second, we sometimes suffer because of the sins of those who lived before us. "Our forefathers sinned... now we must suffer because of their wrong" (v. 7). Lord, forgive my sins, and don't punish my children because of my sins. But also I am suffering because of my forefathers' sin. I confess their sins, but that doesn't forgive their iniquity, but I pray to alleviate the consequences I bear (this is called identificational repentance {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} in which we acknowledge the sin of our fathers to remove the curse or consequences on our generation). Amen.

Third, God is glorified when the sins of His children are punished, because it shows God's hatred of evil and His reward for righteous living. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} *Lord, I know You hate my sin; forgive me. I repent and turn away from my sin. I pray like Jeremiah, "Restore our days—like they used to be" (v. 21). Amen.*
Fourth, when it looks like God's work is destroyed, God is sitting on His throne in heaven. The success of God is not measured by the success of His people on earth. Not at all. The chief end of mankind is to glorify God, and God is glorified when His people do right, so He rewards them. {409 Reward for Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} *God is glorified when He manifests His holiness by punishing His people when they do wrong. Lord, I worship You on Your throne.* {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} *Be glorified in my life by what I do right, and be glorified in punishment when I do wrong. But most of all be glorified in everything. Amen.*

17 We feel weak and tired, and our eyes
are dim because of tears. 18 Mount Zion is
empty with wild dogs prowling in it. 19 But,
LORD, You remain the same forever, and
You rule from one generation to another.
{366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
20 Why then have You forgotten us for so
long? 21 Please bring us back to You, and
make us like we were before. 22 Or have You
completely rejected us and are still very
angry with us? {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24}

Ezekiel

Ch 1: Ezekiel's Vision of the Glory of the Lord 1134
Ch 2: Ezekiel Is Chosen by God 1136
Ch 3: Ezekiel Is Appointed as a Watchman of Israel 1137
Ch 4: The Siege of Jerusalem Portrayed 1138
Ch 5: The Sharp Razor 1139
Ch 6: Prophecy against False Worship 1141
Ch 7: The End Has Come 1141
Ch 8: Ezekiel's Second Vision 1143
Ch 9: God Punishes the Idolaters 1144
Ch 10: The Creatures 1145
Ch 11: Judgment against Jerusalem 1147
Ch 12: What the Exile Will Be Like 1149
Ch 13: Judgment against False Prophets 1150
Ch 14: Judgment against Idolaters 1152
Ch 15: Jerusalem Is Like a Useless Vine 1153
Ch 16: Israel Worshiped Idols and Foreign Gods 1154
Ch 17: A Parable about the Eagles and the Vine 1157
Ch 18: The Righteous Person Will Life; The Sinner Will Die 1158

Ch 19: A Song of Sorrow for Israel's Sins 1160
Ch 20: Israel Rebelled against God 1161
Ch 21: The Swords of Judgment 1163
Ch 22: Jerusalem Is Guilty of Sin 1165
Ch 23: Samaria and Jerusalem, the Sinful Sisters 1166
Ch 24: The Rusty Boiling Pot 1169
Ch 25: Prophecy against the Ammonites 1170
Ch 26: Tyre Will Be Destroyed 1172
Ch 27: Lament over Tyre 1173
Ch 28: The King of Tyre Will Fall 1175
Ch 29: The Prophecy against Egypt 1177
Ch 30: Egypt Will Be Punished 1178
Ch 31: Egypt Is Like a Fallen Cedar Tree 1179
Ch 32: The Pharaoh Is Like a Sea Monster 1180
Ch 33: Listen to the Watchman 1182
Ch 34: A Prophecy against the Shepherds of Israel 1184
Ch 35: Judgment against Mount Seir and Edom 1186
Ch 36: A Prophecy to the Mountains of Israel . 1186
Ch 37: The Valley of Dried-Up Bones 1189
Ch 38: Prophecies against Gog 1191
Ch 39: Prophecies against Gog 1192
Ch 40: A Vision of the House of the LORD 1194

Ch 41: The Temple Measurements 1196
Ch 42: Charmbers to the North and South 1198
Ch 43: The Glory of the LORD Returns to the Temple 1199
Ch 44: The Laws Concerning the House of the LORD 1200
Ch 45: The Division of the Land 1202
Ch 46: The Prince and the Offerings 1204
Ch 47: The Waters Flowing from the House of the LORD 1206
Ch 48: The Division of the Land 1207

EZEKIEL

Key Words: *Son of Man* found 107 times (See Ezekiel 2:1)

Key Verse: "The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel the priest, the son of Buzi, in the land of the Chaldeans by the river Chebar; and the hand of the LORD was there upon him" (1:3).

Theme: Ezekiel was born into the priestly tribe (1:3), but God gave him visions, and commanded him to tell (prophesy) them to the nation of Israel. Ezekiel was carried into Babylon in the first deportation (606 B.C.). He kept before the nation the sins which led to their captivity. He also predicted Israel's return to the land of promise (Ch. 37) and described the temple in Jerusalem during the coming millennial kingdom (Ch. 40-48). Ezekiel also predicted judgment upon the surrounding nations that had oppressed Israel. There are two reoccurring phrases in Ezekiel that establish the authority of his messages; "the hand of the LORD was there upon him" (Ezek. 1:3; 3:14, 22) and "The word of the LORD came expressly unto Ezekiel" (1:3).

God calls Ezekiel "Son of Man" to remind him of his humanity because he comes from flesh; yet God used him in supernatural ways. Jesus used the same term (80 times in Luke in reference to Himself, that is, "Son of Man" to accentuate that God had come from the flesh.) *Lord, Ezekiel was just human, yet You spoke to him supernaturally and used him to communicate Your message to others. In the same way, I am just human; but You speak to me supernaturally through Scripture, so I will tell Your message to others. Amen.*

Ezekiel 1

Ezekiel's Vision of the Glory of the Lord

1 On July 31st, when I (Ezekiel) was 30 years old, while I was with the Judean captives besides the Kebar River, the heavens were opened and I saw visions of God. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2 This happened during the fifth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity. 3 The LORD spoke to me, {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} Ezekiel, son of Buzi, a priest, by the Kebar River in the land of the Babylonians. The LORD placed His hand on me.

God is waiting for you when your dreams fail, {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} just as the Lord had another task for Ezekiel when he couldn't minister in the temple. Lord, take my eyes off human things, and human expectations. Help me to see You {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} through my crushed spirit and broken dreams. When the bottom drops out of everything, {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} I will worship You sitting on Your throne. Amen.

4I saw a great windstorm blowing in from
the north. Lightning flashed from a huge
cloud, and the cloud was surrounded by a
brilliant light. 5In the fire were four living
creatures that looked like humans. 6But
each one had four faces and four wings.
7Their legs were human-like, but their feet
were split like calves' feet and were like
polished bronze. 8Beneath their wings I
could see human-like hands. 9The wings
of each creature touched the wings of the
two beings beside it. The creatures moved
together in any direction, without turn-
ing their bodies. {519 Vision-Motivated
Prayer, Prov. 29:18}
10Each creature had the face of a human in
front, the face of a lion on the right side,
the face of a bull on the left, and the face of
an eagle on the back. 11Each creature had
two wings that touched two wings of the
living creatures on either side of it, and the
other two wings covered his body. 12Wher-
ever the spirit led them, they went in that
direction straight forward without turn-
ing. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}
13The winged creatures looked like bright
coals of fire, like bright torches, and light-
ning flashed among them. 14And the crea-
tures themselves darted in every direction,
as quickly as lightning. {519 Vision-Moti-
vated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}
15As I looked at these creatures, I saw a
wheel on the ground beside each one.
16The wheels sparkled like a green min-
eral. The four wheels looked alike, but
each wheel had another wheel turning
crosswise within it; 17so they could go in
any direction without the wheels turn-
ing. 18The rims of the wheels were large,
and had eyes all around the edges. {519
Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}
19When the winged creatures moved, the
wheels moved too. And when the crea-
tures flew upward, the wheels moved up
too. 20Wherever the spirit moved the crea-
tures, the wheels moved too. And when
the spirit moved, the creatures and the
wheels moved. {383 Promise of the Holy
Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} 21When the crea-
tures moved, the wheels moved, and when
the creatures stopped, the wheels stopped.
And when the creatures rose from the
ground, the wheels rose too, because
the spirit of the creatures was also in the
wheels.
22Above the winged creatures I saw what
looked like an expanse sparkling like crystal.
23Each creature's wings and each creature
had two wings covering its body. 24When-
ever they flew, their wings sounded like the
roar of waves washing against the shore, or
like the voice of the LORD of the Heav-
ens or the shouting of an army. When they
stopped, they let down their wings. {542

Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [25]As they stood with their wings lowered, I heard a voice from above their heads.
[26]I saw what looked like a throne made of sapphire, and high above on the throne was what looked like a human. [27]From His waist up He looked like glowing hot metal and from the waist down He looked like a burning flame, and surrounding Him was a bright light [28]like a rainbow in the clouds. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} This was the brightness of the LORD's glory. Then I fell face down, and I heard the voice of someone speaking.

Ezekiel didn't understand everything that was happening to him, and neither will you. Lord, I don't understand everything You're doing in my life. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} By faith I will serve You and leave the results to You. Amen.

Ezekiel 2

Ezekiel Is Chosen by God

[1]The voice said, "Son of man stand up and I will speak to you." [2]The Spirit came into me and raised me to my feet. I listened to His words. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}

Ezekiel was filled with the Spirit (v. 2) just as believers today are commanded, "Be filled with the Spirit" (Eph. 5:18). Lord, I'm empty, and I feel so useless when I'm empty. Fill me with the Holy Spirit so I can be used by You. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} I confess my sins, and repent of them. Cleanse me by Your blood (1 John 1:7). Use me in Your service. {432 Service-Response Prayer, Heb. 5:4} Amen.

[3]He said, "Son of Man, I am sending you to the Israelites, a nation that has rebelled against Me, they and their ancestors to this very day. [4]They are a hardhearted and stubborn people. Say to them, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says.' Here's what I want you to say to them. [5]Of course they may not listen, because they are a rebellious people, but yet they will know that a prophet has spoken to them. [6]Don't be afraid, though you may feel at times as if you're in a thornbush or among scorpions. Don't be afraid of what they say or be frightened by them. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [7]Speak My words to them, whether they listen or not, for they are a rebellious people.'"

God told Ezekiel, "Don't be afraid of them (people)" (v. 6). This is the same thing God told Jeremiah (1:8). Lord, I let people intimidate me, especially unsaved people. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} Forgive me. Take away my fear of people and make me a bold witness for You. Amen.

[8]"You, Son of man, listen to what I say to you. Don't rebel against Me as they've done. Open your mouth and eat what I'll give you." {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8}
[9]Then I saw a hand stretched out to me, and it held a scroll, [10]which the hand unrolled for me. On both sides of the scroll were words of sorrow, mourning, and grief. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Ezekiel 3

Ezekiel Is Appointed as a Watchman of Israel

1 The LORD said, "Ezekiel, after you eat
this scroll then go speak to the people of
Israel." 2 So I opened my mouth and He
gave me the scroll. 3 Then He said, "Eat this
scroll." So I did, and it tasted like honey.
{229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} 4 He then
said, "Son of man, go to the people of Israel
with My message. {432 Service-Prayer,
Heb. 5:4} 5 I'm not sending you to people
who speak a language you can't under-
stand. 6 No, I'm not sending you to people
with a strange, difficult language. If I did,
they wouldn't listen."

God told Ezekiel to go speak to Israel, "You are not being sent to a people whose speech you cannot understand. Their language is not difficult..." (vs. 5, 6). We are like Ezekiel; we are sent to witness to people who speak our language. Lord, I don't need a foreign tongue to witness for You. You can use the language I already know. I don't need to learn another language; I just need to speak to people I know and tell them what You've done for me; {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} but I'm usually scared or intimated. Forgive me for not being bold. Forgive me for my silence. Amen.

7 "I'm sending you to the Israelites, but they
won't listen to you because they didn't
listen to Me. All of them are stubborn
and hardhearted. {327 Obedient-Prayer,
Col. 2:6} 8 But I've made you as hard and
stubborn as they are. 9 I've made your fore-
head as hard as a rock. {165 Fear-Praying,
Rev. 14:7} So don't be afraid of them or
terrified by them, even though they are
such rebels."

God told Ezekiel, "I have made you as hard as a diamond" (v. 9). Lord, my problem—I'm soft. Make me hard against criticism and persecution. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} May I be hard in trials, yet have a tender heart to You. Amen.

10 Then He added, "Son of man, listen
carefully to what I'll say to you and then
think carefully about My words. {286
Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 11 Then go
to your people and say to them, whether
they listen or not, 'This is what the sover-
eign LORD says.'" 12 Then the Spirit of the
LORD lifted me up, and as the glory of the
LORD rose from its place, I heard behind
me the rumbling sound of an earthquake.
{366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
13 This was the sound made by the wings of
the creatures brushing against each other,
and the sound of the wheels beneath them.
{542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}
14 The Spirit lifted me up and took me away,
and I was angry and bitter. The LORD's
power was on me. {359 Power-Praying,
Rom. 1:16} 15 Then I went to the Judean
captives in Tell-Abib, beside the Kebar
River. I sat with them for a week, over-
whelmed at what had happened.
16 At the end of the seven days, the LORD
gave me this message: 17 "Son of man, I have
appointed you to be a watchman for Israel.

{529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} When you get a message from Me, pass it on to them right away. 18When I tell wicked people they'll die because of their sins, but you don't give them this warning, they'll die in their sins and you'll be responsible. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 19If you warn them and they keep on sinning, they'll die in their sins and you won't be responsible. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 20If good people turn bad and don't listen to My warning, they'll die. So if you don't warn them of the consequences of their sins, they'll die in their sins and their previous good deeds won't help them. I'll hold you responsible for their death. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} 21But if you warn them and they turn from their sin, they'll live, and you'll not be responsible." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

22The LORD took hold of me and said, "Get up and get into the valley, and I'll talk with you there." 23I got up and went, and there I saw the glory of the LORD as I had seen it in my vision by the Kebar River. And I fell with my face to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16}

24Then the Spirit took control of me, and I got up. He said, "Go, lock yourself in your house. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} 25You'll be tied up so you can't go out. 26I'll make you unable to talk with your rebellious people. 27But when I give you a message, I'll enable you to talk. Then you'll say to them, 'This is what the sovereign LORD says.' Some of them will listen, {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} but others will refuse to listen because they are rebellious."

Ezekiel 4

The Siege of Jerusalem Portrayed

1"Son of man, take a large brick and sketch on it a map of Jerusalem. 2Build siege ramps against the city walls, and surround the city with enemy camps. 3Put an iron pan between you and the city and turn your face toward the city. The enemy will attack the city, and this will be a warning to the people of Israel.

4"Then lie down on your left side for 390 days as a sign of Israel's punishment, {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 5one day for each year of its suffering. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 6After that, lie or your right side for 40 days, one day for each year of Judah's sin. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

7"Lie there with your arm bared and prophesy against Jerusalem. 8I'll tie you with ropes so you can't turn from side to side till the days of the siege have been completed."

God tells Ezekiel to do a symbolic action, just as God instructed Jeremiah. Ezekiel would play "toy soldiers" like children use things to represent armaments, soldiers and defensive positions. Ezekiel was told to lie first on his left side, then his right. God used visual symbols because they effectively communicate truths or principles that are hard to see with the naked eye. God likes symbols because they take away any excuses, such as: I didn't

understand. Lord, I will be baptized to tell the world I died with You, was buried; and rose again. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} *I will eat the bread of communion to know Your body was broken for me, and I will drink the cup because Your blood was spilt to take away my sin. I will respect the symbols of Christianity and learn from them. Amen.*

9"Get some wheat, barley, beans, lentils, millet, and spelt, and mix them together for bread. This will be food for you while you're lying on your left side 390 days. 10Eat about eight ounces of bread each day, 11and drink about a quart of water each day. 12Make your bread like barley cakes. While the people are watching, bake it over a fire using dried human waste as fuel." 13The LORD then said, "Israel will eat defiled bread in Gentile lands where I'll scatter them."

14I said, "O Sovereign LORD, I have never defiled myself by using human waste. I've never made myself ceremonially unclean by eating any animal that died of sickness or was killed by wild animals or anything that You said is unclean." 15"Okay," the LORD said, "You may bake your bread using cow dung instead of human waste."

16Then He said to me, "Son of man, food and water will be rationed, and the people will be anxious and hopeless. 17Food and water will be so scarce that the people will look at each other in fear, {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} and they'll waste away under God's punishment."

The last statement of the chapter says, "They will become weak because of their sin" (v. 17). Sin weakens the will, because you've done something you know you shouldn't do. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} *Then sin weakens the character and inner perception of yourself. Lord, help me realize every sin has its consequences. Strengthen me* {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} *to stand against sin. May others see Christ in me. Amen.*

Ezekiel 5

The Sharp Razor

1"Now, Son of man, shave your head, and then use weighing scales to divide the hair into three equal parts. 2When the days of your siege come to an end burn a third of your hair. Scatter a third of your hair across your city and slash at it with a sword. Scatter the last third to the wind, for I will scatter My people with the sword. 3Tuck a few strands of hair into your robe. 4Then toss some of these hairs into the fire. A fire will spread from this remnant and will destroy all of Israel." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

5This is what the Sovereign LORD says, "This is an illustration of what will happen to Jerusalem. I have set her in the center of the nations. 6But she has rebelled against My laws and regulations and has been more wicked than those nations. She has refused to obey the laws I gave her."

Here's what God says about Israel's sin, "You cause more confusion (about God) than the nations around you" (v. 7). That means when Christians sin, that causes more confusion about salvation in the minds of the unsaved than anything else. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Think of all the claims of salvation from the Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and secular attacks on Christianity. Christians harm Christianity with their sin more than criticism from any other source. Lord, forgive me when I sin against You, but please forgive me for hurting the cause of Christianity with my sin. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} I would rather die than harm Christianity. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} Keep me from sin; keep me from harm. Amen.

7So the Sovereign LORD says, "Since
You have refused to obey My laws and
regulations and are more sinful than your
neighbors, 8I, the Sovereign LORD, am
now your enemy. I'll punish you while all
the nations watch. 9Therefore, I'm against
you, Jerusalem, and I'll punish you as the
nations look on. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 10Parents will eat their own chil-
dren, and children will eat their parents.
And those who survive I'll scatter in every
direction.
11"As surely as I live," says the Sovereign
LORD, "I'll not favor you and I'll show
you no pity, because you defiled My tem-
ple as a place to worship Me with your
detestable images and terrible practices.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The Lord allowed Nebuchadnezzar to destroy Jerusalem to demonstrate how strongly He felt about Israel's sin. But worse than that, the Father let Jesus Christ be tortured and suffer on the cross to tell us how strong He felt about our sin. Lord, forgive me for not taking the death of Christ seriously. It is the most important thing in eternity. Forgive me of my sin. I worship Your holiness of justice for all You did on the cross for me. Amen.

12"A third of you will die in Jerusalem from
starvation or disease, a third will be slaugh-
tered by the enemy outside the city walls,
and a third will be scattered to the winds
and pursued by soldiers with swords. {268
Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 13Then
My anger will be finished, and I will be
avenged. Then you'll know that I the
LORD spoke in My jealous anger. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
14"Everyone who walks by your city will
laugh at your destruction 15and every
nation will make fun of you and will be
horrified at what I did to you. {478 Testi-
mony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 16I'll shower you
with deadly arrows of famine to destroy
you. The famine will become so severe
that you'll have no more food. 17Also wild
beasts will attack you and kill your chil-
dren. Disease and war will work against
you, and your enemies will defeat you with
their swords. I the LORD have spoken."
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Ezekiel 6

Prophecy against False Worship

1Again a message came to me from the
LORD: 2"Son of man, look toward Isra-
el's mountains and tell them: 3'Listen,
you mountains, hear what the Sovereign
LORD says to the mountains hills, ravines,
and valleys. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-
23} 4I'll smash every altar and I'll slay you
in front of the idols of the people who
worship them. 5I'll lay their dead bodies
in front of the idols, and I'll scatter their
bones around the altars. 6Every town in
Israel will be destroyed, and every hilltop
shrine and altar and other religious objects
you have made will be smashed. 7Then
when your people have died, the survivors
will know that I, the LORD, did all this.'
8"I'll let a few of My people escape and
they'll be scattered among the nations.
9Those who escape will remember how
I've been grieved by their rebelling against
Me and worshiping idols. {189 God-Hat-
ers' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} They will hate them-
selves for all their sinful ways."

God tells Ezekiel to tell Israel, "They will remember how I was hurt when they desired to worship their idols" (v. 9). Most Christians don't realize how much God is hurt when they disobey Him and turn from Him to their sin. God has feelings of emotions, and He can be grieved. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} Lord, turn my thoughts to You; forgive me of thinking only of my happiness, or my pleasure. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Help me do things that bring joy and happiness to You. Lord, be pleased with my obedience; {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I offer to You my devotion and I will obey You today. Amen.

10"They'll know that I am the LORD, and
that I'm serious when I told them all this
would happen."
11The Sovereign LORD says, "Son of man,
clap your hands and stomp your feet in
horror. How terrible it will be for Israel
because of the disgusting things they did.
Now they'll die by the sword, starvation,
and disease. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps.
88:3} 12Those who live far away will die
from diseases, those who live nearby will
die by the sword, and those who remain
will die of starvation. They will all experi-
ence the fury of My wrath. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13Their dead will lie scat-
tered by their altars on every hilltop and
under every green tree and great oak tree,
places where they offered incense to their
idols. Then My people will know that I am
the LORD. 14I'll make their country deso-
late from the Southern Desert to Diblah
in the north. Then they'll know that I am
the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5}

Ezekiel 7

The End Has Come

1Another message came to me from the
LORD: 2"Son of man, tell the people
of Israel that this is what the Sovereign
LORD says: 'Israel has come to an end!
Your whole country–north, west, east,

south–is finished. 3I'll release My anger against you because of your sins and your detestable idol worship.'"

There is a point when God's patience comes to an end. God's people can sin only so long. God says to Israel, "The end has come for you" (v. 3). Is your sin wearing out God's patience? Lord, sometimes I don't pay attention to the clock. Lord, help me realize what time is left on Your clock. I want to be instant in doing the right things. I want to quickly shun evil influence. Help me to repent instantly because time means so much to You. I'm calling on Your mercy now. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} Amen.

4"'I'll show you no pity and I'll repay you for your conduct and your disgusting practices. Then you'll know that I am the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5The coming disaster will be terrible. 6The end has finally come. 7O Israelites, your doom has finally arrived. Soon you'll experience panic, not joy. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 8I'll pour out My wrath and punish you for all your repulsive sins. 9I'll have no pity on you. I'll repay you for your detestable ways. Then you'll know that I, the LORD, am the one who is punishing you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

10"'The day is here. Like a plant, doom has budded and arrogance has blossomed. 11Your violence will fall back on you as punishment for your wickedness. No one will survive, and they'll lose everything of value. 12The time has come. Buying and selling will stop. 13People who sell property won't be able to buy it back. Everyone must be punished for his sins. No one will survive, and I'll not change My mind. 14The trumpet is sounded to call Israel's soldiers to battle, but no one will go to war because in My anger I'll strike everyone down. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

15"'People who live in the countryside will be killed by enemy swords, and people in the cities will die by starvation and disease. 16If any escape to the mountains they'll moan like doves because of their sins. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30}

17"'Your hands will be limp, and your knees will be weak as water. 18In mourning you'll wear burlap, as you face terror. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} Your faces will be covered with shame, and you'll shave your heads. 19You'll throw away your silver and gold like trash. In the day of My anger your money won't be able to save you. It won't satisfy your hunger. In fact it'll make you stumble into sin. 20Proud of your beautiful jewelry, you used it to make detestable and worthless idols. So I'll make your idols disgusting to you. 21I'll give your wealth to wicked foreigners as loot. 22I'll look away as robbers desecrate My temple. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

23"'Get chains ready to drag away dead bodies. Bloodshed and violence are everywhere. 24I'll have the most wicked nations come and occupy your homes. But I'll also end their pride and ruin their temples. 25You'll be terrified and you'll long for peace but none will be found. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 26One tragedy will follow another, and bad news will follow other bad news. You'll want

some word from a prophet, some teaching from the priests, or some counsel from the elders, but it won't be available. [27]Your king and his princes will be in despair, and your people will tremble in fear. I'll treat you the way you treated others, and I'll punish you for your sins. Then you'll know that I am the LORD.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Ezekiel 8

Ezekiel's Second Vision

[1]On September 17, 592 B.C., during the sixth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, as I was talking with the leaders of Judah in my home, the Sovereign LORD took hold of me, [2]and I saw something shaped like a human. He was like fire from the waist down, and bright as polished metal from the waist up. [3]He reached out what seemed to be a hand, and He grabbed me by my hair. Then the Spirit lifted me up and took me to Jerusalem to the north gate of the temple's inner courtyard {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} where there was an idol that provoked God to jealousy, making Him very angry. [4]Then I saw the glory of the God of Israel, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} just as I had seen it in the valley near the Kebar River.

[5]God said to me, "Son of man, look north." And when I did, I saw that disgusting idol by the altar near the gate. [6]God then said, "Son of man, do you see the awful sins My people are committing? {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} These detestable sins are driving Me from My temple. You'll see even worse sins than these." [7]Then He took me to the courtyard entrance where I saw a hole in the wall. [8]God said, "Son of man, dig into this hole." When I did, I saw a doorway there. [9]God said, "Go in and see the wicked and detestable things the people are doing there." [10]Inside I saw the walls were covered with pictures of reptiles and disgusting, unclean animals. I also saw the idols the Israelites were worshiping. [11]Seventy Israelite leaders were standing there, including Jaazaniah, son of Shaphan. Each one was holding an incense burner, and the room was filled with the smell of incense. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[12]God said, "Son of man, do you see what terrible things these leaders are doing in the darkness, each in his own room with his idol? They say I can't see them, because they think I've deserted them. [13]But I'll now show you something worse than this." [14]Then He brought me to the temple's northgate. There I saw women mourning for the god Tammuz. [15]He said, "I'll now show you even greater sins than these." {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}

[16]He brought me to the temple's inner courtyard, and there at the entrance, between the porch and the bronze altar of burnt offering, were about 25 men standing with their backs to the temple, and they were bowing down, worshiping the sun. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Chapters 8-11 include a series of visions that show Ezekiel the evils of Israel. When Ezekiel dug into the wall he found all types

of unclean (abominable) animals. Ezekiel is shown 70 men (the Sanhedrin) with their backs to God in the temple, but they were worshiping the sun. Women were seen worshiping Tammuz, the Babylonian deity husband of Ishtar. Lord, You see the sins of people that they keep hidden from others. Even when people try to hide their sins, You see everything. Lord, forgive my sins; {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} cleanse me. Don't look on my sins, but look at the blood of Christ who forgives my sin. Look on me through the eyes of Jesus Christ. Amen.

17God said to me, "Have you seen this, Son of man? Is it nothing to the people of Judah that they commit these awful sins? They have also spread violence and injustice throughout Israel and have made Me very angry. They have thumbed their noses at Me and caused Me to be very angry with them. 18So in My anger I'll punish them without mercy, and when they shout to Me for help, I won't listen to them." {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Some sin is against nature and the lower animals; other sins are against persons; still other sin is against ourselves. But the worst sin of all is against God. The first of the greatest commands is "You shall have no other gods before me" (Exod. 20:3). Israel was involved in just about every type of idolatrous worship possible. No wonder God says, "I will act in anger" (v. 18). Lord, keep me from all types of sins, {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} especially sins against You. I don't want You angry with me. I repent of all sins {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}, and I want to be clothed in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} I want to stand perfect before You. Amen.

Ezekiel 9

God Punishes the Idolaters

1Then the LORD spoke in a loud voice, "Come to Jerusalem, you men I've chosen to destroy the city. Bring your weapons."
2I saw six men come from near the city's upper gate which faces north. Each one had a deadly weapon. With them was a man clothed in linen who had things to write with. They all stood beside the altar of burnt offering. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
3God's glory went from the winged creatures {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and moved to the temple entrance. The LORD said to the man in linen with a writing kit, 4"Go through Jerusalem and put a mark on the foreheads of those who are sad about the disgusting things being done in the city." {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21}

God sent men (angels) who had charge over Jerusalem to go through the city, "Put a mark on the foreheads of the people who groan" (v. 4). The term groan meant both surprise and anguish. Are you surprised when sin creeps into your life or the life of other Christians you know? {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Do you even

groan when you see sin in any Christian? {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} Lord, surprise or shock me when I see sin in my life. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} Then may my sigh turn to groans of conviction and displeasure. Lord, give me a hatred for sin. Amen.

5I heard the LORD say to the six men, "Follow him and kill everyone who does not have a mark on his forehead. Show no mercy. 6Kill old men, young people, women and children. But don't harm anyone who has the mark. Begin here at the temple." So the men began with the old men who were in front of the temple. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Those who sinned were killed in the vision. But good news; those who were marked because they groaned, were not touched but were protected. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} (vs. 6, 11). Lord, I know You preserve those who love and obey You. Because I love and obey You, I have confidence {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} that You will preserve me in the day of judgment. Amen.

7Then the LORD said to the six men, "Defile the temple by filling the courtyards with the corpses of those you kill." So they went through the city and did as they were told. 8While they were carrying out their orders, I was alone. I fell to the ground on my face and I said, "O Sovereign LORD, in Your anger will You wipe out everyone in Jerusalem?" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 9He answered, "The sins of Judah and Israel are so great. The land is filled with blood, and the city is full of injustice. The people think that because I've forsaken the land, I don't see them. 10Therefore I'll not spare them or have pity on them. I'll repay them for what they've done." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11Then the man in linen with the writing kit said, "I've done as you commanded."

Ezekiel 10

The Creatures

1Above the winged creatures I saw what looked like a throne of sapphire. 2The LORD said to the man in linen, "Go between the whirling wheels under the creatures and take burning coals in your hands and scatter them over Jerusalem." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I watched as he followed the LORD's instruction.

3The winged creatures were standing at the south side of the temple when the man went in, and the cloud of the LORD's glory filled the inner courtyard. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 4The LORD's glory rose from above the winged creatures and moved to the temple entrance. The cloud filled the entire temple, and the courtyard was glowing brightly. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 5The sound of the wings of the winged creatures could be heard in the outer courtyard. It was like the voice of the LORD of the Heavens when He speaks. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

6The LORD told the man in linen to take
some burning coals from between the
wheels under the winged creatures. So the
man went in and stood beside a wheel.
7Then one of the creatures reached to the
fire, took some coals, and put them in the
hands of the man in linen who took them
and went out. {15 Angel-Like Closeness
to God, Heb. 9:5} 8Under the wings of the
creatures were what looked like the hands
of a man.
9Each of the winged creatures had a wheel
beside it, and the wheels sparkled like a
green mineral. 10All four wheels looked
the same, and each had a wheel turning
crossways within it. 11The wheels moved
together whenever the creatures moved
so they could go in any direction with-
out the wheels turning. 12The creatures'
bodies including their backs, hands, and
wings, and also the wheels, were covered
with eyes. 13I heard a voice referring to
the wheels as "the whirling wheels." 14The
winged creatures each had four faces–the
faces of a bull, a human, a lion, and an
eagle. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer,
Heb. 2:7}
15Then when the winged creatures, the
ones I saw by the Kebar 16River, moved, the
wheels beside them moved, and when the
creatures spread their wings to rise from
the ground the wheels were by their side.
17When the creatures stopped, the wheels
stopped. And when the creatures rose into
the air, the wheels rose with them. This is
because the spirit of the winged creatures
was in the wheels. {224 Holy Spirit-Pray-
ing, Jude 20}
18Then the glory of the LORD moved from
the temple entrance and stopped above
the winged creatures. {377 Presence of
God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 19They spread their
wings and flew into the air with the wheels
beside them. They stopped at the east gate
of the temple, and the glory of the LORD
was over them. {541 Worship-Prayer, John
4:23} 20These were the winged creatures I
had seen beneath the God of Israel by
the Kebar River. {14 Angel-Appreciation
Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 21Each had four faces and
four wings, and under their wings were
what looked like human hands. 22They had
the same four faces as those near the Kebar.
Each creature moved straight ahead with-
out turning.

Ezekiel sees a horrifying vision that begins (v. 8:4, KJV) when "He saw the glory of the God of Israel." This was the Shekinah (this word means glory) cloud that led Israel daily through the desert for 40 years. This was the cloud that went up to stand between Israel and the menacing army of Pharaoh (Exod. 14:19-20). This cloud sat on the top of Mount Sinai because God's presence was in the cloud when the LORD dwelt with His people.

When Solomon dedicated the temple, this cloud filled the temple. The fire came down from heaven... "the glory of the LORD filled the LORD's house" (2 Chron. 7:1, KJV). Why was this a horrifying vision? Because Ezekiel saw the slow departure of God from the temple. Since God was going to allow the Babylonians to destroy the temple, he would no longer be the temple's protector, and

surely no enemy could tear down the temple when God was present in it.

First, Ezekiel saw the Shekinah cloud lift up into the air from its usual place on the sacred chest. "The glory of the God of Israel was gone up from the cherub where upon He sat" (9:3). It was as if God was waiting for someone to cry, "God, don't leave us." But there was no warning. No one cared that God was leaving.

Next, "The glory of the LORD... stood over the threshold of the house" (10:10). Doesn't someone linger at the front door before they leave? That's what God did. He was lingering because He wanted someone to ask Him to stay. The people were so spiritually blinded; they couldn't see God was leaving.

Next, "The glory of the LORD... departed from off the threshold" (10:18). God lifted high above the temple. Was God waiting high above the temple so all could see that He was leaving? But only Ezekiel, 500 miles away, could see the vision of God leaving. Finally, God went to the East of the city and tarried over the Mount of Olives. "The glory of the LORD... stood upon the mountain which is on the east side of the city" (11:23). In the Old Testament, God's glory left His people from the Mount of Olives. In the New Testament, Jesus ascended back into heaven from the same place (Acts 1:9-12).

Lord, don't leave me or my church the way You departed from the temple. Stay with me; I need Your protection and power, but most of all, I want to worship You.

Lord, thank You for tarrying and giving Israel another chance to repent. If I ever sin against You, tarry in my life; give me another opportunity to repent and call out to You. I need You desperately.

Also, there is another interesting picture that Ezekiel saw. An angel took coals of fire from off the offering and scattered them throughout the city (10:2). Was this the fire of conviction spread over the people of Israel to bring them back to God? {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Or, was this the fire of judgment, that is, that God was coming to punish them? Lord, before You punish my nation for her sins, give her an opportunity to repent {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and cry out for revival. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} Amen.

Ezekiel 11

Judgment against Jerusalem

[1]The Spirit of the LORD lifted me up {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and took me to the east gate of the temple where I had seen 25 men, including two leaders: Jaazaniah, son of Azzur, and Pelatiah, son of Benaiah. [2]The LORD said to me, "Son of man, these men are giving wicked counsel to the people of Jerusalem and are making evil plans. [3]They say, 'Now is not a good time to build more houses. This city is like a cooking pot, and we are the meat.' [4]Therefore prophesy against them, Son of man." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[5]Then the Spirit of the LORD came on me, and he told me to say this to the people: "This is what the LORD says: 'I know what you are saying, but I also know what

you are thinking. 6You have murdered so many people that the city is filled with dead bodies. 7Yes, the slain bodies are the meat, and the city is like a cooking pot. So I'll force you out of Jerusalem. 8You fear the sword, but that is exactly what I will bring against you,' says the Sovereign LORD. 9"I'll force you out of the city and I'll send armies to attack you, and punish you. 10You'll be slaughtered all the way to Israel's borders, and then you'll realize that I, the LORD, have done these things. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} 11No, this city will not protect you like a cooking pot. I'll execute judgment on you at Israel's borders, not in the city of Jerusalem. 12You'll know that I am the LORD, {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} and that you have not obeyed My decrees or kept My laws, but instead have become like the nations around you.'" 13As I was prophesying, Pelatiah, son of Benaiah died. Then I fell on my face and said loudly, "LORD, do you plan to kill everyone in Israel?" {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

14The LORD said to me, 15"Son of man, the people still left in Jerusalem claim that their relations who were taken captive to Babylonia are too far away to worship Me and so He has given this land to us. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 16Therefore I the Sovereign Lord, say to the captives in Babylonia, 'Although I scattered you among the world's nations, I will be with you wherever you are so you can worship Me.'"

Even though the glory cloud was leaving Jerusalem, God was not completely forsaking His people. God promises, "yet I have become a temple to them in the countries where they have gone" (v. 16). When they couldn't have the temple, they could have God's presence as a personal or "little sanctuary." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Now in the New Testament, the Holy Spirit is not only with us, He dwells within us, {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} "He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:17). Lord, come dwell in my body and be glorified in the things I do. I worship You for Your holiness, and I praise You for Your indwelling. Amen.

17"'I, the Sovereign LORD will gather you from the nations and bring you back from where you were scattered, and I'll give you the land of Israel again. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 18When that happens, you are to remove all disgusting idols. 19Then I'll give you a singleness of heart, and I'll put a new Spirit in you. I'll take away your stubborn hearts of stone and give you tender hearts. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} 20Then you'll follow My regulations and obey My statutes. You'll be My people and I'll be your God. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 21But I'll punish those who worship idols, I, the LORD, have spoken.'"

22Then the winged creatures with the wheels beside them, spread their wings that were above them. {14 Angel-Appreciation

Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 23Then the glory of the LORD went up from Jerusalem and stopped above the mountain east of the city. 24The Spirit lifted me up and brought me to the captives in Babylonia in the vision God gave me. Then the vision of my visit to Jerusalem faded away, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 25and I told the captives everything that the LORD had shown me.

Ezekiel 12

What the Exile Will Be Like

1Again a message came to me from the LORD: "Son of man, you are among a rebellious people. They have eyes but they don't see and ears but they don't hear. 2So pack your things as if you were going into exile. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 3And in the daytime as they watch you go from Jerusalem to another location, perhaps they will understand, though they are rebellious. 4Then in the evening while they are watching, go out as though going on a long march into captivity. 5Then while they are watching, dig a hole through the wall in your house and carry out your things with you. 6Load them on your shoulders while they are watching, and go out like those going into captivity. Cover your face so you can't see the land. All these actions are a sign to the people of Israel." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

7So I did as the LORD told me. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I packed some things as if I were going into captivity. Then in the evening I dug through the wall of my house with my hands. While the people watched, I went out in the evening, carrying my few things on my shoulder. 8The next morning the LORD said, 9"Son of man, those rebellious people asked what you were doing. 10So say to them, 'The Sovereign LORD says these things pertain to Zedekiah and all of Israel.' 11"Say to them, 'I am a sign to you, to show you what will happen to you. You will be taken away as captives.' {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12Zedekiah will place things on his shoulder and leave at night through a hole dug for him in the wall. And he'll cover his face so he can't see the land. 13I'll spread out a net for him and catch him in My snare as he tries to leave Jerusalem. I'll lead him away to Babylon, but he'll never see it, though he'll die there."

Ezekiel is told the people are spiritually rebellious to God, "They have eyes to see, but they do not see. They have ears to hear, but they do not hear" (v. 2). Just as in Ezekiel's day, there are many today who are blinded to spiritual truth. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} Why? Because they don't want to see or hear what God wants them to do. Lord, speak, I will listen. Lord, show me truth in Scripture, I will see what You say, and I will obey. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} If I ever miss your words, shout in my ears; don't let me wander into hardness, only to become brittle. Give me a soft heart. Amen.

14"I'll scatter in every direction his officials
and troops, and I'll track them down with
the sword. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5} 15Then when I force the remaining
people in Jerusalem to live in foreign coun-
tries, they'll know that I am the LORD."

While Israel will not acknowledge the Lord before the captivity, after God punishes Israel, "Then they will know that I am the Eternal One, the LORD." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} Lord, I will acknowledge You before You punish my sin, so I will not suffer any consequences of my transgressions. Forgive me {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} before I cry, and cleanse me before I ask, {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} for You are my God. You are a pardoning God, full of mercy and forgiveness. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} Lord, I plead Your mercy. Amen.

16"I'll see that some of them survive war,
starvation, and disease. That way, they can
confess to their captors how terrible their
sins were. Then they'll know that I am the
LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
17Again the LORD said, 18"Son of man,
tremble as you eat your bread and shudder
as you drink your water. 19Then tell the
Israelites, 'The LORD says that you peo-
ple will eat your food and drink your water
in fear because your land will be stripped
bare because of your violence. {163 Fear
of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 20Every town
will be destroyed and the land will be like
a desert. Then you'll know that I am the
LORD.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts
5:4, 9}
21Again the LORD said to me, 22"Son of
man, you know that proverb that says, 'As
time passes, every prophet is proved a liar.'
23Tell your people I'll put an end to that
saying and people will no longer quote it
because I'll replace it with this proverb:
'The time is near when every prophecy
will be fulfilled.' {520 Vision-Praying,
Josh. 14:12} 24There will be no more false
visions or misleading predictions about
peace in Israel. 25What I predict will be
fulfilled without delay, you rebels of Israel.
I'll fulfill My predictions about you," says
the Sovereign LORD.
26The LORD said to me, 27"Son of man, the
people of Israel are saying that My visions
won't come true for many years from now,
and that all My prophecies pertain to the
distant future. 28So give them this message
from Me: 'My words will soon come true;
there'll be no more delay. {486 Today's
Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} I'll now do
everything I have predicted.'"

Ezekiel 13

Judgment against False Prophets

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, speak
against the false prophets of Israel who
are giving their own prophecies. Tell them
to listen to My Word. 3I say, how terrible
it will be for false prophets who make up
their own prophecies and say nothing.
{486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb.
3:7} 4Your prophets, Israel, are like wild
dogs digging around for food among ruins.

5They haven't repaired breaks in the city
walls to help it be firm in the battle on the
day of the LORD. {105 Defensive-War-
fare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 6Your visions are
false and your predictions are a lie. They
say, 'My message is from the LORD,' but
I never sent them. Yet they still think their
words will come true. 7They say their mes-
sages are from Me, but I never sent them."
8Therefore the Sovereign LORD says, "I'm
against you because of your false words
and lying visions. 9I'll be against prophets
whose visions are false and whose proph-
ecies are lies. They'll not be allowed to
call themselves Israelites and they'll not
be allowed to be in My land. Then you'll
know that I am the Sovereign LORD."

The false prophets will not inherit eternal life, for God condemns their "vanities" and "lies" (v. 9). The King James describes "neither shall they be written in the writings" (v. 9). This is a reference to the "Book of Life" (Rev. 3:5; 20:15); their names will not be written there. Lord, I believe in You, and have accepted Jesus Christ as my Savior. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} My name is written in the Book of Life. Thank You for that inner confidence. Amen.

10"'These prophets tell My people there will
be peace, but there's no peace anywhere.
They are people who built a flimsy wall
and then tried to strengthen it with paint.
11Tell these painters that the wall will col-
lapse under rainstorms, hailstorms, and
windstorms. 12Then the people will ask the
workers, 'Why didn't the paint hold up
the wall?'
13"'Therefore, I the Sovereign LORD, say,
'I'll make a violent wind, hailstorms, and a
rainstorm fall in My anger to destroy your
city. 14I'll tear down your painted wall,
leveling it to the ground with only the
foundation showing. When it falls, it will
crush you. Then you'll know that I am the
LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
15The city of Jerusalem and the prophets
will feed My anger. Then I'll announce
that the 16prophets in Jerusalem who pre-
dicted peace when there was no peace are
dead.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4,
9}
17"'Now, Son of man, condemn the women
of Israel who preach messages they make
up. 18Say to them, 'How terrible it will
be for women who wear magic charms
on their wrists and make veils of various
lengths to trick people into thinking they
can predict the future. Will you trap the
lives of My people but preserve your own?
19You charge My people a few handfuls of
barley and a couple pieces of bread and
then give messages that insult Me. By lying
to My people who love to listen to lies, you
kill those who should live, and you let live
those who should die.'" {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
20Therefore the Sovereign LORD says,
"I'm against all your magic charms by
which you are trapping people like birds.
I'll rip those charms from your arms like
setting birds free from a cage. 21I'll tear off
your magic veils from your heads and set
My people free from your grasp. They'll
no longer be your victims. Then you'll

know that I am the LORD. 22You discouraged the righteous with your lies, and you encouraged the wicked by promising them life if they continue sinning. 23But you'll no longer talk about visions you didn't see or make false predictions. I'll save My people from your grasp. Then you'll know that I'm the LORD." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

The false teachers and those who encourage others to false doctrines will be punished by God. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} First, because they disobey God's commands, and second, because they harm others. "By your lies, you counsel the heart of the person... not to stop being evil" (v. 22). Lord, keep me from the influence of false teachers. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} Holy Spirit, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} I ask You to guide me into truth (John 16:13). May I never influence others to believe the wrong thing about the Bible. I want my doctrine to be accurate and I want to teach others accurately. Amen.

Ezekiel 14

Judgment against Idolaters

1One day some of Israel's leaders came and sat in front of me. 2Then the LORD said, 3"Son of man, these men have set up idols secretly in their hearts, and these idols will cause them to stumble in sin. So I refuse to give them a message."

A group of men came to Ezekiel "and sat down in front of me" (v. 1). That meant they wanted to inquire of the LORD through Ezekiel. God told Ezekiel, "These men love to worship idols" (v. 3). Then God said, "Shall I allow them to ask Me for help" (v. 3)? God, who knows the hearts of all, hates hypocrisy. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} Lord, I want to be totally honest with You, {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} but sometimes I don't even know my own heart (Jer. 33:3-4). Forgive my ignorant sin, and cleanse me. Keep me from hypocritical sin; help me deal honestly with my sin. "Search me O God, {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and know my heart, try me and know my way: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting" (Ps. 139:23-24). Amen.

4"'Therefore tell them that if they worship idols, even in their hearts secretly, and then they go to a prophet to see what I'll say, I'll answer them Myself. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 5And I'll do this to capture the hearts and minds of My people who have turned from Me to worship idols.

6"'Therefore tell the Israelites to turn from their idols and stop all their atrocious practices. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 7When any one of your Israelites or any foreign resident rejects Me and sets up idols in his heart and falls into sin, and then goes to a prophet to ask My advice, I'll answer him Myself. 8I, the LORD, will turn against him and punish him by

making him a byword, one people talk about, and I'll answer him Myself. Then you'll know that I am the LORD." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
9"If a prophet is deceived and gives a message anyway, I am the One who caused him to lie. I'll reject him and cut him off from My people. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10And anyone who goes to a false prophet will be punished in the same way. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 11I'll do this so Israel will return to Me and stop defiling themselves with their disgusting sins. They'll be My people and I'll be their God," says the sovereign LORD. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}
12Then the LORD said, 13"Son of man, suppose an entire nation sins against Me, and I punish it by destroying the crops by a famine, resulting in both people and animals dying of starvation. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14Even if Noah, David, and Job lived there, they would only be able to keep themselves alive because of their righteousness," says the Sovereign LORD. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
15"Or if I send wild beasts into the country and they kill all the children, and leave the country desolate, 16even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were there, they couldn't rescue their sons or daughters. Only they alone would survive. 17Or if I bring a sword against the country to kill men and animals, 18again I affirm that if these three men were there, they couldn't rescue their sons and daughters. Only they alone would survive. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
19"Or suppose I poured out My wrath by sending a terrible disease that killed both people and animals. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 20Even if Noah, Daniel, and Job were living there, they could not rescue their sons or daughters. Only they alone would survive because of their righteousness.
21"I, the Sovereign LORD, will punish Jerusalem by sending war, starvation, wild animals, and disease to kill all your people and animals. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 22Those who survive will be taken to Babylonia. When you see how sinful they are, you'll realize why I did these things to Jerusalem. 23You'll be convinced that I've done the right thing."

Ezekiel 15

Jerusalem Is Like a Useless Vine

1Again the LORD, said to me, 2"Son of man, how does the wood of a grapevine compare to a tree branch? 3The wood of a grapevine can't be used to make anything, not even pegs to hang things on. 4It can be used only as firewood. But after a fire burns the ends and chars the middle, it is useless. As fuel it burns too quickly. 5Before it was burned, it was useless, and after it is burned, it is completely useless.
6"I, the Sovereign LORD, promise that just as the wood of a grapevine is burned as firewood, 7so I'll punish Jerusalem with fire. If they escape from one fire, they'll fall into another. When this happens, you'll

know that I am the LORD. [8]And I'll make Israel's land a desolate wasteland because the people have been unfaithful. I, the Sovereign God, have spoken." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

God says Israel is like a vine, and the nature of a vine is fruit bearing. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}. A vine is useless for lumber to build or to heat. When a vine's fruit bearing ceases, pull it up and burn it up. Thus, Israel is no longer useful to God, so the nation will be destroyed. Lord, I want to be fruitful to You; {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} it grieves me when I don't produce fruit for You. Let the Holy Spirit fill me {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} to produce the fruit of the Spirit in character (Gal. 5:22-23). Let the Holy Spirit use me to win someone {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} to salvation. Amen.

Ezekiel 16

Israel Worshiped Idols and Foreign Gods

[1]The LORD spoke to me yet again. [2]"Son of man, confront the people of Jerusalem about their terrible sins. [3]Give them this message from Me: 'Jerusalem, you were born in the country of the Canaanites, and your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite. [4]When you were born, no one cut your cord or washed your body. No one rubbed you with salt or dressed you in warm clothing. [5]No one loved you enough to do these things for you, and no one felt sorry for you. You were despised and thrown out into a field left to die.

[6]"'Then I saw you lying there, kicking in your own blood. I said, "Live." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [7]I helped you grow like someone caring for a tender young plant: you grew up to be a beautiful young woman with full breasts and long hair, and yet you were still naked. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} [8]When I saw you again, you were old enough to be married. So I covered you with My own robe. Then I promised that you belong to Me, and that I, the Sovereign LORD, will take care of you. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [9]I washed the blood off of you and rubbed you with olive oil. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [10]I gave you expensive clothes of linen and silk, and sandals made from the best leather. [11]I gave you jewelry, bracelets, and a necklace, [12]and a ring on your nose, and earring for your ears, [13]and adorned you in gold and silver, and your clothes were made of only the finest material and embroidered cloth. Your food was fine flour, honey, and olive oil. You became very beautiful, much like a queen. {33 Beautiful-Prayer, Rev. 21:19} [14]Your beauty I gave you became known around the world.

[15]"'Unfortunately you trusted in your beauty and fame and you became a prostitute. You offered yourself to every man who came along. [16]You made shrines and decorated them with some of your clothes, and you carried on your prostitution there. These things should never have happened.

17You made idols out of the gold and silver jewelry I gave you and you worshiped those idols. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 18You put on them some of the clothes I gave you, and you offered them oil and incense. 19I gave you fine flour, olive oil, and honey to eat, but you sacrificed them to the idols.

20"'But worse than that, you sacrificed your sons and daughters as food to the idols. 21You slaughtered My children and sacrificed them to the idols. 22You never once thought about the days when you lay naked in a field, covered with your own blood. 23'How terrible for you,' says the Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Besides all these wicked things, 24you made a shrine for every public square. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 25By these shrines you offered your body to everyone who passed by. 26You even offered yourself to the Egyptians, your lustful neighbors, and that increased My anger. 27So I punished you by letting the Philistines take over some of your land. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Even they were shocked by your sinful conduct. 28Then you slept with the Assyrians. But still you weren't satisfied, 29so also you had sex with the Babylonian merchants but that didn't satisfy you either. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

30"'You have such a sick heart,' says the Sovereign LORD, 'that you do such things, acting like a disrespectful prostitute. 31You build shrines on every street corner and altars to idols in every city square. You were so eager for sex that you refused payment for your services. 32As an adulterous wife you prefer love with strangers rather than your husband. 33Prostitutes receive payment for sex, but you give gifts to your lovers bribing them to come to you. 34You aren't like other prostitutes. No one pays you; you pay them. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

35"'Jerusalem, you prostitute, hear this message from the LORD. 36You exposed yourself to your lovers, you worshiped disgusting idols, you sacrificed your children to those idols. 37Therefore I, the LORD God, will gather all your lovers, those you liked and those you didn't. I'll strip you naked in front of them and they'll stare at you. 38I'll judge you for being an unfaithful wife and a murderer, and I'll cover you with blood in My jealous anger. 39Then I'll give you over to your lovers, those many nations, and they'll tear down your altars and shrines. They'll take your clothes, and your jewelry, leaving you naked and ashamed. 40An angry mob will stone you to death and cut you to pieces with their swords. 41They'll burn down your houses and punish you as other women look on. I'll stop you from being a prostitute and paying your lovers. 42Then I'll be calm and no longer be angry and jealous. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 43You didn't remember how I took care of you in your youth, but instead you made Me mad with all these disgusting things you've done. You made things worse by acting like a prostitute. So I'll punish you,'" says the Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

44"People will quote this proverb about you: 'Like mother, like daughter.' 45Your mother

hated her husband and children, and your sisters hated their husbands and children. Your father was an Amorite, and your mother was a Hittite. [46]Your older sister was Samaria, the city to the north. Your younger sister was Sodom, the city to the south. [47]You followed their wicked ways and soon became more sinful than they were.

[48]"As surely as I live," says the Sovereign LORD, "the people of Sodom and its villages were not as sinful as you are. [49]They were arrogant, gluttonous, and lazy, but she did nothing to help the poor and needy. [50]They were haughty and did terrible things before Me, and so I destroyed them.

[51]"You people of Jerusalem have done twice as many sins as Sodom. They seem righteous compared with what you've done. [52]And their punishment may seem light compared to yours. Be ashamed of your sins, which make your sister's sins seem righteous. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[53]"Someday I'll bless Sodom and Samaria, and you too, Jerusalem. [54]Then you'll be ashamed of what you've done. And they'll feel good in comparison to you. [55]Your sisters, Sodom and Samaria, and their villages will be like they were before. And so will you. [56]Jerusalem, you were so arrogant you wouldn't even mention Sodom. [57]But now Edom and the Philistines and their villages hate you and despise you. [58]You'll pay for all the disgusting things you've done. I, the LORD, have spoken. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[59]"Jerusalem, you'll be punished because you didn't keep our agreement. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [60]But I'll keep the agreement I made with you when you were young, {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} and I'll make an everlasting promise. [61]You'll be ashamed when I make your sisters, Samaria and Sodom, as your daughters, even though they aren't part of our agreement. [62]I'll keep this promise, and you'll know I am the LORD. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [63]I'll make a substitutionary payment for your sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} But you'll be too ashamed even to mention your sins," says the Sovereign LORD. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

God shows a picture of His love for Israel where He chose Israel to be His wife. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} He abundantly lavished His protection and riches on her. Even when Israel defected from the LORD, He dealt with Israel in grace and mercy. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} But adultery and idolatry are intermingled. In idolatry, Israel turned to love idols, then worshiped foreign gods, and venerated them. As always, when the heart turns from the LORD, love of the world's system quickly follows. Lord, keep me from spiritual adultery; {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} may I never love or serve anything in place of You. I know I have a double-minded heart; forgive my inclination to sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Keep my eyes focused on You. I love You with all my heart. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} May I always do so. Amen.

Ezekiel 17

A Parable about the Eagles and the Vine

[1]The LORD said to me, [2]"Son of man, tell this story to the people of Israel. [3]A big eagle with strong wings and pretty feathers flew to Lebanon. He grabbed the top branch of a cedar tree, [4]and broke it off and carried it away to a city of merchants where he planted it. [5]He took some seed from Israel and planted it in fertile ground beside a river like a willow tree. [6]It grew into a spreading vine. Its branches grew up toward the eagle, and its roots grew strong beneath it. It had lots of strong branches and lots of leaves. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

[7]"Then another eagle with strong wings and thick feathers came along. The vine extended its roots and branches toward the eagle for water. [8]The vine was already planted in good soil by lots of water so it would become a good vine with lots of leaves and delicious grapes. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [9]So I, the Sovereign LORD, ask, 'Should I let this vine grow? No, I'll pull it out by the roots. Its fruit will be cut off and its leaves will wither and die. It won't take a strong arm or a large army to pull it up by the root. [10]Even if its transported, it won't survive. It'll wither when the desert wind blows against it.'"

[11]The LORD said, [12]"Say to the rebels of Israel, 'Do you know what this story means? I'll tell you,' says the Sovereign LORD. 'The king of Babylonia came to Jerusalem and carried off her king and officials to Babylon as captives. [13]He chose a member of the royal family of Jerusalem and signed a treaty with him and made him agree to be loyal. He also led away many of Judah's top leaders. [14]So Judah could never be strong again. [15]But this new king of Judah rebelled against Babylonia, sending to Egypt for horses and troops. Can Israel get away with breaking her treaty with Babylonia? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]No. For as surely as I live,' says the Sovereign LORD, 'the king of Israel will die in Babylon because he'll break the treaty he made with the king of Babylonia. [17]Pharaoh and his army in Egypt won't help Judah when the king of the Babylonians builds siege ramps against the wall of Jerusalem. He'll kill many in Jerusalem. [18]Because the king of Israel broke his treaty, he won't escape.' {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[19]"As surely as I am the living Sovereign LORD, I'll punish him for breaking the agreement he said he'd keep. He has despised My name, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [20]so I'll throw a net over him to trap him. Then I'll bring him to Babylon and punish him there because he was unfaithful to Me. [21]His troops will run away, but they'll be killed in battle, and survivors will be scattered in every direction. Then you'll know that I, the LORD have spoken these things. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[22]"I'll take a tender branch from the top of a tall cedar, and I'll plant it on the top of Israel's highest mountain. [23]It will grow branches and produce large fruit. All kinds of birds will find shelter in the tree under

its branches. [24]Every tree will know that I, the LORD, can cut down tall trees and make green trees wither, and I can give life to dead trees. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I will do what I said."

Ezekiel speaks God's predictions. First, Nebuchadnezzar will take King Jehoiakim to Babylon (that is, 597 B.C. v. 12). Second, Nebuchadnezzar will make Zedekiah a "puppet king" to rule for Babylon (v. 13). Third, Zedekiah will break his treaty (covenant) and seek help from Egypt (vs. 13-17). Fourth, Zedekiah will break his covenant with Babylon and rebel against God (vs. 18-19). Fifth, Zedekiah will die and his troops be defeated (vs. 20-21). Lord, You know the future because You live there. You predicted what will happen in the future. You know Your people will rebel against You, but You still give them opportunity to repent. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} *You are a merciful and tender Lord; thank You for forgiveness* {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} *and kindness to me. Help me be worthy of Your love. Amen.*

Ezekiel 18

The Righteous Person Will Live; The Sinner Will Die

[1]Again the LORD said, [2]"You people quote this proverb: 'The parents have eaten sour grapes, and a sour taste is in their children's mouths.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]But tell the people they'll no longer say this proverb. [4]Everyone belongs to Me, both parents and children. And only those who sin will be put to death." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

The people of Jerusalem were hiding behind the proverb that said, "The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge" (v. 2, KJV). Israel was saying Jerusalem was suffering from the sins of their fathers. While there are cumulative outward consequences of sin, each person is accountable for his own sin (v. 4). "This is a lesson of accountability and responsibility. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} *The people of Jerusalem would be punished for their sin. Lord, I will not blame my life or any misfortune on my parents. I am responsible for my life and what I make of it. Forgive me for any sin I commit, and give me strength to live above any consequences that come from my sin.* {516 Victory Over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} *Help me be victorious because I want to live above sin. I want to serve You in holiness.* {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} *Amen.*

[5]"Suppose a man is righteous and always does what is right. [6]Suppose he doesn't eat meat sacrificed to foreign gods at hilltop shrines and worship those idols. Suppose he doesn't have sex with someone's wife or with a woman having her monthly period. [7]Suppose he never cheats anyone and always returns anything he took as security for a loan. And suppose he gives food and clothing to the poor. [8]Suppose he doesn't charge interest on loans, and is fair to everyone, [9]and follows My teachings

{154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} and faithfully obeys My laws. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} This man is good and will live," says the Sovereign LORD.

10"Suppose a man has a violent son who sheds blood and sins, 11doing things his father never did. He eats meat sacrificed to idols, has sex with someone else's wife, 12cheats the poor and needy, and keeps what is given to him as security for a loan. He worships idols and does disgusting things, 13and he charges high interest when he loans money. Such a man will not live. He'll be put to death because he has done all these detestable things. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

14"But suppose that sinful son has a son who sees his father's sins but decides not to do them. 15Suppose he refuses to worship idols at hilltop shrines, does not commit adultery, 16and does not cheat anyone or demand the security for a loan. He gives food and clothes to the needy, helps the poor, 17and does nothing evil. He charges no interest on loans, and he follows My teachings and obeys My laws. He will not die for his father's sins, he will live. 18But the father will die for cheating and robbing and doing evil. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

19"But why isn't a son punished for the sins of his father? That's because the son is doing what is right and obeys My laws. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 20But the son who sins will die. A child won't be punished for his parents' sins, and parents won't be punished for their child's sins. Good people will be rewarded for their goodness, and wicked people will be punished for their wickedness.

21"Suppose wicked people stop sinning and start obeying My laws and doing what is right. They will live and not be put to death. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 22Their past sins will be forgiven and they'll live. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 23I the Sovereign LORD, don't like to see wicked people die. I like to see them turn from their wicked ways and live. 24However, if good people start sinning and doing detestable things, will they live? No. They'll die because of their sinful deeds. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

25"Do you think I'm not being fair? But who is unfair? You are, not Me. 26When righteous people turn from being good and start sinning, they'll die for it. 27And if wicked people turn from their wickedness, obey My laws, and do what is right, they'll live. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 28They thought about it, and turned from their sin. They will live and not die. 29And yet you people of Israel keep saying I'm unjust. But you, not Me, are the ones who are unjust.

30"Therefore I'll judge each of you for what you've done," says the Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} "Turn from your sins, or you'll be punished. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 31Get rid of your evil ways, and get a new heart and a new spirit. Why should you die? {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} 32I, the Sovereign LORD, don't want to see that happen. So stop sinning and live."

God wanted a person to live for Him from the innermost part of his being that came from a new heart and a new spirit. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} Lord, search me thoroughly (Ps. 139:23, 24) to find my hypocrisy or ignorant sin. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} Forgive me when I don't walk uprightly. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Keep me from intentional sin, and make me pure. Amen.

Ezekiel 19

A Song of Sorrow for Israel's Sins

1"Son of man, sing this funeral song for two of Israel's leaders (Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin). {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 2What a brave lioness your mother was. She raised her cubs among lions. 3She raised one of them to be a strong lion, hunting prey and being a man-eater. 4When the nations heard about him, they trapped him in a pit. Then they led him with hooks to Egypt.

5"When his mother saw that he would not return, she taught another of her cubs to be a strong lion. 6Prowling with the other lions as a leader, he devoured prey and he too became a man-eater. 7He destroyed fortresses and ruined towns. When he roared people were afraid. 8Then nations planned to kill him. They spread out a net and caught him in a trap. 9They put him in a cage and took him to Babylonia. They locked him away so his roar could never be heard again in Israel." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Ezekiel sings a lament of sadness over God's people. They are likened to two young treacherous lions, that is, Jehoahaz and Jehoiachin, just as treacherous as they were dumb. Jehoahaz was devious, so he was led prisoner to Riblah in Egypt with a ring in his nose (2 Kings 23:33). Jehoiachin was taken prisoner to Babylon for 37 years (2 Kings 24:14). Lord, I want to have pure inward motives. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Make me truthful and honest in all things. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} Keep me from being cruel to people and deceitful in dealings with others. Amen.

10"Your mother was like a vine, planted by a river. She had many branches and lots of grapes. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 11Her branches became strong. And she became very tall, above all other trees. She stood out because of her height and green branches. 12But in anger I pulled her up by the roots and threw her to the ground. The desert dried up the grapes and its branches withered, and its stem was destroyed by fire. 13She was growing in the hot, dry desert, 14where her stem caught fire and flames burned her branches and grapes. No branch is left, except for a ruler's scepter." {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} The time for the funeral has now arrived.

God's people are pictured as a fruitful vine (vs. 10-14), which was exalted by the nations. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

She was "pulled up by its roots in anger" (v. 12). There will be no king over God's people until Jesus returns to rule Israel during the coming Kingdom, when He shall rule with a rod of iron (Rev. 19:15). Lord, I look forward to the return of Jesus to sit on the throne of David to rule Israel with a rod of iron. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} Now come sit on the throne of my heart, rule me from the inside, so outwardly I'll be a testimony {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} for You. Amen.

Ezekiel 20

Israel Rebelled against God

[1]On August 14, 591 B.C., in the seventh year of King Jehoiachin's captivity, some of Israel's leaders came to ask if there was a message from the LORD, and as they waited they sat in front of me. [2]Then the LORD said, [3]"Son of man, these men have come to ask for My help. But tell them I'll give them no answer."

Again, the elders come to Ezekiel to inquire of God (previous 14:1, now v. 1). The phrase "set before me" meant they went to a prophet to inquire of God. But God, who knows all hearts, saw their insincerity, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} "I will not be inquired of by you" (v. 3). Is this a picture why God doesn't answer our prayers? {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} God sees our sins, or our insincerity, or our hypocrisy, and refuses to answer us. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} "The Lord does not hear sinners" (John 9:31). Lord, forgive all my sin so I can pray effectively. Lord, I have ignorant sin, and sometimes my doubtful heart hides my sin from view. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} Forgive me all my sin. Sometimes I don't think You hear my prayers, and You turn a deaf ear. Hear me, O Lord, when I cry (Jer. 33:3). Amen.

[4]"Remind them of the disgusting practices of their ancestors. [5]Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: 'When I chose Israel to be My people, I promised that I would be their God.'"

God is known by those who want to know Him. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} He said, "I made myself known to Israel" (v. 9). Lord, I want to know You; show me Your majesty and glory so I can worship You in a greater way. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} Show me Your love and kindness, so I can know You intimately. Show me Your forgiveness and grace so I can praise Your eternal compassionate nature. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} Amen.

[6]"I promised I would rescue them from Egypt and lead them to a land with lots of milk from cows and lots of honey from bees. [7]I told them to get rid of their disgusting idols and not to worship the gods of Egypt, because I am the LORD their God. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [8]"But they rebelled against Me and wouldn't listen. They kept on worshiping

their idols and foreign gods. So in My anger I decided to pour out My wrath on them in Egypt. 9But I didn't because I had promised to rescue them, and I didn't want other nation to think I couldn't keep My word. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 10So I brought the Israelites out of Egypt and into the desert. 11I gave them My laws and regulations so they would know how to live. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12I told them to respect the Sabbath as a way of showing they belong to Me.

13"But in the desert they rebelled against Me, refusing to obey My laws and regulations and not respecting the Sabbath. So in My anger I decided to destroy the Israelites in the desert. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 14But that would have been a problem because several nations knew I rescued the Israelites from Egypt. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 15So I told the Israelites in the desert that I wouldn't lead them into the land I had promised them. 16Why did I tell them this? Because they ignored My laws and regulations, and didn't keep the Sabbath and they worshiped idols. 17Yet I felt sorry for them and decided not to let them die in the desert. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

18"I warned their children not to follow their parents by worshiping idols. 19I told them I'm the LORD their God and that therefore they should obey My laws and teachings. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 20Also I told them to keep Sabbath days holy, because that shows that they are My people. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22}

21"Their children rebelled against Me too. Like their parents, they rebelled against Me, and refused to obey My laws and regulations and had no regard for the Sabbath days. So I decided to punish them in the desert. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 22But then I decided not to because nations had seen Me rescue them from Egypt. 23Then in the desert I promised that I would scatter the Israelites to other nations, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 24because they didn't obey My laws and didn't keep the Sabbath days holy and worshiped idols their ancestors had made. 25I gave them laws and customs that would not lead to life. 26I let them offer unacceptable sacrifices, including their firstborn children as offerings to their gods. I did this so they would know that I, the LORD, am God.

27"Son of man, tell the Israelites that their ancestors criticized Me and insulted Me. 28They offered sacrifices, incenses, and wine to gods at every hilltop shrine and under every large tree. This made Me very angry. 29When I asked them where they went to worship these gods, they said, 'At the hilltop shrines.' And those places of worship are still called Bamah ('hilltop shrines') or shrines. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

30"You Israelites, you follow the example of your ancestors 31by worshiping idols and sacrificing your children as offerings. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} But don't think you can commit these sins and then ask Me for a message. As surely as I live," says the Sovereign LORD, "that won't happen. 32You think you can be like other

nations in worshiping idols of wood and stone. But not so,
33"As surely as I'm the living LORD, I'll rule over you in a strong way in anger and power. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
34I'll gather you from the nations where you'll be scattered, and I'll judge you, 35and I'll lead you into a desert 36where I'll punish you just as I punished your ancestors in the desert. 37I'll force you to obey the regulations of our agreement. 38As surely as I live, I'll separate the rebels from you. I'll bring them from the countries where they'll be scattered and in captivity, but they'll never be allowed to return to Israel. Then you'll know that I am the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
39"Go right ahead and worship your idols, but don't turn around and offer Me gifts. 40In a future day, everyone in Israel will worship Me on Mount Zion, My holy mountain in Jerusalem. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} You'll serve Me, and I'll accept your offerings and sacrifices. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 41When I bring you home from the places where you are scattered, I'll be pleased with you just as I am pleased with the smoke of your sacrifices. Every nation will see that I am holy. 42And you'll know that I am the One who brought you back to Israel, the land I promised your ancestors. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} 43Then you'll remember your sins, and you'll hate yourselves for doing such terrible sins. 44You'll know that I am the LORD when I treat you with mercy when you deserve to be punished."
45The LORD then said, 46"Son of man, speak against the Southern Desert, and say to people there 47'O, the LORD God, will start a fire that will burn every tree, whether green or dry. Nothing will be able to put out the fire. Everything in its path from south to north will be burned. 48Everyone will know I started it and that it can't be put out.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 49But I said, "LORD God, I don't want to give them that message. Already they say I confuse them with my messages."

Ezekiel 21

The Swords of Judgment

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, speak against the temple in Jerusalem and warn everyone in Israel 3that I'll soon punish them. I'll have My sword ready to kill both the righteous and the wicked. 4I'll not spare even the righteous, and many people will die. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 5Everyone will know that I, the LORD, have done this. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6Groan in sorrow and despair. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 7When people ask you why you are groaning, say to them, 'Every heart will faint and tremble in fear {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and lose courage.'"
8Then the LORD said, 9"Son of man, give the people of Jerusalem this message: 10'I've sharpened My sword to kill; it's strong and polished. Punishment is coming because people have ignored My warnings. {267

Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11My sword is sharpened and polished, ready to kill.'
12"Son of man, cry out in sorrow {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} and beat your thigh because that sword will kill My people and their leaders. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} They'll all die."

God tells Ezekiel, "Cry and yell." {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} Judgment is not a time for mirth and joyfulness. We should never gloat when a sinner is punished, and that goes double when God punishes a saved person. Lord, I will not rejoice when You punish any wicked person. I will pray for Your blessing on their life and for their salvation. The Lord commands me to "love your enemies... pray for them which despitefully use you" (Luke 6:27, 28). So Lord, I will prosper as I pray for those who are Your enemies. Amen.

13"It will put them all to the test, so what chance will they have for survival?" asks the LORD God. 14"Son of man, clap your hands together. Wave the sword twice, in fact, three times, as a sign of the great massacre My people will face. 15They'll lose courage, {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} because a sword is at every gate, flashing like lightning and ready to kill. 16The sword will slash to the right and to the left wherever it wishes. 17I too will clap My hands and I'll stop being angry. I, the LORD, have spoken." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
18Then the LORD said, 19"Son of man, on a map trace two roads for the king of Babylonia to follow when he comes with his sword. Put a signpost where the two routes separate and go in different directions. 20Show that one road leads to Rabbah, the capital of the Ammonites, and that the other road leads to Jerusalem. 21The king of Babylonia will ask his magicians to foretell which route to take. They'll shake arrows, ask his idols, and examine the liver of a sacrificial animal. 22By these means they'll decide to go to Jerusalem. They'll attack the city gates with battering rams, announcing the battle cry. Then they'll put up siege ramps against the walls. 23The people of Jerusalem will think this is a mistake because they had made a treaty with the Babylonians. But the king of Babylonia will think of their rebellion against him, and so he'll attack and defeat them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
24The LORD God says, "Again and again you are guilty because of your continued wickedness. All your actions are sinful, so now you will be punished. 25Zedekiah, you wicked ruler of Israel, your final day has arrived. 26I, the Sovereign LORD, tell you to take off your crown. Things are now changing. The poor will be in charge, and the rich will be nobodies." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The picture of "remove the diadem, and take off the crown" (v. 26, KJV) is God removing the high priest from the office, and the crown is a reference of God removing the king from the throne. The kingdom of Israel will never be fully restored. There will be high priests, and kings that is, Caiaphas and Herod

during the time of Jesus; but they will not be God's anointed servants in those offices. Lord, Jesus is my High Priest {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13} who makes intercession for me (Heb. 7:25) and Jesus is the King who sits on the throne of my life. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Amen.

27"I'll destroy the kingdom of Judah. And it won't be restored until the One appears who has the right to rule. Then I'll give the kingdom to Him. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
28"Son of man, prophesy against the Ammonites who mocked Israel. Tell them, My sword is ready to slaughter you. It is polished and sharpened and flashes like lightning. 29Your magicians and false prophets have lied in telling you false visions and untrue messages that your gods will save you from the Babylonians. But the sword will come on the wicked and you'll be slaughtered. 30I won't put My sword away till I punish you. I'll destroy you in your own country. 31I'll pour out My fury on you, and My anger will be like a flaming fire. I'll hand you over to cruel men who are experts in killing. 32You'll be burned, and you'll die in your own country, you'll be wiped out and completely forgotten. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I, the LORD, have spoken."

Ezekiel 22

Jerusalem Is Guilty of Sin

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, get ready to judge Jerusalem as a city of murderers. Announce the people's sins publicly, 3and give them this message from Me, the Sovereign LORD: 'You are a city of murderers and a city full of idols. 4You are guilty of both murder and idolatry, so your day of doom has come, and you've reached the end of your years. Nations around the world will laugh at you. 5And people everywhere will mock you, an infamous, confused city. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
6"Every leader in Israel is a murderer. 7"You don't honor your parents, and foreign residents are required to pay for protection, and orphans and widows are treated wrongly. 8You despise My sacred places and you treat the Sabbath like other days. 9People tell lies about others, resulting in their deaths. Idols are worshiped at every hilltop shrine and people take part in sexually immoral acts. 10Men have sex with their father's wives and with women who are having their monthly period. 11Some men have sex with someone else's wife or with their daughters-in-law or sisters. 12Others accept money to murder someone and some get money illegally. And they don't even think of Me and My commands,' says the Sovereign LORD. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
13"I shake My fist in anger at your dishonest gain and your murders. 14But your strength and courage will disappear when I deal with you. I, the LORD, have spoken, and I'll do all I said. 15I'll scatter you among the nations, and I'll stop your wicked ways. 16Other nations will look down on you, and then you'll know that

I am the LORD." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
17The LORD said, 18"Son of man, the people of Israel are as worthless as the leftover metal in a furnace after silver is purified. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}
19So give them this message: 'Because you are worthless metal, I'll bring you to My furnace in Jerusalem, where 20I'll melt you down in the heat of My anger, just as copper, tin, iron, and lead are melted in a furnace, 21I'll blow the fire of My wrath on you, 22and you'll melt like silver in intense heat. Then you'll know that I, the LORD, am the One who poured wrath on you.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
23The LORD said, 24"Son of Man, tell the people of Israel, in My wrath you'll be like an uncleared wilderness or a desert without rain. 25Your prophets are against you, like lions stalking prey. They put many people to death, and they steal treasures, and make many women widows. 26The priests disobey My laws, and have defiled My temple. They make no distinction between what is holy and what is not, and the Sabbaths are like any other day, so that My reputation is greatly dishonored by them.
27"Your leaders are like wolves, tearing apart their victims, and destroying lives to gain money. 28Your prophets tell of their visions, which are false, and speak false messages. 29The people take advantage of the poor, the needy, and foreign residents. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
30"I, the LORD, looked for someone to build up the wall and to keep Me from destroying the city, but I found none. 31So I'll punish them in My anger because of all their sins," says the Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Jerusalem is again condemned. Some readers today may ask, "Why does Ezekiel keep repeating this theme?" Because these are different messages that Ezekiel actually preached against Israel. These are the many evidences that God loved His people and wanted them to repent. Lord, Your written Word is a continuing message for people to repent and turn to You, but they will not. So I pray for the unsaved to have "eyes to see" so they will realize their sin and turn to You. Amen.

Ezekiel 23

Samaria and Jerusalem, the Sinful Sisters

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, two sisters were 3young and in Egypt, and they became prostitutes. 4The older was Oholah, which stands for Samaria, and her sister was Oholibah, which stands for Jerusalem. I married them and they gave birth to My children.
5"Then Oholah turned from Me to other gods, and she gave herself to the Samarians. 6They were handsome young men, high-ranking officers in the attractive blue uniforms. 7She had sex with these important officials and worshiped their idols. 8When she was in Egypt, she continued doing these things and she was always ready for sex.
9"So I gave Oholah over to the Assyrians, and their gods, whom she loved very much.

[10]They took off her clothes and killed her, and then took her children away as slaves. Every woman in the area talked about her sinful behaviors. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[11]"But when Oholibah (Jerusalem) saw what had happened to her sister, she was more sinful than her sister Oholah. [12]She longed for the Assyrians handsome young men on fine horses. They were in attractive uniforms. [13]Like her sister she did vulgar things.
[14]"She was even more debased than her sister Oholah (Samaria) because she loved the images of Babylonian military officials on the wall, handsome young men on fine horses and in red uniforms, and [15]they had belts around their waists and large turbans on their heads. They reminded her of Babylonian cavalry officers. [16]She sent messengers to Babylonia to ask them to come to her. [17]So men from Babylonia came and had sex with her. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} But later she got disgusted with them and broke off all relations with them."

In this chapter is a picture of God's people giving themselves to the nations around them in spiritual adultery when they worship the gods (idols) of the pagan. God accuses them, "As soon as she saw them with her eyes, she doted on them and sent messengers to them" (v. 16, KJV). The phrase, "She doted on them" is translated in this version, "She wanted to have sex with them." Doesn't sin usually get to us through the eyes? We want the illicit things we see with our eyes. Lord, keep my eyes from looking on sin to desire it. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} When I happen to see sin, make me look away and forget what I saw. Keep me pure in eyes and heart so that I may be pure in my body. Amen.

[18]"Oholibah let everyone see her naked body, and she didn't care if they knew she was a prostitute. [19]She became even more immoral, living as if she were back in Egypt. [20]She wanted to have sex with every Egyptian man. [21]And she longed for the days when she was a young prostitute." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
[22]The LORD God said, "Oholibah, you turned against your lovers, but now they'll come against you as enemies. [23]I'll gather the young officers and high-ranking cavalrymen from Babylonia and Assyria, the tribes of Pokod, Shoa, and Koa. [24]They'll come from the north with chariots and wagons filled with weapons. They'll surround you ready for battle and I'll let them do whatever they wish. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [25]I'm angry with you, and so I'll let them be cruel to you. They'll cut off your nose and ears, kill your children, and kill any survivors. They'll take your children away as captives and anything that is left will be burned. [26]They'll take your beautiful clothes and jewelry. [27]In this way I'll stop your prostitution and you'll never want to think about those days again."
[28]"The Sovereign LORD says, "You can be sure that I'll hand you over to your enemies whom you now despise. [29]Hating

you, they'll rob you and they'll strip you naked. Your terrible sins [30]led to this. You were determined to have sex with men from other nations and to worship their idols. [31]You followed in your sister's footsteps, so now you must be punished as she was." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

What will Israel's lovers do? God says, "They will treat you with hatred" (v. 29). Have you ever noticed that the thing you love you will eventually hate? {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} Then, that thing you love, will hate you and destroy you. The youth loves his alcohol, but it will destroy his will-power and body. And what he loved, he ends up hating. The one who loves promiscuous sex will end up with a sexual disease that hates his physical life. Lord, give me a hatred for sin before it hates me and destroys me. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} Give me a passionate desire for purity of mind and body. Amen.

[32]I, the LORD God, gave your sisters a large cup filled with My anger. Everyone will mock you because you must drink from this cup too. [33]You'll reel like a drunkard because the cup is filled with insults and distress. [34]You'll drink every last drop. Then you'll smash it and beat your breast in anguish. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken these words. [35]Because you turned your back on Me, and lived as a prostitute, you must be punished." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[36]The LORD said, "Son of man, tell Oholah (Samaria) and Oholibah (Jerusalem) they are guilty of their sinful ways. [37]They are guilty of both adultery (by worshiping idols) and murder (by sacrificing their children as offerings to idols). [38]Also they make My temple unfit for worship and did not keep the Sabbath day. [39]When they murdered their children in front of the idols, they went into My temple to worship. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

[40]"You even sent messengers to attract men from places far away. When they arrived, you two sisters took baths, painted your eyelids, and wore your finest jewelry. [41]They sat on a nicely embroidered couch, and olive oil and incense were on a table in front of them. [42]Noisy drunkards came in from the desert, and they gave the sisters bracelets and beautiful crowns. [43]The men wanted to have sex with the women, even though they were exhausted from being prostitutes. [44]In fact, the men had sex over and over with Oholah and Oholibah. [45]But good men {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} will judge the two sisters of being unfaithful.

[46]"So I, the LORD God, say to those sisters: 'I'll call together an angry mob to crush and rob you. [47]They'll stone you and kill you and your children with swords and burn your houses. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [48]I'll get rid of prostitution and idolatry in this country. This will be a warning everywhere for women not to act as these women have. [49]I'll punish you for becoming prostitutes and for worshiping idols, and you'll know that I'm the LORD God.'" {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Ezekiel 24

The Rusty Boiling Pot

[1]Nine years after King Jehoiachin and others of who were led as prisoners to Babylonia, the LORD spoke to me. This was in January, 588 B.C. [2]"Son of Man, write down today's date because this is the day the king of Babylonia has begun his attack against Jerusalem. [3]Then give this illustration to My rebellious people. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Put a pot of water on the fire to boil. [4]Fill it with the legs and shoulders of sheep and all the tender cuts. [5]Use the best sheep from the flock. Pile wood under the pot, and boil the meat until it is well done."

On the very day that Nebuchadnezzar set the siege against Jerusalem, Ezekiel prepared a stew pot with water and meat, symbolic of the people in Jerusalem that will be cooked "to death." Have you noticed that God's timing is impeccable? He's not late or early. The Psalmist tells us, "My times are in Your hand" (Ps. 31:15). Lord, I will watch my time and not waste it. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} I will redeem the time (Eph. 5:16) so I can do more for You than some who waste time. Thank You for the gift of time. When I give my time to You, use it for Your glory. Amen. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[6]"I, the LORD God, say, 'How terrible it will be for Jerusalem, a city of murderers. She is like a rusty pot. Take out the meat piece by piece in whatever order they come. [7]The people of Jerusalem murdered innocent people and didn't even bother to cover up their blood on the ground. [8]The blood on the ground cries out to Me for revenge.'

[9]"I, the LORD God, say, 'How terrible it will be for Jerusalem, city of murderers. I'll pile logs of fuel under her. [10]Heap on the wood, light the fire, and cook the meat. Then boil away the broth and let the bones be burned. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]Set the empty pot on the coals to clean the pot and burn off all the rust. [12]The rust (that is, the corruption) is still remaining, despite the hottest fire. [13]This is the rust of your sexual sin and your worshiping idols. I tried to cleanse you, but you refused. So you'll remain filthy until My fury against you has been satisfied. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [14]I, the LORD, have spoken these words. I won't change My mind. You, Jerusalem, will be punished for your wicked actions.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[15]Again the LORD said, [16]"Son of man, I'll take the life of your wife. She'll die suddenly. But don't express sorrow. Don't weep. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [17]You may sigh, but only quietly, don't wail at her grave, {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} don't remove your turban or take off your sandals. And don't accept food brought to you by your friends."

When God took away "the desire of your eyes" (v. 16), which was his wife, Ezekiel was not to show the normal signs of mourning and grief. He wasn't even allowed to eat

the bread that neighbors brought into him. Lord, prepare me when a loved one or friend dies. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} May I mourn properly, but also, may I glorify You in the hour of their death. Amen.

18Then I told this to my people, and suddenly at sunset my wife died. 19The next morning people asked me why I wasn't mourning for my wife and what it all meant.

20I announced, "The LORD God said, 21'I'm ready to destroy the temple {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} in which you take pride. Your sons and daughters in Jerusalem will be killed. 22Then you'll do the same things I, Ezekiel, have done. You'll not mourn in public; and you'll refuse to eat food brought by friends. 23You'll not take off your turbans or your sandals. You won't weep or mourn {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} but you'll mourn privately because of all your sins. 24Ezekiel is an example. Everything he's done, you'll do. Then when that time comes, you'll know that I am the LORD.

25"'Son of man, I'll soon destroy the temple, {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} your stronghold, joy, {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and glory in which you are proud. I'll also take away your sons and daughters. 26On that day someone will leave Jerusalem to tell you in Babylon what has happened. 27On the day he arrives, your voice will return to you so you can talk to him. You'll be a symbol for these people, then they'll know that I am the LORD.'" {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Ezekiel 25

Prophecy against the Ammonites

1The LORD God said, 2"Son of man, prophesy against the Ammonites and its people 3and tell them, 'Listen to what the Sovereign LORD says. You were glad when My temple was destroyed, {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} and you were glad when Israel was taken into captivity, and you were glad when Judah was taken captive. 4Therefore because you did this, I'll cause some tribes from the east to set up their camps among you and pitch their tents there. They will steal your fruit and your livestock. 5And your capital city of Rabbah will be pastureland for camels, and your entire country will be pastureland for sheep. Then you'll know that I am the LORD.'"

6"'The Sovereign LORD says, "Out of hatred for Israel you clapped and cheered when Israel was taken captive. 7Therefore I'll give you over to other nations. You'll no longer be a nation. I'll destroy you. Then you'll know that I am the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The Ammonites lived on the other side of the Jordan River, northeast of Jerusalem. They came from the incestuous relationship between Lot and a daughter (Gen. 19:38). The Ammonites always had animosity to Israel and waged several wars against God's people. When Nebuchadnezzar destroyed

Jerusalem, the Ammonites grabbed whatever territory they could from Israel. Ezekiel announces judgment against the Ammonites (v. 1-7), then Ammon "shall know that I am the LORD" (v. 7). Lord, old family hatreds seem to never die; give me love for all my family. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} *May I forgive the sins of family to me, as You forgive my sins* {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} *and trespasses (Matt. 6:12). Amen.*

8 "'And because Moab thought Judah was
no different from other nations, 9 I'll let
Moab's eastern towns along its border be
attacked, including Beth-Jeshimoth, Baal-
Meon, and Kirjathaim. 10 The same eastern
tribes that invaded Ammon will invade
Moab, and Moab too will no longer be
a nation. 11 I'll destroy Moab, and they'll
know that I am the LORD.'" {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Moab also lived on the other side of the Jordan. They, like Ammon, came from the incestuous relationship between Lot and another daughter (Gen. 19:36-37). They constantly fought Israel and would not recognize God's special covenant with Israel. Nebuchadnezzar conquered both Ammon and Moab five years after destroying Jerusalem. Lord, families seem to fight over position and relationships. I will love and pray for all my family. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} *I will not glory over earthly relationships, but I will rejoice in my relationship* {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} *with You. Amen.*

12 The LORD God then said, "The peo-
ple of Edom are guilty of taking revenge
on Judah. 13 Therefore I, the Sovereign
LORD, will punish Edom, killing all its
men and animals. From Teman to Dedan.
14 I'll send My own people to take revenge
on the Edomites. They'll feel my wrath
and anger and My vengeance," says the
Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5}

Edomites were descendants of Esau, Jacob's twin brother. Edom was located south of the Dead Sea in a mountainous terrain that seemed unconquerable to invaders. Edom always hated Israel; probably going back to Jacob's tricking Esau out of the birthright and blessing (Gen. 26-27). The Lord says of Edom, He will "take vengeance" (v. 12) which means, "revenging with revenge." Lord, may I not hate any family, and I forgive those who hate me. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} *I pray for all my family.* {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} *Bless them.* {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} *Save them. Use me as a testimony to win them to Christ. Amen.*

15 The Sovereign LORD also says this:
"The Philistines have tried repeatedly to
take revenge on Judah and to destroy it.
16 Therefore I say, I'll treat the Philistines
as My enemies. I'll cut off the Kerethites
and others on the seacoast. In My anger

17I'll take revenge on them. When I punish them, they'll know that I am the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The Philistines came from Mizraim, the son of Ham (Gen. 10:13, 14). They originally settled in the Aegean Sea region, but moved and conquered southern Israel. They were always hostile to Israel. Notice the Philistines; "have taken vengeance with a despiteful heart, to destroy it for the old hatred" (v. 15, KJV). Lord, I pray for any old enemies I have. Help me be a testimony {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} of love and forgiveness. I pray for their salvation. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Bless them and use me to bring Your love into their life. Amen.

Ezekiel 26

Tyre Will Be Destroyed

1Eleven years after King Jehoiachin and the rest of us were taken captive in Babylon (586 B.C.), the LORD spoke to me the first day of this month. He said, 2"Son of man, Tyre is rejoicing over Jerusalem's fall, saying, 'Jerusalem controlled the north-south trade routes along the coast and also the routes to the Jordan River. But now that she is destroyed, I'll be heir of her wealth.' 3Therefore the Sovereign LORD says, "I'll bring many nations against you like waves crashing against the shore. 4They'll destroy the walls of Tyre and your towers, and I'll scrape away your soil and make you bare rock. 5Your island will be uninhabited, a place where fishermen spread their nets. I have spoken these words," says the Sovereign LORD. "The nations will rob you, 6and your villages on the mainland will be destroyed. Then you'll know that I am the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 7The Sovereign LORD says, "From the north I'll send against you Nebuchadnezzar, King of Babylonia like a king of kings, with a great army and many chariots and horsemen. 8He'll destroy your villages and then put up siege ramps against your city walls and set up rows of shields around you. 9He'll pound your walls with battering rams, and he'll destroy your watchtowers with sledgehammers. 10The hoofs of his many horses will choke your city with dust. As his chariots and horsemen enter your broken-down gates, your walls will shake. 11His horsemen will trample every street, murdering your people and toppling your huge pillars.

12"They'll carry off all your wealth and tear down your walls. They'll also destroy your homes and throw your stones, timber, and rubble into the sea. 13I'll stop all music in your city, and harps will not be played. 14I'll make your island a bare rock, a place where fishermen will spread their nets. You'll never be rebuilt, for I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

The Phoenicians lived north of Israel and were known as a maritime nation. Nebuchadnezzar besieged the city for 13 years (585-572) and finally destroyed it. The city was re-built on an island close to the shore

of the Mediterranean Sea. Alexander the Great built a causeway out to the city to capture and destroy it. He threw the debris into the sea. Today fishermen's nets can be seen drying on the rocks of the causeway. God predicted, "the spreading of the nets in the midst of the sea." Lord, I'm amazed at Your accuracy to predict the future. So I have confidence {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} that what You predict for me after death will happen. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} And I know Your prediction of the end times will happen as You said. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} Thank You for confidence; it's good to eliminate my doubts. Amen.

15The Sovereign LORD says this to Tyre:
"People on the whole coastline will shake
when you fall and when they hear the
wounded scream and moan. {202 Grief-
Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 16Then all the rulers
along the seacoast will set aside their beau-
tiful royal robes and sit on the ground
shaking with fear. 17Then they'll sing this
funeral song: {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps.
95:2} 'O famous island city, how you've
been destroyed. Your people who ruled
the sea have spread fear everywhere. 18Now
that Tyre is in ruins the people on the coast
tremble in fear.'"
19The Sovereign LORD says, "Tyre, I'll
make you a city of ruins with no people.
You'll sink beneath the ocean depths, and
the seas will swallow you up. 20I'll send
you to the world of the dead, to be with
those who went there years ago. Your city
will lie in ruins like people who've gone to
the world of the dead. You'll never return
to the land of the living. 21You'll come to a
horrible end. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5} People will look for you, but won't
find you. I, the Sovereign LORD, have
spoken these words."

Ezekiel 27

Lament over Tyre

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, sing this
funeral song for Tyre, {439 Singing-Prayer,
Ps. 95:2} 3the city that trades with nations
along the coast. Give Tyre this message:
'Tyre, you boast about your beauty, 4and
you've extended your boundaries into the
sea. Your builders made you great. 5Build-
ers used cypress trees from Mount Her-
mon to build your ships, including your
sail mast. 6From the oaks of Bashan they
carved oars, and made your decks from
pine trees from Cyprus, which they cov-
ered with ivory. 7Sails are made from linen
from Egypt, and they were sailed like ban-
ners. Blue and purple awnings were made
bright with dyes from eastern Cyprus.
8"'Your oarsmen came from Sidon and
Arvad and your own helmsmen were
from Tyre itself. 9Men from nearby Gebal
repaired your ships, and sailors came from
many places to barter for your goods.
10Men from Persia, Lydia, and Libya
served in your army. They honored you
by hanging their shields and helmets on
your walls. 11Men from Arvad and Cilicia
were your guards, and men from Gammad
manned your towers. They hung their

shields on your walls, thus adding to the attractiveness of your city.
12"'Merchants from Tarshish in Southern Spain traded silver, iron, tin, and lead for your products. 13Merchants from Greece, Tubal, and Meshech traded slaves and bronze dishes, and 14merchants from Togarmah traded riding horses, chariot horses, and mules for your various goods. 15Merchants came from Dedan the island of Rhodes and people from nations along the coast gave you ivory and black wood in exchange for your goods.
16"'Edom sent merchants to buy your goods in exchange for turquoise, purple cloth, embroidered material, fine linen, coral, and rubies. 17They bought from you your finest wheat, best figs, honey, olive oil, and spices. 18Damascus brought you wine from Helbon and white wool from Zahar. 19Vedan and Juvan brought iron and spices to trade for your goods. 20Dedan traded their expensive saddle blankets, 21and people from Arabia and Kedar traded lambs, sheep, and goats. 22Merchants from Sheba and Raamah brought spices, jewels, and gold in exchange for your items. 23You also traded goods with merchants from Haran, Canneh, Eden, Sheba, Asshur, and Chilmad, 24and they brought to you expensive clothing, purple cloth, and embroidered material, colored rugs, and strong rope. 25Large ships of Tarshish carried your goods wherever you wanted to take them. And with all your trading, your warehouse was filled from wall to wall and from floor to ceiling.
26"'But beware! Your oarsmen are rowing your ship into a hurricane. And it will be wrecked by strong winds from the east. 27Everything on that ship will be lost—your riches, wares, sailors, helmsmen, ship builders, merchants, and soldiers. Everything that day will sink into the depths of the sea.
28"'People on the shore will hear the cries of the drowning crew. 29The oarsmen will leave their ships as oarsmen, sailors, and captives stand on the shore mourning for you. 30They'll show their mourning by throwing dust on their heads, rolling in ashes, 31wearing burlap, and crying in despair. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 32In their grief they will sing this funeral song; "Tyre, you were such a great city. But you are now at the bottom of the sea—like no other city. 33Many nations were pleased with all your merchandise, and many kings got rich with your goods. 34But now you are a wrecked ship, lying at the bottom of the sea and your cargo and crew have gone down with you. 35People living along the coast are shocked at the news of your defeat. Rulers are horrified at what has happened, and their faces show their terror. 36Merchants of many nations shake their heads in disbelief at what has happened, because you've come to a horrible end and are gone forever."'"

Tyre is pictured as a great commercial ship (v. 1-9) that travels the waters of the Mediterranean. At the end of the chapter she shipwrecks (vs. 26-36). Her material riches are lost. Lord, I realize all material wealth comes from You; thank You for the gift You've given me. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} I

will use all the material resources that You've given me for Your glory. Give me a gracious heart to share, a willing heart to give, and a thankful heart {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} for the privilege to serve You with my resources. Amen.

Ezekiel 28

The King of Tyre Will Fall

1The LORD God said to me, 2"Son of man, give this message to the prince of Tyre: 'You are so arrogant. In your pride you even claimed, "I am a god, I sit on a divine throne in the heart of the sea." But you are only a mere human, not a god. 3You think you're wiser than Daniel, and that you know everything. 4With your wisdom {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} you have become very rich, and your storehouses are filled with gold and silver. 5Yes, you are extremely wealthy, and your wealth has made you very proud.

6"'Therefore, I, the Sovereign LORD, say since you think you are as wise as a god, 7I'll bring ruthless foreigners against you. They'll draw their swords against you and destroy all the belongings you worked so hard to get. 8They'll kill you, and you'll die there on your island home. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 9When these enemies come against you, will you still claim to be a god? To them, you'll be a mere human, not a god. 10You'll die by these foreigners like an outcast. I, the LORD, have spoken these words.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

11The LORD God said to me, {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 12"Son of man, sing this funeral song for the king (satan) of Tyre: 'At one time, king of Tyre, you were perfect in wisdom and beauty. 13You were in Eden, the garden of God. You wore jewelry made of brightly colored gems and precious stones, including ruby, topaz, emerald, chrysolite, onyx, jasper, sapphire, turquoise, and beryl. They were all set in gold, and were ready for you when you were created. 14I appointed you as a winged creature to guard my holy mountain where you walked among stones of fire.

15"From the day you were created you were blameless until you started being wicked. 16The great wealth you gained from trading with other nations led you to be violent, and to sin. So I forced you to leave My mountain, I caused you to leave the mountain, O guardian winged creature, where you had been among the stones of fire.

17"'Your beauty led you to be filled with pride, and your splendor spoiled your wisdom. So I tossed you to the ground and let kings gaze at you.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lucifer is described as "full of wisdom and perfect in beauty" (v. 12). Since God is perfect, it's the only way He could create an angel, that is, an incorporeal being who could think, feel, and possess free choice. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} Lucifer was the highest in the order of angels,

and is called "the anointed cherub" (v. 14). The word "covereth" (v. 14) suggests Lucifer guarded or protected the throne of God. Also, as a person's hair that covers the head gives beauty, Lucifer gave beauty to God. {33 Beautiful-Prayer, Rev. 21:19} But, it's impossible to make God more beautiful, for God is the originator and embodiment of beauty.

Lucifer had access to "the holy mountain" (v. 14) which suggests he entered the actual presence of God. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Lucifer was closer to God than any other angel. When it describes Lucifer "walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire" (v. 14), it suggests Lucifer could go or carry out decisions God made. Lucifer was in God's presence when God was deciding the rest of creation.

Lucifer is described as "perfect in your ways from the day {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} you were created" (v. 15). Then "iniquity was found in you" (v. 15). Lucifer's sin was not an outward transgression of turning to evil things, such as prohibited in the Ten Commands. Lucifer's sin was in the free choice he was given to worship God, but he chose to follow a selfish urge to magnify himself and lift himself into God's place. Sin is not a thing; sin is an act or attitude. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lucifer sinned when he said, "I will ascend into heaven" (Isa. 14:13). Then he said, "I will exalt my throne above the stars (angels); I will sit in the mount of the congregation" (where God sits, Isa. 14:13). Then Lucifer added two more expressions of pride, "I will ascend above the heights of the clouds" (get God's glory), and "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:14), meaning Lucifer wanted God's rulership.

Ezekiel concludes, "Iniquity was found in you" (Ezek. 28:15). So God said, "You sinned; therefore I cast you as a profane thing out" (Ezek. 28:16). Lord, may I never seek to take Your glory for anything I do. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} Keep me humble. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} Lord, may I never do anything for pride or self-exaltation. Selfishness is my seat of sin; it is ever with me. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} Holy Spirit, enlighten me to any wrong attitude. Help me remember, "Not I but Christ" (Gal. 2:20). Amen.

18 "'Your places of worship are corrupt
because of your many sins and you cheat
your merchants. So I caused your city to be
on fire and I burned it down. Now every-
one sees only ashes where your great city
was located. 19 Every nation that knew you
is amazed. You have come to a horrible end
and you are gone forever.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
20 The LORD said to me, 21 "Son of man,
prophesy against the city of Sidon, 22 and
give them this message from the Sover-
eign LORD: 'I, the LORD God, am your
enemy, Sidon, and when I punish you and
show you My holiness, you will know
that I am the LORD. 23 I'll send a disease
against you, and I'll send enemy nations
against you from every direction. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Blood will
flow in your streets from people who will

be killed by the enemy. Then you'll know that I'm the LORD.'
24"No longer will Israel's neighbors be like painful thorns to them. The Israelites will know that I am the Sovereign LORD." 25Then the Sovereign LORD said, "I'll gather the people of Israel from the nations where they've been scattered, and those nations will see that I am holy. My people will again live in their own land which I promised to them and to My servant Jacob. 26They'll be safe and will build houses and plant vineyards. And I'll punish their neighboring nations who hated them. Then Israel will know that I am the LORD their God." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Ezekiel 29

The Prophecy against Egypt

1In January 587 B.C., the tenth year of King Jehoiachin's captivity in Babylon, the LORD spoke to me and said, 2"Son of man, prophesy against Pharaoh, king of Egypt and against all Egypt. 3Give him this message from the Sovereign LORD. 'I am your enemy, Pharaoh. You were like a big crocodile lying in the Nile. You said, "The Nile River is yours and you made it for yourself." 4I'll put hooks in your jaws and pull you out of the water and I will leave you and all 5your fish on the desert to die. You'll be unburied, and wild animals and birds will eat your flesh. 6Then everyone in Egypt will know that I am the LORD.

"'You've been like a broken stick when Israel looked to you for help. 7When they looked to you for help, you were like a cracked stick broken in half, and you stabbed her in the armpit. When Israel leaned on you, you gave way and her back was thrown out of joint. 8So I, the LORD God, will bring an army against you, Egypt, and they'll kill your people and animals. 9Egypt will be a desolate desert, and you Egyptians will know that I am the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
"'You said you made the Nile River, and it is yours. 10But I'm now against you and your river. I'll make your nation a desolate waste from Migdol in the north to Aswan in the south, all the way to the border of Ethiopia. 11For 40 years Egypt will be completely uninhabited, so no human or animal will travel there. 12Egypt will be surrounded by other desolate nations, and Egypt will be barren. Every city in Egypt will be desolate for 40 years, and Egyptians will be scattered to other nations.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
13The Sovereign LORD also says, "After those 40 years, I'll bring the Egyptians back to their land. 14Again they'll live in Pathros and I'll make them prosperous again. But Egypt will remain a weak kingdom, 15unable to rule other nations, as in the past. 16My people Israel will no longer trust in you, Egypt, for help. Your condition will show Israel how wrong they were to turn to you for help. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then Israel will know that I alone am the Sovereign LORD."
17In the 27th year after King Jehoiachin and the rest of us were taken captive to

Babylonia (571 B.C.) the LORD spoke to me in the spring. He said, [18]"Son of man, Nebuchadnezzar, king of Babylon, made his army fight hard against Tyre. In carrying heavy loads, their heads were rubbed bald and their shoulders were red and sore. But Nebuchadnezzar and his army still could not capture the city. [19]So I'll give Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar. He'll take their wealth, looting everything of Egypt in order to pay his own soldiers. [20]I've given Egypt to him as a reward for following My orders. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
[21]"The day will come when I'll restore Israel's glory, and then your words will be respected. Then Israel will know that I am the LORD." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Ezekiel predicts the destruction of Egypt and Tyre in this chapter. The Pharaoh had come to the aid of Jerusalem, so Babylon left to fight Egypt. Nebuchadnezzar had previously laid siege to Tyre for 13 years producing economic loss. His soldiers got nothing from Tyre, so he went to Egypt for "wages for his army" (v. 19). God says, "I will give the land of Egypt to Nebuchadnezzar ... and take her spoil" (v. 19). Babylon invaded Egypt (vs. 8, 9). Egypt never again became a world power, "They shall no more rule over the nations" (v. 15). Lord, I'm amazed how accurately You've predicted in the Bible. Give me more trust {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} to believe everything You've said. Amen.

Ezekiel 30

Egypt Will Be Punished

[1]Another message came to me from the LORD: [2]"Son of man, give Egypt this message from the Sovereign LORD: [3]"Weep because the terrible day, the day of the LORD, is almost here. It'll be a time of darkness and gloom, a day of despair for the nations. [4]Your own nation Egypt will be attacked, and the corpses of people who are killed will cover the ground. Their wealth will be taken away. Ethiopia will be involved too. [5]Libya, Lydia, and Arabia will be destroyed. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [6]All of your allies will fall, and their strength will end. People from Migdol in the north to Aswan in the south will die,' says the Sovereign LORD, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]"Egypt will be terribly deserted with its cities in complete ruins. [8]I'll set Egypt and her allies on fire. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]I'll send messengers to Ethiopia to frighten them {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} out of their complacency. And they'll be terrified at the thought of their coming destruction.
[10]"'I, the Sovereign LORD, say, "I'll cause Nebuchadnezzar of Babylonia to destroy the many people in Egypt. [11]He and his ruthless army will invade Egypt, kill many with the sword, and fill the land with Egyptian corpses. [12]I'll dry up the Nile River and sell the land to evil men. I'll use foreigners to destroy the land of Egypt and everything in it. I, the LORD, have spoken these words."'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

13The Sovereign LORD also says to Egypt: "I'll smash all the idols you Egyptians worship in the city of Memphis. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} No ruler will be left in the land; only terror will exist. 14Pathros will be in ruins and Zoan will be burned. Thebes, your capital, will also be destroyed. 15Pelusium will feel My fierce wrath, and all the soldiers at Thebes will be killed. 16I'll set fire to all of Egypt. Pelusium, Thebes, and Memphis will all be terrified. 17Young soldiers, Heliopolis, and Bubastis, will be killed in battle, and the women will be taken as slaves. 18When I break the power of Egypt, it will be a sad day for Tahapanhes too. A dark cloud will cover the land as your daughters are being led away as captives. 19I'll greatly punish you, Egypt, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and you'll know that I am the LORD."

20Eleven years after King Jehoiachin and the rest of us were taken captive to Babylonia (586 B.C.) the LORD spoke to me in April of that year, and said, 21"Son of man, I, the LORD, have defeated the king of Egypt. I broke his arm, but no one has put a cast on it or put it in a sling to make it strong enough to hold a sword. 22So tell him that I, the Sovereign LORD, will break both his arms, and his sword will drop from his hand. 23and I'll scatter the Egyptians throughout various nations. 24I'll strengthen the arms of Babylon's king, and I'll break the arms of the king of Egypt. He'll lie there wounded, moaning in pain. 25I'll strengthen the arms of the king of Babylon, but the arms of Pharaoh will fall weak and limp. When I put My sword in the hands of Babylon's king and he uses it against Egypt, then Egypt will know that I am the LORD. 26Also when I scatter the Egyptians among the nations, then they will know that I am the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Because Egypt was a wealthy nation, she hired mercenary soldiers for defense, "They that uphold Egypt shall fall" (v. 6) and "all her helpers will be destroyed" (v. 8). The wealth of Egypt was seized and multitudes of Egyptians were carried off captive, mostly to Babylon. Lord, You cause the rise and fall of nations {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}; large and small. You do the same to individuals. Because I've trusted in You {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}, I'm not worried about the future. Day by day, and in the passing minutes, I trust You to work Your plan in my life. Amen.

Ezekiel 31

Egypt Is Like a Fallen Cedar Tree

1Eleven years after King Jehoiachin and the rest of us were taken captive to Babylonia (586 B.C.) the LORD spoke to me in June of that year and said, 2"Son of man, tell the king of Egypt these words: 'You are great and powerful. 3You are as Assyria was, a mighty nation. Assyria too was once like a cedar tree in Lebanon, with large branches reaching to the sky. 4Deep springs watered it and helped it grow tall. And nearby streams watered nearby trees. 5But this tree

was taller than the other trees, and it grew long, thick branches.
6"'Birds rested in its branches, and animals enjoyed its shade. All the nations of the world lived in its shadow. 7It was beautiful and strong because it had lots of water. 8It was taller than all the cedar trees in the garden of Eden. No cypress tree could match it, nor did any tree in the garden compare with its beauty. 9Because I made this tree so majestic, all the trees in Eden wanted to be like it.
10"'Therefore, king of Egypt, this is what I say about this tree: Because it grew so tall and was proud of its height, 11I, the LORD God, will hand it over to a nation that will destroy it because of its wickedness. 12A foreign army will cut it down and leave it on the ground. Its branches will be scattered across the mountains and valleys. Nations who lived beneath its shadow went away and left it lying there. 13Birds nested on the fallen trunk, and wild animals lay among its branches. 14No other trees should ever grow as tall as this tree, for every tree, no matter how tall or how well watered will not survive. They are all destined for death with all the proud people of the world.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
15The Sovereign LORD says, "When this tree died, I, the LORD God, caused rivers and streams to mourn its death. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} I held back the rivers and streams. When I cover Lebanon with darkness, all the trees will wither. 16This tree will crash to the ground {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} and I'll send it to the world below. Then the nations will tremble. The trees of Eden and of Lebanon, already in the world of the dead, will be glad when this tree falls. 17The tree's allies were destroyed and sent to the world below to join the dead.
18"Egypt, you were like this tree—taller and stronger than anyone on earth. You'll be brought down to the world of the dead with all the other nations. There you'll join the many godless and the wicked who have died by the sword. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I, the LORD God, have spoken."

God compares Egypt to Assyria. We see Assyria as the most beautiful and lofty cedar tree in Lebanon, greater in beauty than any other tree (nation). "O Egypt... You too, will be brought down to the pit with all these other nations" (v. 18, NLT). Lord, the nation Egypt served Your purpose, then You allowed it to be cast aside. Help me see Your plan on earth, and use me in Your plan. I want to make a difference in eternity {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22}, so use me today. Amen.

Ezekiel 32

The Pharaoh Is Like a Sea Monster

1In the spring of the 12th year of King Jehoiachin's captivity (585 B.C.) the LORD gave me this message: 2"Son of man, mourn for Pharaoh King of Egypt {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} and say to him, 'You think of yourself as a strong young lion, but you are really just a crocodile in the Nile River, churning up the

water with your feet and muddying the water. 3Therefore I, the Sovereign LORD, say this: "I'll send many people to catch you in My net and bring you out of the water. 4I'll leave you on the land to die. Birds will land on you, and wild animals will eat your flesh. 5I'll spread your rotting flesh on the mountains and in the valleys, 6and your blood will fill up the streams. 7I'll darken the stars with thick clouds and the sun and moon will stop shining. 8Your country will be in total darkness. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken these words. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

9"""When I tell foreign nations that you never heard of how I destroyed you, they'll be shocked. 10I'll bring terror to many lands, and their kings will be horrified because of what could happen to them when I wave my sword before them.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

11The Sovereign LORD says, "I'm bringing the king of Babylon against you, Egypt. 12The swords of mighty soldiers—who terrify the nations—will destroy you. They'll shatter your pride, Egypt, and all your many soldiers. 13I'll destroy all your cattle that graze beside the streams. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} And the feet of men and animals will never again muddy those streams. 14Then I'll let your waters, Egypt, be calm again, and they'll flow as smoothly as olive oil. 15And when I smite Egypt, strip you bare, and strike all your people, you'll know that I am the LORD. 16Here is the funeral dirge people will sing for Egypt. 'Let all nations weep. Let them mourn for Egypt and its masses.' I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken these words."

17In the spring of the 12th year of King Jehoiachin's captivity (585 B.C.) the LORD gave me another message: 18"Son of man, weep for the many soldiers of Egypt and of other nations for I'll send them to the world below. 19Say to them, 'O Egypt, are you lovelier than other nations? Obviously not. So you'll go down to the pit and be there where those godless people are.' 20You Egyptians will be slaughtered with others who have died by the sword. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} You'll be dragged off for judgment, 21mighty leaders, already down in the grave will welcome you there, Egypt, along with your allies. They'll say, 'Now that you are here, lie with the ungodly and all the victims of the sword.'

22"Assyria is in the grave with all her soldiers slain by the sword. 23Their graves are in the depths of the earth, and they are surrounded by her allies. They used to terrify people, but now they lie in shame with their enemies. 24Elam lies buried there with its many soldiers. They terrorized nearby nations, 25but now they are ashamed and lie in their graves with others who were killed in battle.

26"The graves of soldiers from Meshech and Tubal are there. They terrified people, but now they are killed in battle. 27They were not given proper burials like former heroes who were buried with their swords under their heads and with their shields over their bodies. While still alive, they terrified everyone.

[28]"You Egyptians will be defeated by the sword and buried with the godless soldiers. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [29]Edom's kings and leaders are in the grave. They used to be mighty, but they now lie buried with other godless leaders in the grave. [30]All the princes of the north and the Sidonians are in the grave. They too are victims of the sword. They used to be a terror to other nations, but now they lie in shame with the other dead who are in the grave. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [31]"When Pharaoh arrives in the grave, he'll be relieved to know that his soldiers are not alone," says the Sovereign LORD. [32]"He had spread terror among other nations, but now he and all his soldiers will be lying with the godless who died by the sword. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken these words." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Pharaoh likens himself to a young lion to be feared, but God says he is like an ugly crocodile that only muddies the Nile (v. 2). The crocodile may be feared in water, but will be taken from the waters and left on the land to die. All will scavenge him. "The sword of the king of Babylon shall come upon you" (v. 11). Lord, You will judge evil nations for their wickedness, and the individuals in them for their sin. Your judgment will be great and just. I pray {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} for the unsaved; send revival in nations so that a great multitude will turn to You. Amen.

Ezekiel 33

Listen to the Watchman

[1]Again the LORD spoke to me, saying, [2]"Son of man, give your people this message: When I bring an army against a country, have a watchman [3]sound a warning that the army is coming. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} [4]Then if any of the people hear the warning but ignore it, then it is their fault if they are killed in battle. [5]If they hear the warning but disregard it, they are responsible. If they had paid attention to the warning, they could have saved their lives. [6]But if the watchman sees the enemy coming and doesn't sound the alarm, he is responsible for their deaths if some die. They'll die in their sins, but the watchman will be responsible.'" [7]The Lord said, "I have made you, son of man, a watchman for Israel. Warn the people when I give you a message. [8]If I say to the wicked, 'You are on a slippery road to death' and you don't warn them to repent; they will die in their sins and I will hold you responsible for their death. [9]But if you warn the wicked and they don't repent, they will die in their sins. But you will have saved your life."

Ezekiel is a spiritual sentry—watchman—for God. Just as a "look out" on the wall warns of a potential attack {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}, Ezekiel was responsible to warn God's people of an attack by wickedness. He was responsible to point out sin and call the people to repent by turning to the Lord. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer,

Eph. 4:22} Lord, give me eyes to see the danger of sin in the lives of Your people. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} Give me a mouth to warn Your people of spiritual attacks. Then give me a heart to intercede {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} in spiritual warfare to defeat satan. Amen.

10 The LORD said, "Son of man, the people
are complaining that their sins are causing
them to waste away. {528 Warfare-Prayer,
Rev. 12:7} 11 As surely as I live," says the Sov-
ereign LORD, "I don't like to see wicked
people die. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8} I prefer to see them turn from their
sins and live. Turn from your sins, you
people of Israel, so you'll live. 12 Tell them
that the people's good deeds won't save
them if they sin, {410 Righteous-Peo-
ple Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} nor will the sins
of evil people destroy them if they turn
from their sins. 13 If I promise good peo-
ple they'll live and then they start sinning,
thinking their good deeds in their past
will save them, then they'll be put to death
and I'll not remember their good deeds.
{99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 14 Or
suppose I tell some wicked people they'll
die but then they turn from their sins and
start doing what is right. 15 They might
return something they've taken as a secu-
rity for a loan, or return what they've sto-
len, and begin obeying My laws and stop
sinning, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph.
4:22} then they'll live. 16 I'll forget their
past sins, and they'll live because they have
done what is right.

17 "Ezekiel, your people are saying I'm
being unfair. But they are the ones who
are unfair. 18 As I said before, if good peo-
ple start doing evil, they'll be put to death.
19 But if wicked people turn from their sins
and do what is right, they will live. {399
Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 20 You
Israelites think I'm not fair. But you'll be
judged by your deeds."
21 Twelve years after King Jehoiachin and
the rest of us were taken as captives to
Babylonia (B.C. 585) a man had escaped
from Jerusalem and told me, "The city has
fallen." 22 The previous evening the LORD
healed me so that again I could speak
when this man arrived in the morning.
23 Then the LORD said, 24 "Son of man,
the people living in the ruined cities keep
saying, 'Abraham was one man, and the
LORD gave him the whole land of Israel.
{182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
There are many of us, so the land should be
ours.' 25 So Ezekiel, give this message to the
Sovereign LORD: 'How can you think
the land is yours when you eat meat with
blood in it, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-
23} worship idols, 26 murder innocent peo-
ple, are unfaithful in marriage, and spread
violence? {323 "No" Answers to Prayer,
Isa. 59:1, 2} 27 As surely as I am the living
LORD God, you people in the ruined cit-
ies will be killed by the sword. Those living
in open fields will be killed by wild ani-
mals. And those hiding in caves and for-
tresses will die of diseases. 28 I'll make the
country desolate and your pride will come
to an end. Even the mountains will be bare
so that no one will cross them. 29 When I've
made the land desolate because of your

sins, then you'll know that I'm the LORD.'
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
30"Son of man, your people are talking
about you in their houses, and they are
saying, 'Let's ask Ezekiel what the LORD
has said today.' 31So they come and listen
to you, but they don't intend to do what
I tell them. They talk about love, but they
are interested only in money. {231 Hypo-
critical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 32They treat you
as if you are only singing love songs and
playing musical instruments. They listen
to what you say, but they don't put those
things into practice. 33When those terrible
things happen, as they certainly will, then
they'll know that you are a prophet."

Ezekiel 34

A Prophecy against the Shepherds of Israel

1This message came to me from the LORD:
2"Son of man, prophesy against the shep-
herds, the leaders of Israel, and give them
this message. 'How terrible it will be for
you shepherds who only take care of your-
selves and neglect your sheep. 3You drink
their milk, make clothes from their wool,
and butcher the best animals. 4You haven't
helped the weak ones, or taken care of the
sick, or bound up the injured. You hav-
en't looked for those who wandered off.
Instead you treated them harshly. 5They are
scattered without a shepherd and are prey
for wild animals. 6They have wandered
over mountains and hills, and no one has
searched for them. {432 Service-Prayer,
Heb. 5:4} 7Therefore, you shepherds, hear
the Word of the LORD: 8"As surely as I
live," says the Sovereign LORD, "because
My flock; lacks a shepherd, they have been
attacked and eaten by wild animals. And
My shepherds, you didn't look for My
flock when they were lost. And you took
care of your own needs and not those of
My flock; you let them starve." 9Therefore,
you shepherds, hear the Word of the Sov-
ereign LORD: 10"'These shepherds are My
enemies, and they are responsible for what
has happened to My flock. I'll not allow
them to tend their flock, {59 Care-Casting
Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} and I'll not let them
butcher and eat the sheep.'"
11This is what the Sovereign LORD says,
"I'll look for My sheep and care for them.
{59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7}
12I'll be like a shepherd looking for his
lost sheep. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1
John 1:3} I'll find and rescue them from
the places where they were scattered on
that dark, cloudy day. {403 Restoration
of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} 13I'll
bring them back to their land of Israel
from the nations where they've been scat-
tered. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} 14I'll
let them enjoy grazing in the hills and
mountain pastures of Israel. 15I'll care for
them and keep them safe," says the Sover-
eign LORD. 16"I'll look for and bring back
home the ones who've strayed away. I'll
bandage the injured and strengthen the
weak. I'll destroy the powerful, fat shep-
herds. I'll feed the flock, yes—I'll feed you
punishment." {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1
Peter 5:7}

Ezekiel pronounced judgment against the shepherds of Israel, that is, false prophets, priests, kings and elders who lead God's people astray. The sheep are described as "sick, diseased, broken, and scattered" (vs. 4-6). Then Ezekiel becomes prophetic by describing the re-gathering of Israel from the nations where God scattered them. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Phrases such as "good pasture" and "lie down" reflect God's future blessing on Israel (vs. 13-16). Lord, You have an eternal plan to re-gather Israel in the future. I worship You for Your faithfulness to Your people. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} But Israel's leaders in the past sinned against You, just as some leaders sin against You today. Lord, I pray for pastors, teachers, elders, deacons and counselors. {432 Service-Response Prayer, Heb. 5:4} May they be faithful to You. Amen.

17The Sovereign LORD says this to His sheep, the people of Israel: "I'll separate the sheep, and also the sheep from the goats. 18You eat the greenest grass and trample down the rest. And you drink the clean water, and then walk in the water to make it muddy. 19Other sheep have only grass that's been trampled on, and only muddy water to drink." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

20Therefore this is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I'll separate the fat sheep from the weak sheep. 21You fat sheep push and butt My weak sheep so that they are scattered. 22I'll rescue My flock, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} and they'll no longer be abused. I'll know which of My sheep is fat and which ones are weak. 23I'll give you one shepherd, My servant David, and he'll provide for and care for you. 24I, the LORD, will be your God, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} and My servant David will be a prince. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

25"I'll give My people peace, and I'll force out the dangerous animals from the land. My people will be able to camp peacefully in wild places and sleep in the woods. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 26I'll bless you and the places around My holy hill. I'll send rain, showers of blessings, and they will come at just the right time. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 27Trees will produce their fruit, and crops will grow, and everyone will be safe. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} When I've set you free from slavery, then you'll know that I am the LORD. 28No longer will other nations defeat you, nor will wild animals attack you. You'll be safe and unafraid. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

29"Your land will be known for its abundant crops, and you'll never go hungry and never be laughed at by foreigners. 30You'll know that you, the people of Israel, are My people," {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} says the Sovereign LORD. 31"You are My flock, the sheep of My pasture. You are My people, and I am your God," {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} says the Sovereign LORD.

Ezekiel 35

Judgment against Mount Seir and Edom

[1]Again the LORD spoke to me: [2]"Son of man, prophesy against the people of Mount Seir (Edom). [3]Give them this message from the Sovereign LORD: 'I'm your enemy, Mount Seir, and I'll destroy you completely. [4]I'll destroy your cities and make your land a desert waste, and then you'll know that I am the LORD.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Seir means rugged country, and Edom was the nation south of the Dead Sea inhabited by the descendants of Esau. They had hated God's people ever since Jacob tricked Esau out of the birthright for a mess of pottage. When God's people were judged, Edom gloated and killed the survivors fleeing from danger. God says to Edom, "I will stretch out my hand against you" (v. 3). Lord, there are people in my life that hate You and Your commands. They may not use the word "hate," but they reject You and resist Your rule. I pray for them to be saved. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Open their eyes to see their sin against You. Convict them of their sin and bring them to repentance. Amen.

[5]"'Your hatred for the people of Israel led you to kill them when they were helpless and being punished for their sins. [6]As surely as I live,' says the Sovereign LORD, 'since you enjoy blood so much, I'll give you a bloodbath. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [7]I'll make Mount Seir deserted, and I'll kill any who try to escape and any who return. [8]Dead bodies will cover your mountains, hills, and valleys, and your streams will be filled with people killed by the sword. [9]You'll be deserted forever, and your cities will never be rebuilt. Then you'll know that I am the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]"'You thought Israel and Judah belonged to you, and that you could take over their land. [11]But as surely as I live,' says the Sovereign LORD, 'I'll pay back your angry deeds with Mine. I'll punish you for being angry and hateful toward My people. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} I'll honor My name by what I did to you. [12]Then you'll know that I, the LORD, heard every disrespectful word you said against Israel. You said, 'They've been destroyed, and now we can take their land.' [13]But in saying that, you were speaking against Me, and I heard all that you said." [14]The Sovereign LORD says, "Everyone will be glad {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} when they hear that I have made you desolate. [15]You rejoiced that the land of Israel became deserted. Now I'll rejoice that your land, Edom, will be desolate. You, Edom, will be desolate. Then you'll know that I am the LORD." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Ezekiel 36

A Prophecy to the Mountains of Israel

[1]The LORD said, "Son of man, prophesy to Israel's mountains, and say, 'Mountains of Israel, hear the Word of the LORD.

[2]Your enemies said your mountains belong to them.' {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [3]So, Son of man, give the mountains this message from the Sovereign LORD. 'Your enemies attacked you from every side, and now foreign nations have possessed you and make fun of you. [4]Therefore, Mountains of Israel, hear the word of the Sovereign LORD. All you mountains, hills, streams, and valleys, listen to Me. Your towns will lie in ruins and are deserted and foreign nations have destroyed them and made fun of you. [5]But My anger is against these nations, especially Edom, because they laughed at you and took over your land.'" [6]Therefore the Sovereign LORD says to the mountains, hills, streams, and valleys, "I am very angry because you have suffered at the hands of foreign nations. [7]Therefore I now promise that those nations will suffer shame. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[8]"'Trees on your mountains will produce lots of fruit for My people who will soon return home. [9]Israel, I'll take care of you and help you by plowing your soil and sowing your crops. [10]I'll increase the population of Israel, and the people will rebuild their ruined cities. [11]Also, your flocks and herds will multiply. Mountains of Israel, I'll bring people to live on you again. And I'll make you more prosperous than before. Then you'll know that I am the LORD. [12]I'll cause My people to walk on you again, You'll belong to them. And you'll never again be a place where they burn their children alive to idols." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

[13]The Sovereign LORD says, "Other nations have made fun of you saying, 'Israel is a land that devours her people.' [14]But you'll never do that again," says the Sovereign LORD. [15]"'I'll not allow these nations to make fun of you, and they'll no longer put you to shame."

[16]This message also came from the LORD: [17]"'Son of man, when the people of Israel were living in their land, they made it unclean by their sins. Their conduct was filthy as a bloody rag. [18]They committed murder and worshiped idols, which further polluted the land. So I poured out My wrath on them, [19]and I scattered them to other nations {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} to punish them for their sins. [20]But when they were in these other countries, they dishonored My holy name. The nations said, 'These are the LORD's people, and He couldn't keep them safe in His own land.' [21]Then I was concerned that My holy name had been dishonored throughout the world.

[22]"'Give the people of Israel this message from the Sovereign LORD: 'You don't deserve it, but I'm bringing you back to your land. [23]Why then am I doing this? To protect the reputation of My holy name, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} which you dishonored. And My bringing you home will show the nations that I am the LORD. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [24]I'll gather you from the nations and bring you home again. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[25]"'This will be as if I sprinkle clean water on you, and you'll be clean. I'll wash away the filth of your sins, and you'll no longer

worship idols. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 26I'll give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. This will replace your present stony heart of sin with a new, obedient heart.'" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Israel is the key to understanding God's timetable of the future. Because of Israel's sin in the Old Testament, she was judged and scattered among the Gentile nations. In God's time He sent His Son Jesus to live among the Jews and die for the sins of the world. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} Ezekiel's prediction will have a double fulfillment. Ezekiel says God will give a "new heart... and a new spirit... within you {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} and I will take away the stony heart" (v. 26). This is a picture of our regeneration when Christians are born again and given new desires to serve God. But it also has a second fulfillment when Israel is brought back to the land of promise and they are transformed inwardly. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Lord, thank You for a new nature to love You and hate sin. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} I couldn't live for You if You had not given me a new heart and a new nature. I will obey {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} the impulses to do righteously and reject impulses to sin. Amen.

27"'And I'll put My Spirit in you {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} to help you obey My laws and do what I command.'" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Ezekiel also promises the double fulfillment of "I will put my Spirit within you" (v. 27). Jesus promised the Holy Spirit, "He dwells with you and will be in you" (John 14:17). We have a double enablement that will help us obey God. First, we have a new nature, and second; we have the indwelling Holy Spirit. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} Lord, I will follow the positive desires of my new nature. I will let the indwelling Holy Spirit lead me. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} Lord, I want to be holy and I want to be spiritual. I yield to the power of the Holy Spirit to make it happen. Amen. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

28"'You'll again live in the land I gave your ancestors. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} You'll be My people, and I'll be your God. 29I'll cleanse you of your sins, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and give you abundant crops, and you'll never again have famine in the land. 30You'll have abundant crops from your fruit trees and fields, and never again will your neighboring nations make fun of you for having famines.

31"'You'll remember your sinful ways and despise yourselves for what you did. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 32But remember,' says the Sovereign LORD, 'I'm not doing this because you deserve it. In fact, you should be ashamed of what you've done. I, the LORD, have promised this, and I'll do it.'"

[33]The Sovereign LORD says, "When I cleanse you from your sins, {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} I'll bring people to live in your cities, and the ruins of houses and cities will be rebuilt. [34]Fields that used to be empty and desolate will again be farmed, after 70 years when the people were first taken into captivity. [35]People will be amazed at the difference between the deserted land and the land that now looks like the Garden of Eden. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [36]Then surviving nations will know that I, the LORD, rebuilt the ruins and planted crops in the desert. I, the LORD, make this promise."

[37]This is what the Sovereign LORD says: "I'll once again hear your prayers, and I'm ready to grant these requests. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [38]The towns will be filled with people, and in the festivals Jerusalem will be filled with flocks. Ruined cities will be filled with people once again, {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} and everyone will know that I am the LORD."

Ezekiel 37

The Valley of Dried-Up Bones

[1]The Spirit of the LORD {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} carried me to a valley filled with bones. [2]He showed me the old, dry bones scattered on the valley floor. [3]Then He said to me, "Son of man, can these bones come alive again?" "Sovereign LORD," I replied, "only You know the answer to that." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [4]Then He said, "Tell the bones this: 'Dry bones, listen to the Word of the LORD. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [5]I, the LORD, will put breath in you. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} [6]I'll put muscles and skin on you, and breathe life into you. Then you'll know that I am the LORD.'" {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[7]So I spoke those words, and immediately I heard a rattling noise all across the valley. [8]The bones were coming together and attaching to each other. Muscles and skin covered the bones, but they had no life in them.

Israel had given up hope when the people heard Jerusalem had fallen and was destroyed, "Our hope is lost" (v. 11.). The dead bones are Israel, and this chapter is a message of hope and encouragement. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} There are two aspects of the resurrection; first, it will be a national re-emergence of the nation Israel as individuals are brought together without life, that is, bone to bone. This is a reference to the nation Israel coming together politically in May, 1948 in the land of Israel. They did not recognize Jehovah as their Lord, so they were in unbelief. Lord, I know Your plan involves the Jews, and You bless those who bless the Jews (Gen. 12:2, 3). So, I pray for Israel and I pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:67). Amen.

[9]Then the LORD told me to tell the wind to blow from all four directions and to breathe life into these bodies. {224 Holy

Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [10]So I gave them this command and they came back to life and stood up. There were so many, it was like a vast army. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

The second resurrection refers to the spiritual regeneration of physical Jews into the future millennium. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Jews will repent and return to their Lord, and then they will be regenerated. The Jews who died in faith will be resurrected and join them in the land. King David will be raised and will be their vice president (vs. 24, 25). Jesus will be the ruler (President). Israel will no longer defile themselves (v. 23). Lord, I believe You have a great plan for the Jews and You will raise them. I also believe You will raise me in the resurrection {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} and I shall live with You (John 14:2, 3) in heaven. Amen.

[11]Then the LORD said, "Ezekiel, the people of Israel are like these dead bones. They complain that they are old and dried out and that they have no hope. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [12]So say to them that the Sovereign LORD says He'll open your graves and bring you out. And He'll bring you back to the land of Israel. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [13]Then when I do this, {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} you'll know that I'm the LORD. [14]"I'll put My Spirit in you and you'll live and I'll settle you in your land. Then you'll know that I've done as I said, and that I've spoken these words."

[15]Again the LORD said, "Get a stick and write on it 'The kingdom of Judah.' [16]Then get another stick and write on it 'The kingdom of Israel.' [17]Join them together so that they are like one stick. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [18]When people ask you what this means, [19]tell them, 'I, the Sovereign LORD, will join Israel and Judah, making them one.' {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [20]Hold these sticks together, [21]and tell the people of Israel that I'll bring them home from the nations where they are scattered. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [22]They'll be one nation in the land with a king over them. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} They'll no longer be two nations. [23]They'll no longer worship idols and commit other sins. I'll wash them from their sins and make them clean, and I'll keep them from backsliding. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} They'll again be My people, and I'll be their God."

God's desire is to "Be their God" (v. 27) and "Be with them" v. 27). He will make His sanctuary—Tabernacle (vs. 26, 27)—with them. Lord, today I want You to live in my life; make my heart Your dwelling place. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} Come make my heart Your Tabernacle, and rule my life from the inside out. Amen.

24"My servant David will be their king, and
he'll be like a shepherd to them. They'll
obey My regulations and keep My laws.
{327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 25They'll
live in the land where their ancestors
lived, the land I gave My servant Jacob. 26I
promise to give them eternal peace. {92
Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} I'll
multiply them as a nation, and I'll have
My temple stand in the land forever. {182
Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 27I'll
live among My people, and I'll be their
God and they'll be My people. {166 Fel-
lowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} 28Everyone
will know that My temple is in Israel and
that I've set the Israelites apart to be holy
to Me."

Ezekiel 38

Prophecies against Gog

1The LORD said, 2"Son of man, speak
against Gog, in the land of Magog, who
rules over Meshech and Tubal. Give him
this message from the Sovereign LORD:
3'I, the LORD God, am your enemy, 4and
I'll put a hook in your jaws, and drag away
you and your army, with your cavalry, and
shields and swords. 5Your army includes
soldiers from Persia, Ethiopia, and Libya
with their shields and helmets, 6and also
Gomer and Beth-Togarmah in the far
north. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7"'Be prepared for your armies to fight
8because in the future I'll command you
to invade Israel, a people recovered from
war but who'll have returned from foreign
nations where they once lived. They now
live in safety in the mountains of their own
land. 9But you'll attack them, advancing
like a storm and surrounding them like a
cloud. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
10"'In that future day you'll have evil
thoughts and you'll devise a wicked plan.
11You'll plan to invade a land of unwalled
villages where the people are peaceful
and living in safety and in towns without
walls, gates, and bars. 12You'll rob people
in towns that were once in ruins. They
are now filled with people who were cap-
tives in foreign nations, but they have now
returned to Israel and are rich in livestock
and goods. 13People of Sheba and Dedan
and merchants from southern Spain will
be your allies. You'll loot some of their sil-
ver and gold and livestock and goods.'
14"Son of man, prophesy against 'Gog and
say in that day, when My people are liv-
ing in peace, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer,
Heb. 12:14} 15you'll lead your powerful
cavalry, 16and go against My people like a
cloud. In the future days, 'Gog, I'll bring
you against My land. Then every nation
will know that I, the LORD, am holy.'"
{135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
17The Sovereign LORD says, "Years ago I
had My prophets warn the people of Israel
that I would send an enemy to attack them.
18But when you invade Israel, I'll be very
angry, 19and in My anger I'll send a terri-
ble earthquake. 20All living things: wild
animals, reptiles, and humans will tremble
in fear of Me. {163 Fear of God-Praying,
Heb. 5:7} Mountains will be overturned,
cliffs will crumble, and cities will collapse.
21I, the LORD, will summon the sword
against you," says the Sovereign LORD.

"Your soldiers will be so frightened that they'll attack each other. [22]I'll punish you with disease and death. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll pour rain, hail, and burning sulphur on you and your army. [23]In this way I'll show My greatness and holiness and I'll make Myself known to the nations. Then they'll know that I, the LORD, am holy." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Note the following timeline. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 1. Israel will be scattered among the Gentiles, without a home of her own. (First by Babylon, 586 B.C., then by Rome, A.D. 70). 2. The United Nations recognized Israel's home west of Jordan in May, 1948. 3. Some Jews returned in unbelief, but not all. 4. After the rapture of the church, the antichrist will make a covenant with Israel to give them safety for 7 years in their home land (Dan. 9:26-27). 5. Israel will lose her religious liberty (Matt. 24:15-16; Rev. 13:1-8). 6. The antichrist will do miracles and impose himself as deity upon the world, including Israel (2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:4-10). 7. A coalition of the nations will make war against Israel (Rev. 16:13-16). 8. The Lord Jesus will return from heaven (Rev. 19:19) and overcome them (Rev. 19:20-21). 9. Then Israel will repent and turn to the Lord, and be ushered into the Millennium, and saved Israel will be resurrected and join them. Lord, I see Your program for Israel and I worship You, the Lord God of Israel. Just as You will keep Your promises to Israel, I know You will keep Your promises to me. Amen.

Ezekiel 39

Prophecies against Gog

[1]"Son of man, prophesy against Gog and tell him, 'You are the leader of Meshech and Tubal, but I, the LORD, am your enemy. [2]I'll drag you from the north, and I'll bring you to the mountains of Israel. [3]I'll knock the bow out of your left hand and the arrows out of your right hand. [4]You and your vast army will die on the mountains. Birds and wild animals will eat your dead bodies [5]in the open fields. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken. [6]I'll set Magog on fire as well as nations on the coast. They'll know that I am the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[7]"'My people will no longer desecrate My holy name. Everyone will know that I am the LORD, the Holy One of Israel. [8]The day is coming when these things will happen just as I have said. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]When that day comes, people in the towns of Israel will collect the weapons of their enemies—shields, bows and arrows, spears, and clubs—and will use them for fuel for seven years. [10]They won't need to gather wood from the fields or chop down trees. This will be the Israelites' way of taking revenge on those who robbed and looted them.

[11]"'I'll make a vast graveyard for Gog and his army east of the Dead Sea. That graveyard will block the way of anyone who

tries to walk through the valley. So it will be known as "the Valley of Gog's Army." [12]The Israelites will spend seven months burying dead bodies. [13]Everyone in Israel will help, and the LORD will honor them when they see My glory. [14]After those seven months people will be appointed to bury those that remain on the ground. [15]When one of them finds a human bone, he'll set up a marker beside it. Then the gravediggers will bury those bones in "the Valley of God's Army." [16]A town named Hamonah (meaning "Gog's Army") will be nearby. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[17]"'Son of man, call all the birds and wild animals to come from every direction to a great feast at the mountains of Israel where they'll eat the flesh and drink the blood of the dead soldiers. [18]They will feast on the dead bodies of great men as though they were rams, lambs, goats, and fat young bulls of Bashan. [19]The birds and animals may eat till they are full and drink until they are drunk. [20]At My banquet table you may feast on horses, riders, and great warriors,'" says the Sovereign LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[21]Therefore the Sovereign LORD says, "I'll bring back My glory among the nations. Everyone will see the punishment I've inflicted on them. [22]Then the Israelites will know that I am the LORD their God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [23]Foreign nations will realize the Israelites had to leave their land because of their sin against Me. [24]They deserved to be punished because of their wicked ways." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[25]Now the Sovereign LORD says, "I'll show mercy to the Israelites and bring them back from the nations where they'll be captives. [26]They'll be safe in their land, but they'll be ashamed of their sinful ways. [27-28]Foreign nations will know that I am the LORD their God when I bring them back to their land. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [29]I'll never again turn My back on the people of Israel, and My Spirit will live in them," says the Sovereign LORD. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

Most biblical scholars agree that Gog (38:1) is a symbolic name for the nations as a whole north of Israel. Meshech is Moscow. Tubal, a son of Japheth (Gen. 10:2), lived in the Caucasus Mountains. Persia is today's Iran, Ethiopia is today's nation in Northern Africa, and Libya another nation in Northern Africa on the Mediterranean Sea. Gomer is modern-day Germany, and Togarmah is modern Turkey (38:2-6). Some of these nations are Arabic in opposition to Israel.

Israel's enemies appear to oppose Israel to the end, just as some people will hate you because of your faith. They will not change their hatred until God transforms them through the new birth. Lord, I pray for those who hate me. Save them, transform them {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}, and may they follow You, as I am Your disciple. I pray against Israel's enemies, because they are Your enemies. I pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). Amen.

Ezekiel 40

A Vision of the House of the LORD

[1]In the 25th year of the captivity of King Jehoiachin and the rest of us in Babylon and 14 years after the Babylonians captured Jerusalem (574 B.C.), the LORD's power took hold of me on the tenth day of the first month. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} [2]In some visions He carried me to a high mountain in Jerusalem and on the south side of the mountain there were some buildings that looked like a city. [3]The LORD took me closer, and I saw a man who was sparkling like bronze. He was standing near one of the gates and holding a tape measure in one hand and a measuring rod in the other. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [4]The man said to me, "Son of man, pay careful attention to what I'll show you, {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} because that is why I've brought you here. Then you are to tell the people of Israel what you've seen."

[5]The first thing I saw was a wall surrounding the temple area. The man took his measuring rod, which was 10 feet long, and he measured the wall. It was 10 feet high and 10 feet thick. [6]Then he went to the gate that faced east, and he walked up steps that led to a long passageway. It was 10 feet deep. [7]Guard alcoves were built into the gateway passage. [8]Each alcove was 10 and a half feet deep, and they were separated by a distance between them of 8 feet. [9]The gateway's inner threshold, which led to the foyer at the end of the passage, was 10 feet deep, and faced the temple. The last guardroom was 13 feet from the doorway to the opposite wall, and the distance from the doorway to the wall on either side was three feet. [10]The three guardrooms on each side of the passageway were the same size, and the walks that separated them were the same thickness.

[11]Then the man measured the width of the passageway, and it was 22 feet, and the two doors of the gate were 16 feet wide. [12]In front of each alcove was a wall 21 inches thick. And the alcoves were 100 feet square. [13]He measured the entrance room at the far end of the passageway, and it was 42 feet. The entrance room at the far end of the passage was 34 feet wide. [14]He also measured the inside walls of the gate complex, it was 90 feet from the porch to the courtyard. [15]The man also measured the length of the passageway, and it was 85 feet. [16]The three walls in the guardrooms had small windows in them, like the ones in the entrance room. The walls along the passageway were decorated with carved palm trees.

[17]The man then led me {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} through the passageway and into the outer courtyard of the temple. Thirty rooms were built against the outer wall, and in front of them was a sidewalk around the courtyard. [18]This was called the lower sidewalk, and it was 85 feet wide. [19]I saw the gates leading to the temple's inner courtyard, and I saw that they were higher than the gates leading to the outer courtyard. The distance between the outer and inner gates was 175 feet.

[20]Then the man measured the north gate leading to the outer courtyard. [21]This gate

also had three guardrooms on each side of the passageway. The measurements of these rooms and of the walls between them, and the entrance room at the far end of the passageway were the same as those of the east gate. The north gate was also 85 feet long and 42 feet wide. 22The windows, the entrance room, and the carvings of palm trees were exactly like those in the east gate. The entrance room also faced the courtyard and had seven steps leading up to it. 23On the north side was another gateway leading to the inner courtyard opposite the outer gateway. The distance between the outer and inner gates was 175 feet.

24The man then took me to the south gate. He measured the walls and the entrance room of this gate, and the measurements were the same as those of the other two gates. 25Windows were in the guardrooms of this gate and in the entrance room, like the others, and this gate was 85 feet long and 42 feet wide. 26Seven steps led up to the gate, and palm tree decorations were along the dividing walls. 27Another gateway led into the inner courtyard. The distance between the two gateways was 175 feet.

28Then the man took me to the south gate that led into the inner courtyard. It had the same measurements as the other gateways. 29Everything along the passageway was the same size, and this included the guardrooms, the walls separating them, the entrance room at the far end, and the windows. This gate was like the others, 85 feet long and 42 feet wide. 30Its guardrooms and entrance and exit halls and windows were identical to the others. 31The one difference is that eight steps, not seven, led up to the gate. Palm tree decorations were on the passageway walls.

32Next we went through the east gate to the inner courtyard. This gate had the same measurements as the others. 33The guardrooms, the walls separating them, the windows, the entrance rooms, and everything along the passageway was the same size. This gate was 85 feet long and 42 feet wide. 34The entrance room faced the outer courtyard, and palm trees decorated the walls. Eight steps led up to this gate.

35Then the man took me to the north gate. Its guard rooms, the walls separating them, 36and its entrance rooms were the same size as the others. The guard rooms, the walls separating them, and the entrance room were the same size as the other gates. The entrance room had windows and the gate was 85 feet long and 42 feet wide. 37The entrance room faced the outer courtyard, and the passageway walls were decorated with carvings of palm trees. Eight steps led up to this gate.

38A door led from the foyer of the inner gateway on the north side into a side room 39where there were four tables where animals to be sacrificed were killed. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 40Outside this room was a small building used for washing animals before they were offered as sacrifices to the LORD. 41Outside the foyer were two more tables leading to the north entrance. So there were eight tables in all, four inside and four outside. At these eight tables the sacrifices

were cut up and prepared. 42Four stone tables were 21 inches high and 31 inches square where animals were butchered for burnt offerings. The butchering knives and other implements were kept on the tables. 43Hooks, each three inches long, were attached to the walls. The flesh of the offerings was to be laid on the tables.

44The man then took me to the inner courtyard where there were two one-room buildings, one beside the inner northern gate facing south, and one beside the inner southern gate facing north. 45The man said to me, "The building beside the north gate is for the priests who supervise the temple, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 46and the building beside the south gate is for the priests who serve at the altar. They are descendants of Zadok, the only Levites allowed to serve as the LORD's priests.

47The man measured the inner courtyard, and it was 175 feet square. An altar was in front of the temple. 48Then he measured the doorway of the porch. Ten steps led up to it from the inner court. The doorway was 24 feet long, eight feet wide, and the distance from the doorway to the wall on either side was five feet. 49The entry hall was 34 feet by 20 feet, with steps leading up to it with a column on each side.

Ezekiel is transported in a vision to the temple mount. What is this temple? 1. Some say it describes Solomon's temple that was destroyed. 2. Some say it is the blueprint for Zerubbabel to rebuild the temple. 3. Some say it is the place for the returning Jews to build during the Tribulation. But notice what is left out, that is, the sacred chest, the mercy seat, the Table of Showbread, and the golden lamp stand. 4. Some say this is an allegory of the future temple in heaven where the Body of Christ will worship. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 5. Perhaps all these views are wrong, and that Ezekiel is describing a real temple in Jerusalem in the future. Lord, I believe You will keep Your promises to Israel and they will worship You in this temple in Jerusalem in the future Millennium. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} But I don't need a temple, because wherever Your presence is located, that's Your sanctuary. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Come make Your home in my body. Be glorified through me. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} I will worship You for Your indwelling in my heart. Amen.

Ezekiel 41

The Temple Measurements

1Then the man brought me into the holy place, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} the large main room of the temple. He measured the doorway to this room, and it was 10 feet wide, 2117 feet long, and the distance from the doorway to the wall on either side was eight feet. This main room was 68 feet by 34 feet. 3Then the man walked to the far end of the holy place, and he said, "Beyond this doorway is the most holy place." He measured the doorway. It was three feet wide, 10 feet long, and the distance from the doorway

to the wall on each side was 12 feet. [4]The most holy place was 34 feet square.

In verse 4, Ezekiel is shown "the most Holy Place" which is the "Holy of Holies." This is the room where the sacred chest was located, and the High Priest entered with blood on the Day of Atonement to make redemption for God's people. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} It is the Holy of all Holies, because a holy God came to dwell in that room. Nothing can be more holy than God. Lord, make my heart a "holy of holies." Come make Your home in the sanctuary of my body. Because You are holy, make my life holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} I will separate myself from sin to reflect glory to You. Thank You for the blood of Christ Jesus that cleanses me from all sin (1 John 1:7). Amen.

[5]The man then measured the wall and found that it was 10 feet thick, with a row of rooms along the outside wall, each seven feet wide. [6]These rooms were in three levels, one about the others, with 30 rooms in each level. They rested on ledges attached to the temple walls, so that nothing was built into the walls. [7]The temple walls were thicker at the bottom than at the top, so that the level of rooms at the top were wider than those at the bottom. A stairway at the side of the temple led from the bottom level to the middle level to the top level.

[8]The temple was built on a stone base 10 feet high, which was also the foundation for the storage rooms. [9]The outside walls of the storage rooms were eight feet thick. [10]The nearest buildings were 34 feet away from a row of rooms in the inner court. [11]One door led into the storage rooms on the north side of the temple, and another door led to the storage rooms on the south side.

[12]Another building faced the west end of the temple. It was 117 feet wide, 150 feet long, and its walls were over eight feet thick. [13]The man measured the length of the temple, and it was 175 feet. The courtyard around the back wall of the temple was also 175 feet. [14]And the distance across the front of the temple was 175 feet. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [15]The length of the west building with its side rooms was also 175 feet.

The inside walls of the temple porch and the holy place and most holy place were paneled with wood [16]along with the window frames and side rooms. [17]The space above the door leading into the most holy place was also paneled. [18]The walls were decorated with carvings of creatures. Each had two faces, and a carving of a palm tree was between each winged creature. [19]One face was that of a man, and it looked to one of the palm trees. The other face was that of a young lion, and it looked to the palm tree on the other side. These figures were carved all along the inside of the temple; [20]from the floor to the top of the walls. [21]Square pillars were at the entrance to the holy place and the most holy place. [22]A wooden altar in front of the doorway to the most holy place was five feet high and four feet square. Its corners, base, and sides were all made of wood. The man said,

"This altar is a reminder of the LORD's presence." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
23The doorway to the main room of the temple and the doorway to the most holy place had two doors, 24and each door had two sections that could be opened. 25The doors leading into the holy place were decorated with carvings of winged creatures and palm trees like those on the walls. And there was a wooden covering over the porch outside these doors. 26Small windows decorated with carvings of palm trees were on each side of the porch.

Ezekiel 42

Chambers to the North and South

1The man {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} led me into the outer courtyard and brought me to the rooms against the north wall of the courtyards. 2This set of rooms was 175 feet long and 87 and a half feet wide. 3The rows of rooms were on the inner wall of the courtyard. The rooms were on three levels with doors opening toward the north, 4and in front of them was a walkway 18 feet wide and 175 feet long. 5Each level of rooms was narrower than those below it. 6Since the levels did not have supporting pillars as the courtyards, the central and top levels were set back from the level below it. 7An outer wall separated the rooms from the outer courtyard. It was 87 and a half feet deep. 8But the rooms closest to the temple measured 175 feet. 9A door led from the outer courtyard to the lower level of rooms.
10Also a set of rooms was on the south side of the outer courtyard, opposite the outer wall. 11These were like rooms on the north, and had the same length and width. Also a walkway was in front of these rooms. 12The door to the beginning of the passageway to these rooms was like the passageway on the wall on the east.
13Then the man said to me, "The rooms on the north and south sides of the temple are for the priests to eat the food from the holy offerings. These include grain offerings, sin offerings, and guilt offerings. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 14After the priests enter these rooms, they are not to go into the outer courtyard until they leave behind the garments in which they minister, for they are holy, and are to put on regular clothes."
15When the man finished measuring the inside of the temple area, he took me back through the east gate and measured the wall around the entire area. 16The east side was 840 feet long, 17the north side was 840 feet long, 18the south side was 840 feet long, 19and the west side was 840 feet long. 20The distance was the same on all four sides, making the temple area a perfect square. The wall separated the holy from the common.

Because Ezekiel was born in the Tribe of Levi, and had been a priest (1:3), he was concerned with the rooms in the temple and gave their exact measurements. Lord, I want to handle the temple of my body as carefully as Ezekiel wrote about the coming temple in the Millennium. {353 Physical Before

Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} ***Lord, I want to do everything You want me to do; teach me what to do. I want You to dwell in every part of my body; I yield it all to You.*** *{549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}* ***I want You to be glorified in every part of my body; come possess every part of my temple. I only have this one body; I give it to You for Your purpose. Amen.***

Ezekiel 43

The Glory of the LORD Returns to the Temple

[1]Then the man brought me to the gate facing east, [2]and I saw the glory of the God of Israel coming from the east. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} I heard a sound like the roar of rushing water, and the land was radiant with His glory. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [3]The vision was like what I had seen when he came to destroy the city of Jerusalem and like the visions I had seen by the Kebar River, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} and I fell facedown. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [4]The LORD's glory entered the temple through the eastern gate.

Ezekiel saw the glory of God return to Jerusalem through the East Gate. This is the same gate by which God's glory left Jerusalem (10:19). There is a principle to remember: God returns the way He left. When you sin in any area of your life, you must get God back through the door He left. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} ***You must confess the sin of that area, and apply the blood of Christ to that area.*** *{173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}* ***Lord, I want You to live in every area of my life. When I've sinned in any area, I confess the sin of that area—forgive me—cleanse me—restore me.*** *{404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}* ***Come back into that area to live and reign. Amen.***

[5]The Spirit lifted me up and brought me into the inner court, and the glory of the LORD filled the temple. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}

Lord, I will go to a church building every Lord's Day. I want to meet You there. *{183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}* ***Speak to me when I obey Your command to gather with other believers (Heb. 10:25). Speak in Your house. Amen.***

[6]The man was standing beside me, and I heard the LORD say from inside the temple, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [7]"Son of man, this temple is My throne on earth. I'll live here among the Israelites forever. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} They and their kings will never defile My holy name again by their prostitution and their worship of lifeless idols at their hilltop shrines. [8]They built their idol temples right next to Mine, with only a wall between them. This and their evil ways ruined My holy name and so I destroyed them in My anger. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]But if they stop worshiping these idols and tear

down the pillars to honor their kings, I'll live among them forever. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
10"Son of man, describe the temple to the Israelite, 11so they'll be ashamed of their sins. Show them the plan, explaining the design and shape. Then if they are truly sorry for having sinned against Me, explain to them the gates and measurements, and the regulations about worshiping there. Then write these things down so they can study and obey them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 12The most important thing about My temple mount is its holiness. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
13"These are to be the measurements of the altar. Around the altar at the bottom there is to be a gutter 20 inches wide and 20 inches deep, with a 9 inch ledge on the outer rim. 14The altar is to rest on a base of three sections, each of them square. The bottom section is to be 27 feet on each side and three feet high. 15The middle section is to be 24 feet on each side and 7 feet high, with a 10 inch rim around the outer edge. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 16The top section, which is to be 20 feet on each side and 7 feet high, is where sacrifices were burned. 17The four corners of the altar looked like the horns of a bull. Steps leading up to the altar were on the east side."
18The LORD God said to me, "Son of man, the Sovereign LORD says that after the altar is built, it must be dedicated to Me by {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} 19having the priests of the family of Zadok slaughter a young bull as a sacrifice for sin. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 20Smear some of the animal's blood on the four horns of the altar, the four corners of the upper ledge, and the rim that runs around that ledge. This will cleanse it and make atonement for the altar. 21Then take the young bull for the sin offering and burn it at the appointed place outside the temple area. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
22"The next day offer as a sacrifice for sin a goat with no physical defects. Sprinkle its blood on the altar just as you did with the blood of the bull. 23Then choose a young bull and a young ram that have no physical defects, 24and bring them to Me at the temple. As a cleansing ceremony sprinkle salt on them and offer them as sacrifices to Me.
25"Every day for seven days sacrifice a male goat and young bull, and a ram as a sin offering. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} These animals are to have no physical defects. 26Do this each day for seven days, thus setting it apart for Me. 27On the eight day and each day after that, the priests are to sacrifice on the altar the burnt offerings and thank offerings of the people. Then I'll be pleased with you," says the Sovereign LORD.

Ezekiel 44

The Laws Concerning the House of the LORD

1The man took me back to the outer courtyard and near the east gateway, but the

doors to this gate were closed. [2]Then the LORD said to me, "This gate must remain closed because the LORD, the God of Israel, entered here. No one must use it."

Ezekiel deals with those who may minister in the new temple. Ezekiel sees the East Gate is shut permanently, "It shall not be opened" (v. 2). That's because the Lord came through that gate and a human would desecrate it. But it also suggests the Lord will never again depart from His temple. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} *Lord, You've entered my life and I've become Your sanctuary (1 Cor. 3:16; 2 Cor. 6:16). Dwell in me and be glorified in my body.* {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} *You have given me eternal life and I shall have it forever. Amen.*

[3]"The ruler of Israel may come here to eat a sacrificed meal that's been offered to Me, but he must use only the entrance room of this gate."
[4]Then the man took me through the north gateway. I saw that the glory of the LORD filled the temple, {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} and I fell with my face to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16}

Again Ezekiel "looked and behold the glory of the LORD filled the house of the Lord: and I fell on my face" (44:4). Lord, I too fell on my face in worship because You dwell with Your people. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} *You are Emmanuel, "God with us" (Matt. 1:23). You came to live among us in the incarnation, now You come to live in me in salvation.* {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} *I worship You with my face to the ground. Amen.*

[5]Then the LORD said, "Son of man, I'll give you laws for My temple. So listen carefully to what I tell you who can be admitted to the temple and who is to be excluded. [6]Say to these rebellious foreigners {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} that you have sinned greatly by letting godless pagans enter My temple. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [7]You let them enter My temple to offer sacrifices to Me, [8]and you have put foreigners in charge of worship at My temple. [9]And so I, the LORD God, say that no godless foreigners will be allowed in the temple. And this includes foreign residents living in Israel."
[10]The LORD said, "The people of the tribe of Levi who worshiped idols must be punished. [11]They'll be allowed to serve only as temple workers by guarding the gates and killing animals to be sacrificed and helping the worshipers. [12]But because these Levites worshiped idols, I, the LORD God, will see that these Levites will be punished. These priests did not stop the Israelites from sinning. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [13]So now I'll no longer let the Levites serve as My priests. They may not touch any of My holy things or the holy offerings, because they must bear the shame of all the sins they've committed. [14]All they'll be allowed to do is maintenance work and helping the people in a general way.

15"The Levitical priests who are descendants of Zadok were faithful to Me when other Israelites disobeyed Me. So these priests will continue to stand in My presence {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and offer the fat and blood of sacrifices," says the Sovereign LORD. 16"They are the ones who'll enter where they'll offer sacrifices at My altar. 17When they enter the inner courtyard, they must wear their linen priestly garments. My priests must never wear anything made of wool when they are on duty in the courtyard or the temple. 18Their turbans and undergarments must also be of linen, because wearing wool will cause them to perspire. 19Before they return to the outer courtyard, they must remove their linen garments and leave them in the sacred rooms and put on their regular clothing. That way no one will touch their garments and be consecrated by them.

20"They must not shave their heads or let their hair grow long, but they must keep it properly trimmed. 21They must not drink wine before entering the inner courtyard. 22They may marry only virgins from Israel or widows of another priest. 23Priests must teach My people the difference between what is sacred and what is ordinary, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} between what is clean and what is unclean. 24They'll make decisions in different legal cases, according to My laws. They must also observe the religious festivals My law requires {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and must respect the Sabbath.

25"A priest must not go near a dead body unless it's one of his parents or children, or his brother or an unmarried sister. 26If a priest touches a dead body, he is unclean and must go through a ceremony to make himself ceremonially clean. Seven days later 27he must go to the inner courtyard and offer a sacrifice for sin. After that he may again serve as My priest. I, the LORD God, have spoken these words. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22}

28"The priests are not to own any property, because I'll provide for them. 29Instead they'll receive part of the grain sacrifices and part of the sin offerings and part of the guilt offerings. They'll also receive anything in Israel that has been completely dedicated to Me. 30Also the first part of every harvest will belong to the priests. And they'll receive part of all gifts and offerings the Israelites bring to Me. The first part of the people's flour must be given to the priests, and I'll bless the homes of the people who do this. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 31The priests must not eat any bird or animal that dies a natural death or that has been killed by a wild animal."

Ezekiel 45

The Division of the Land

1"When you divide the land among the tribes of Israel, you must first give a section of it to Me. This area will be eight miles long and three miles wide. 2The temple will be on a piece of land 840 feet square, and the temple will be surrounded by an open space 84 feet wide. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 3The most holy

place will be located on a sacred piece of land eight miles long and three miles wide. 4I'll give half of my sacred land, eight miles long and three miles wide, to the priests who serve in My temple. Their houses and the temple will be in this half."

Ezekiel described the portion of land that is designated for the priest. It is to be on a high hill (v. 2) with walled courts for privacy and protection (v. 4). Notice the place they live "shall be holy" (v. 1). That suggests we must dedicate our house (apartments, condos, or rooms) to God to be holy for Him. Lord, I give You my house; come live there and be glorified there. I will not keep evil things there, nor will I do evil there. Come live in my house, and may people who visit me realize it is a holy place that is dedicated to You. Protect my dwelling from harm. I will use my house to glorify You. Amen.

5"I'll give the other half of My land to the Levites who work in My temple, and the towns where they live will be there.
6"'Next to the larger sacred land will be an area eight miles long and two miles wide. This will belong to the people of Israel and will include the city of Jerusalem."
7The LORD said, "The area west and east of My sacred land and the city of Jerusalem will belong to the ruler of Israel. He'll have the region between the western edge of My land, the Mediterranean Sea, and between the eastern edge of My land and the Jordan River. The length of this property will be the same as the sections of land given to the tribes. 8These sections of land will be for the prince of Israel."
The LORD God then said, "You leaders of Israel will no longer oppress and rob My people. Assign the rest of the land to the people, giving an allotment to each tribe. 9You must do what the Sovereign LORD says. 'You princes of Israel, start doing what is right and stop expelling people from their homes. 10Use only honest weights and scales, honest dry volume measures, and honest dry and liquid volume measures. 11The homer (about six and a half bushels) will be your standard dry measure, and the ephah will be one-tenth of a homer for dry measure and the bath will be one-tenth of a homer for liquid measure. 12The standard unit of weight will be the shekel (about half an ounce). One shekel will equal 20 gerahs, and 60 shekels will equal one mina.
13"'You must give the prince a bushel of wheat or barley for every 60 you reap, 14one percent of your olive oil, 15and one sheep for every 200 in your flocks. These will be the grain offerings, burnt offerings, and peace offerings that will be substitutionary payment for sin,' {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} says the Sovereign LORD. 16'The people must join the prince in bringing these offerings. 17The prince is to provide offerings that are given at religious festivals, the new moon celebrations, the Sabbath days, and all similar occasions.'" {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}
18The Sovereign God says, "In early spring, on the first day of each new year, sacrifice to Me a young bull that has no physical

defects. This is to purify the temple. [19]The priests are to put some of the blood of this animal on the doorposts of the temple {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} and on the four corners of the altar and on the doorposts of the gates that lead into the inner courtyard. [20]The same must be done on the seventh day of the month, so that anyone who sins accidentally without knowing it will help keep My temple holy. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

[21]"Each year celebrate the Passover, beginning on the 14th day of the new year and continuing for seven days. Eat only bread made without yeast. [22]On the first day of the Passover the prince is to offer a young bull as a sin offering for himself and the people. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [23]Each day of the Passover the prince is to bring seven bulls and seven rams without any physical defects as a burnt offering to the LORD. Also a male goat is to be offered each day for a sin offering. [24]The prince will give half a bushel of flour as a grain offering and a gallon of olive oil with each bull and ram.

[25]"During the seven days of the Festival of Shelters which occurs every year in early autumn, the prince is to provide these same sacrifices for the sin offering, the burnt offering, and the grain offering, along with the required amount of olive oil."

Ezekiel 46

The Prince and the Offerings

[1]The Sovereign LORD says, "The east gate of the inner courtyard is to remain closed during the six work days of each week. Then it is to be opened on the Sabbath and on the days of the new moon festival. [2]The prince will go into the entrance room of this gate and stand by the doorpost while the priest offers a burnt offering and a fellowship offering. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} He is to worship inside the gate passage and then go out the way he came in. And the gate is to stay open till the evening. [3]Each Sabbath day and on the days of new moon festivals the people of Israel are to come worship Me the LORD in front of the east gate. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

[4]"Each Sabbath day the prince is to present to Me a burnt offering of six lambs and one ram with no physical defects. [5]With the ram he is to bring a grain offering of half a bushel of flour and with each lamb he may bring whatever amount of flour he wishes. Also he must offer a gallon of olive oil for each half bushel of flour. [6]For the new moon festival he is to offer a bull, six lambs, and one ram with no physical defects. [7]With the bull he is to bring a half bushel of flour for a grain offering, and the same with the ram. And with each lamb he may bring whatever amount of flour he wishes. Also he must offer a gallon of olive oil for each half bushel of flour.

[8]"The prince must enter the temple area through the entrance room of the east gate and exit the same way. [9]But when the people come through the north gateway to worship Me in the religious festivals, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} they must leave through the south gateway. And those who enter through the south

gateway must leave by the north gateway. They must never go out the same way they came in; they must always use the opposite passageway. [10]And on these occasions the prince will enter and leave with the people."

Notice the attention given to details in this chapter, suggesting the details of our life should be disciplined so they bring glory to God. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} *Lord, I will give attention to the small details of my life. Keep sin from entering my life in small ways.* {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} *May small details glorify You.* {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} *The world says "the devil is in the details," but I believe You are in the details. Amen.*

[11]"For the special festivals the grain offering will include half a bushel of flour with each bull, another half bushel of flour with each ram, and as much flour as the prince chooses for each lamb. Also a gallon of olive oil is to be given with each half bushel of flour. [12]Whenever the prince offers a voluntary burnt offering or fellowship offering to the LORD, {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} the east gateway to the inner courtyard will be opened and he'll offer his sacrifices as on the Sabbath. Then he'll leave, and the gate will be closed.

[13]"Each morning a year-old lamb without any physical defects is to be sacrificed as a burnt offering to the LORD. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [14]With the lamb a grain offering is to be given to Me consisting of about three pounds of flour and half a gallon of olive oil to mix with the flour. This law must never change. [15]The lamb, the flour, and the olive oil must be given every morning to Me."

[16]The Sovereign LORD also says this: "If a prince gives some land to his son, it will belong to him and his descendants forever. [17]But if the prince gives some land to a servant of his, the servant may keep it till the Year of Jubilee, which comes every 50 years. Then it will be returned to the prince. Only what the prince gives to his sons will be permanent. [18]The prince must never take land from someone by force. If he gives property to his sons, it must be from his own land. I don't want My people losing their property by force."

[19]The man brought me through the entrance between the gateway {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} and took me to the sacred rooms assigned to the priests that faced north. He showed me a place at the west end of these rooms, [20]and said, "This is where the priests are to boil the meat of the trespass offerings and the sin offerings and to bake the flour from the grain offerings into bread. They are to do these things here so they won't have to carry the offerings through the outer courtyard where someone could accidentally be sanctified by them."

[21]Then the man brought me back to the outer courtyard and took me to each of its four corners. [22]In each corner was an area 70 feet long and 52 and a half feet wide enclosed by walls. [23]Around the inside of these walls was a low ledge of stone and

fireplaces along the ledge. [24]The man said, "These are the kitchens where the temple workers will boil the meat of sacrifices offered by the people."

Ezekiel 47

The Waters Flowing from the House of the LORD

[1]Then the man brought me back to the temple entrance. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} There I saw a stream flowing from beneath the temple flowing eastward to the right of the altar. [2]Then he brought me outside the wall through the north gateway and around the east gate. The stream was flowing east through the south side of the east gateway. [3]He measured along the streams for 1,680 feet. Then he told me to wade across, and I did, {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} and the water was up to my ankles. [4]He measured off another 1,680 feet, and told me to wade through it there. When I did, the water was up to my knees. Another 1,680 feet downstream and the water came to my waist. [5]After another 1,680 feet the stream was a river that was so deep I could cross only by swimming.

[6]He told me to keep in mind what I'd seen. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} We then went back along the riverbank.

Ezekiel saw a river "trickling" (v. 1, NASB) out from under the throne. This is a picture of the grace or mercy of God that "trickles" down to us. The water kept getting deeper: "to the ankles" (v. 3), "to the knees" (v. 4), "to my waist" (v. 4), "water to swim" (v. 5). Even when storms {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} and deep water threaten us, we can swim in God's grace. The more we need God's forgiveness, the more He has for us. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Lord, thank You that Your grace meets my needs, and that no matter how deep the troubles, You have grace to cover all my sin. Amen.

[7]I was surprised to see trees growing on each side of the river. [8]He said to me, "This river flows east to the Jordan River valley and enters the Dead Sea, where it turns salt water into fresh water. [9]Wherever this river flows, fish will abound, for its fresh waters will bring life." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Ezekiel was told, "Everything will live wherever the river goes" (v. 9). This will happen literally in the Millennium; {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} but for us today, symbolically, the grace of God gives us new life. We are regenerated, transformed {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}, and given a new purpose in life. Lord, thank You for Your grace that forgives me when I sin. Thank You for Your grace that renews me when I get tired spiritually, or when I give up. Thank You for Your grace that uses me far beyond my abilities and my usefulness. Thank You for grace. Amen. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

[10]"From En-Gedi to En-Eglaim people will fish in the sea and dry their nets along the coast. Fish of every kind will fill the

Dead Sea just as they do the Mediterranean. 11But marshes along the coast will still be salty, so that in that way people will have access to salt.

12"All kinds of fruit trees will be growing on both sides of the river and will produce fresh fruit every month. These leaves will never fade and drop. The trees will be watered by the river flowing from the temple, {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} and the leaves will be for healing the people."

13The Sovereign LORD says this: "These are the instructions to follow in dividing the land for Israel's twelve tribes. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} The tribe of Joseph will receive twice as much as each of the other tribes. 14Each tribe will receive an equal share, as I promised to your ancestors and which you'll receive. The borders of the land are these.

15"The northern border will run from the Mediterranean Sea toward Hethlon, then on through Lebo-Hamath to Zedad. 16Then it will run to Berothah and Sibraim, which are on the border between Damascus and Hamath, and finally to Hazer-Hatticon, on the border of Hauran. 17So the northern border will run from the Mediterranean Sea to Hazar-Enan, on the border between Hamath to the north and Damascus to the south.

18"The eastern border will start at a point between Hauran and Damascus and run south along the Jordan River between Israel and Gilead, past the Dead Sea and as far south as Tamar. This will be the eastern border.

19"The southern border will go west from Tamar to the waters of Meribah at Kadesh and then follow the course of the brook of Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. This will be the southern border.

20"On the west side, the Mediterranean Sea itself will be your border from the southern border to the point where the northern border begins, opposite Lebo-Hamath.

21"These are the boundaries for the land of Israel. 22The land is to be an inheritance for you and foreign residents with their families. They are to be like native-born Israelites and their children are to receive an inheritance in the land with the same rights as your own children. 23These foreign residents are to receive a share of the land in the territory of the tribe with whom they now live. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken these words."

Ezekiel 48

The Division of the Land

1"Here is a list of the tribes and the territory each is to receive. The territory of Dan is in the extreme north. Its boundary line follows the Hethlon road to Lebo-Hamath and then runs on to Hazar-Enan on the border of Damascus, with Hamath to the north. Dan's territory extends all the way across the land of Israel from east to west. 2Asher's territory lies south of Dan's and also extends from east to west. 3Naphtali's land lies south of Asher's, also extending from east to west. 4Then comes Manasseh south of Naphtali, and its territory also extends from east to west. 5South of Manasseh is Ephraim, 6and then Reuben,

7and then Judah, all of whose boundaries extend from east to west.
8"South of Judah will be land set aside for a special purpose. It will be eight miles long and its width will run from Israel's eastern border to the Mediterranean Sea, with My temple in the center." {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

This chapter indicates where each tribe will be located. Each tribe is given a portion without any regard to the original assignment given in Joshua 13-21 after the conquest. The northern tribes were Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, Ephraim, Reuben and Judah. The three tribes located farthest from the temple were born to Jacob's concubines, that is, Dan and Naphtali were born to Rachel's maid, Bilhah, and Asher was born to Leah's maid, Zilpah (Gen. 30:5-13). Gad is farthest away from the temple; the son of a concubine, Judah is closest to the sanctuary because of the Messianic prophecy (Gen. 49:8-12), and he superseded Reuben the first born. Simeon, Issachar, and Zebulun were born to Leah. Benjamin and Joseph were born to Rachel. Lord, some were closer to the sanctuary than others {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}; I want to be as close to You as possible. I realize my closeness to You is determined by my spiritual passions, so I'm going to do everything possible to get close to You. Here I come searching! Amen. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

9"The area for the temple will be eight miles long and three miles wide. 10Half of this land will be for the priests, with the strip of land eight miles long and one and a half miles wide. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 11This land is for the descendants of the Levitical tribe of Zadok who were faithful to Me when the Levites and other Israelites started sinning. 12The land will be their special portion, and the other Levites will live next to the descendants of Zadok. 13The land I give to the Levites is to be the same size and shape as for the Zadok priests—eight miles long and one and a half miles wide. 14None of this land is to be sold or traded for it belongs to Me.
15"South of My sacred land will be a section eight miles long and two miles wide. It will belong to the people and will include the city of Jerusalem with its houses and pastureland. 16The city will be a square of one and a fourth miles on each side. 17An open area for pasture of about 20 feet wide will surround the city. 18The land on the east and west sides of the city will be farmland for the people of Jerusalem. Both portions will be three miles long and two miles wide. 19People from the city may farm the land no matter which tribe they belong to. 20This special section of land, including the city, will be a square of eight miles on each side. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}
21"The land on both sides of this area, for eight miles to the eastern and western boundaries of Israel, will belong to the prince. 22This land will include everything between the territories allotted to Judah and Benjamin, with Judah being the northern border and Benjamin the southern border, except for the area set aside for

the sacred lands and the city. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
23"These are the territories allotted to the
rest of the tribes. Benjamin's territory lies
south of the prince's land, and it extends
across the entire land of Israel from east to
west. 24South of Benjamin's territory lies
that of Simeon, also extending across the
land from east to west. 25Next is the territory of Issachar with the same eastern and
western boundaries.
26"Next is the territory of Zebulun, which
also extends across the land from east to
west. 27The territory of Gad is just south of
Zebulun with the same borders to the east
and west. 28The southern border of Gad
runs from Tamar to the waters of Meribah
at Kadesh and then follows the brook of
Egypt to the Mediterranean Sea. 29These
are the allotments that are to be set aside
for each tribe's exclusive possession. I, the
Sovereign Lord, have spoken!
30"The city of Jerusalem will have 12 gates,
31three on each side of the city wall. These
gates will be named for the 12 tribes of
Israel. In the north the gates will be named
for Reuben, Judah, and Levi. 32On the east
wall, the gates will be named for Joseph,
Benjamin, and Dan. 33The south wall will
have gates named for Simeon, Issachar, and
Zebulun. 34And on the west wall the gates
will be named for Gad, Asher, and Naphtali.
Each side of the wall will be a mile and a half
long, 35and so the total length of the wall will
be six miles. And from that day the name of
the new city will be 'The Lord Is There.'"
{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

God gives the sanctuary a new name, "The name of that city from that day shall be: THE LORD IS THERE" (v. 35). This is another name of God, Jehovah-Shammah. God has been active in all the earth and universe, but now He has gone there to rest (Gen. 2:1, 2). Lord, wherever You are located, I want to be there. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} You will be in the eternal city, so I want to be there, to be with You, and to worship You eternally. Amen. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Daniel

Ch 1: Daniel and His Friends Are Tested 1211
Ch 2: King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream 1213
Ch 3: The Golden Idol 1216
Ch 4: The Second Dream of Nebuchadnezzar 1218
Ch 5: The Handwriting on the Wall 1220
Ch 6: Daniel Is Thrown into the Lion's Den 1223
Ch 7: Daniel's Dream about the Four Animals . 1225
Ch 8: Daniel's Vision of the Ram and the Goat . 1227
Ch 9: Daniel Prays for Israel..... 1229
Ch 10: Daniel's Vision of a Man 1231
Ch 11: The Future after Darius 1232
Ch 12: The End of Days 1235

DANIEL

Key Words: *Dreams and Visions* (Daniel 7:1)

Key Verse: "Daniel answered in the presence of the king, and said, "The secret which the king hath demanded cannot the wise men, the astrologers, the magicians, the soothsayers, shew unto the king; but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets, and maketh known to the king Nebuchadnezzar what shall be in the latter days" (2:27-28).

Theme: Whereas most prophets speak primarily to the Jews, God's people; Daniel focused on secular world empires. Daniel properly predicts the coming of four empires that conquered the Western civilized world (Babylon, Medo-Persia, Greece, Rome 2:31-43). But Daniel's focus was on the coming world dominion by God and His Son, Jesus Christ. The reader should pray for worldwide evangelization and for the coming of the Jewish Messiah, Jesus Christ, who will judge all evil when He establishes His worldwide rule. *Lord, thank You for the plan You had for the Jews, and thank You for Your command to me and the church to go into all the world and preach the gospel to every people group (Matt. 28:19, 20). Amen.*

Daniel 1

Daniel and His Friends Are Tested

1 In the third year of Jehoiakim's reign over Judah (605 B.C.) Nebuchadnezzar, king of
Babylon, went to Jerusalem and surrounded it. 2 He took Jehoiakim and some arti-
cles from the temple to his god Marduk in Babylonia and put them in his treasure room.
{250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} 3 Nebuchadnezzar told Ashpenaz, his
chief official, to bring to him some Israelite captives who were of Jewish royalty.

God wants His people to have healthy and holy bodies. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} Our bodies enable us to do God's will and they are a testimony to the world that we serve Jesus Christ. Daniel was chosen from among those of the nobility because of his healthy body. That suggests some of the nobility were passed over because of their unhealthy bodies. Doesn't it suggest the child of God shouldn't smoke (it takes 6 to 10 years off your life) nor should they get involved in drugs, alcohol, etc. "What, know you not that your body is the temple of God?" (1 Cor. 6:15). Lord, I will take care of my body, it's the only one I'll ever have. Be glorified in

my healthy habits, {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} dress, grooming, bathing and exercising. Make me like Christ. Amen. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

4He wanted young men who were physically attractive, mentally strong, well informed, and capable of serving in the king's palace. Ashpenaz taught them the language and literature of the Babylonians, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 5and each day they were served food from the king's table. After a three year training period, they would be qualified to serve the king.

6Four of these men were Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah. 7The chief official gave them new Babylonian names: Belteshazzar, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 8Daniel asked permission not to eat non-kosher food, which would violate the Mosaic law. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Daniel and his friends refused to eat the same kind of food the king ate. Was it fattening? Was it against the Jewish ritual law? Was it offered to idols? Or, was it alcohol? We're not sure of the problem, but Daniel had deep convictions about eating the food put before him. {98 Daniel Fast and Prayer, Dan. 1:8} "Daniel purposed in his heart." He was more concerned with displeasing God, than he was of disobeying Nebuchadnezzar. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Lord, help me make decisions to please You and not the people of this world. Even when my decisions create a crisis, help me remain true to You. Then protect me after I've decided against the world. Amen.

9Ashpenaz liked Daniel, but he said, 10"The king would kill me if I did that because he would see you looking pale and thin compared to the other young men." {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} 11Daniel said to the guard who was over him and his friends, 12"Here's a suggestion. For 10 days give us only vegetables and water. {98 Daniel Fast and Prayer, Dan. 1:8} 13Then see how we look compared to the others who eat the king's food." 14The guard agreed to this. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

15After 10 days the four young men looked healthier than any of those who ate the king's food. 16So he continued to give them a vegetable diet. 17These four gained knowledge in all kinds of literature and other subjects. And David could interpret visions and dreams. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}

18At the end of three years they were presented to Nebuchadnezzar. 19As he talked with them, he realized the four were tops in every way, and so they were made servants of the king. 20As Nebuchadnezzar questioned them on various subjects, he found them much wiser than his magicians and enchanters. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 21Daniel lived in Babylon till the first year of Cyrus, king of Persia (539 B.C.).

There were long-range results of a healthy diet. "Daniel continued to be the king's personal servant until the 1st year that Cyrus was king" (Dan. 1:21). Daniel must have been in his teen years when he was first tested. Then he lived 70 years in captivity in Babylon, plus another few years under Cyrus the Persian. Daniel lived to be almost 100 years old. If you want long physical health, keep your body healthy. Lord, I take the Daniel pledge, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} I will be healthy. I will not eat or drink anything that will tear down my body. I will be healthy for Your glory. Amen.

Daniel 2

King Nebuchadnezzar's Dream

1In Nebuchadnezzar's second year, one night he had dreams and he couldn't go back to sleep. 2So he asked his magicians, enchanters, sorcerers (who supposedly made contact with spirits), and astrologers to tell what he dreamed. 3He told them he had a troubling dream and he wanted to know its meaning. {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} 4They said, "Tell us your dream, and we'll interpret it." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 5The king said, "If you don't tell me my dream and interpret it, I'll cut you into pieces and turn your houses into rubble. 6But if you tell it to me and explain what it means, I'll give you many gifts and honors." 7Again they said, "You're asking the impossible. How can we interpret it if you don't tell us what you dreamed?" 8The king said, "You are stalling for time. 9If you don't tell me the dream, you'll be killed, as I said. You plan to tell me lies, hoping I'll change my mind. But if you tell me the dream, then I'll know you can interpret it." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

10The astrologer replied, "No one can tell you what you dreamed. That's impossible. No king has ever asked a magician, enchanter, or astrologer to do such a thing. 11That's a difficult thing to do. Only the gods could do that, and they aren't available to us." {221 Hidden Answers-Prayer, Rom. 11:33-36} 12This made the king so angry that he ordered all his wise men to be executed. 13So men were sent to find and kill all the wise men, including Daniel and his three friends. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

14When Arioch, commander of the king's guard, went to execute all the wise men, Daniel spoke tactfully to him, 15and said, "Why such a harsh order?" After Arioch explained the situation, 16Daniel went to the king and asked that the execution be delayed so he would have time to know the king's dream. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}

17Daniel went home and explained to his friends what happened, 18and he asked them to ask the God of heaven for mercy and to tell the dream and its meaning so they wouldn't be executed. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Have you ever noticed how God chooses the young and calls them to serve Him? David was probably under 20 years when he was chosen to interpret the dream. God chose to use Daniel in his teen years because Daniel chose God. "Daniel purposed in his heart" (Dan. 1:8). Lord, I love it when young people choose to serve You, and I love it even more when You choose to use them. Lord, help me see potential in young believers, and may I encourage them toward greater usefulness. Amen. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

19Then in the night God revealed the mystery in a vision, 20and Daniel praised the God of heaven {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} by saying, "Praise to the LORD forever because You are wise and powerful. 21You change the times from one season to another, and You set up kings and You dethrone them. You increase wisdom and knowledge to the wise, 22revealing things hidden in the darkness. And You dwell in the light. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} 23I thank you, God of my ancestors, because You have given me wisdom and power. You answered our request, making the king's dream known to us ." {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11}

Did you see how Daniel got his three friends to pray with him about the crisis? That's a great principle, because Jesus said, "If two of you will agree concerning anything that you ask, it will be done for you by My Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). Lord, I will seek my prayer partners when I face a crisis. Amen. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10}

24Then Daniel told Arioch, "Don't execute the wise men of Babylon. Take me to the king, and I'll explain and interpret his dream." 25So Arioch hurried to the king and said, "Found! I've found one of the captives from Judah who can explain your dream." {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 26The king asked Daniel, "Is it true that you can tell me what my dream was and what it means?" 27Daniel replied, "No wise man, enchanter, magician, or fortune-teller can interpret the dream. 28Only the God in heaven who reveals secrets can do so. He has shown you what will happen in the future. I will now explain to you your dream and your vision." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}

Daniel didn't take credit for interpreting the dream. He gave God the credit. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} Nebuchadnezzar asked, "Are you able to make known to me?" (2:26). Daniel answered, "There is a God in heaven who reveals secrets" (2:28). Lord, forgive me for times when I've taken credit for Your work in my life. I am nothing without You. I now give You credit for every good thing You've done in my life. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} I pledge to take my hands off any self-praise, and give You glory for everything You do in my life. Amen.

29"While you were asleep, you dreamed about future things. God, the revealer of

mysteries, has shown you what will happen. [30]And this is not because I am wiser than anyone else, but because God wanted you to know what went through your mind. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [31]You saw a huge, bright statue, awesome in appearance. [32]The head was made of fine gold, its chest and arms were of silver, its stomach and thighs were of bronze, [33]its legs were of iron, and its feet were of iron and clay. [34]As you watched, a rock, cut out supernaturally from a {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} mountain, struck the feet of iron and clay and smashed them. [35]Then the statue collapsed and the pieces were like chaff on a threshing floor, blown away by the wind without a trace. The rock became a huge mountain that covered the earth. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[36]"Now here's the meaning of the dream. [37]To you, O king, the God of heaven has given you power and glory [38]and has made you ruler over humans and animals and birds. You are the head of gold. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [39]The kingdom after you will be inferior to yours. Then a third kingdom of bronze will rule over the earth. [40]A fourth kingdom will smash everything just as iron breaks things to pieces. And it will demolish the other three kingdoms. [41]The feet and toes, made partly of clay and partly of iron, will be a divided kingdom, [42]partly strong like iron and partly weak like clay. [43]The people will be a mixture and will not be united. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7}

[44]"In the days of those kings the God of heaven will set up a kingdom that will never be destroyed or left to others. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} It will demolish them, but it will endure. [45]This is the meaning of the rock cut out supernaturally from a mountain which will crush the iron, bronze, clay, silver, and gold to pieces. God has shown the king in this dream what will happen in the future. And you can rely on the truth of this dream and its interpretation." {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}

Daniel put himself, his God, and his faith-life on the spot when he volunteered to interpret Nebuchadnezzar's dream. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} It wasn't a leap in the dark; Daniel stepped out into the light of the God of the Hebrews. Daniel didn't know the interpretation, but he knew God could interpret the dream. You could step out into the unknown like Daniel, if you know God as intimately as Daniel. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} Lord, I don't know You as intimately as I want to know You. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} And Lord, I don't do as much by faith as I want to do. I will learn to know You intimately, how to live for You, and how to take steps of faith into the unknown. Amen.

[46]Nebuchadnezzar honored Daniel by falling down in front of him and ordering that an offering and incense be brought to him. [47]He said to Daniel, "The fact that you could reveal this secret shows that your God is the God of gods, and the LORD

of lords." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 48Then the king put Daniel in a high position of authority, gave him many gifts, and made him ruler over the province of Babylon, and chief of all the wise men. 49Also Daniel asked if Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego could be made administrators over the province of Babylon while Daniel was in the royal court. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Daniel 3

The Golden Idol

1King Nebuchadnezzar made a gold statue 90 feet tall and 9 feet wide and set it up on the Dura in the province of Babylon. 2He then invited all his officials—princes, prefects, governors, counselors, treasurers, judges, magistrates, and others—to come to the dedication of the statue. 3So as all these officials stood in front of the statue, 4a herald announced, "You people of every nation and language, 5when you hear musical instruments being played –the horn, zither, lyre, harp, pipes, and others–bow down and worship the gold statue Nebuchadnezzar has set up. 6If you don't bow down, you will immediately be thrown into a blazing furnace."

Have you ever noticed how people make idols to themselves, just like Nebuchadnezzar made a gold idol of himself, and demanded that everyone worship it? People make idols of their jobs, their achievements, their homes, or cars. Remember an idol is anything that gets between a person and God. Lord, I will not let anything or any person get between You and me. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} But sometimes I'm blind and I don't see what I don't see. If anything gets between us, show it to me and I'll remove it immediately. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} Amen.

7So as soon as these musical instruments were being played, people of every race, nation, and language bowed and worshiped the statue. {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2}

The world always has a fiery furnace for those who don't do what they command, and the furnace gets hotter if we don't deny our God or compromise as they tell us. The world's fiery furnace is not always an actual furnace. Sometimes it's a prison, or a martyr's death. But for our modern society, it's public embarrassment, or it's being passed over for a promotion, or a financial penalty. Lord, I have decided to follow You, I'll not look back, or think about turning back, or even turn back. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Lord, I'm coming. Amen.

8Some astrologers went to Nebuchadnezzar and complained about the Jews. 9They said, "Long live the king. 10You ordered that everyone is to bow down and worship the gold statue when they hear the musical instruments being played, 11and that those who don't will be thrown into a blazing furnace."

The three young men knew when they made a positive decision for God, that it might be God's will to intervene. They knew they might have to die in that furnace. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} They said, "Our God whom we serve is able to deliver us... but if not..." (Dan. 3:17-18, KJV). When the three young men refused to worship the idol, they realized they could die for their decision. Lord, I know You have the power to deliver me in times of persecution, but if not, I'm willing to die for You. "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain" (Phil. 1:21). Amen.

12"But some Jews—Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who are over the affairs of the province of Babylon—have refused to serve your gods and to worship the statue you have set up." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}
13Nebuchadnezzar was very angry when he heard this. So he ordered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to be brought to him. 14He said, "Is it true that you won't serve my gods or worship the gold statue I set up? 15I'll give you another opportunity to obey me. If you bow down and worship the statue when you hear the music, all will be okay. But if you don't, you'll be thrown immediately into a blazing furnace. Then what god can rescue you?" {133 Emergency-Prayer, Ps. 91:3-4} 16Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego replied, "We don't need to defend ourselves. If you toss us into the blazing furnace, 17the God we serve can rescue us. 18But if He doesn't we'll still never serve your gods or worship the gold statue you set up." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}
19Nebuchadnezzar was so mad at them that his face was distorted with rage. He had the furnace heated seven times hotter than usual, 20and he ordered some of his strongest soldiers to tie up the three Jews and throw them into the blazing furnace. 21So these three, fully clothed, were tied up and tossed into the furnace. 22The fire was so hot that the flames killed the soldiers, 23and the three Jews fell into the blazing furnace. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
24Nebuchadnezzar jumped up in amazement. He asked his advisers, "Weren't three men tied up and thrown into the fire?" They said, "Yes, O king." 25He said, "But look. Four men are unbound, walking around in the furnace. And the fourth looks like a divine being." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

When Nebuchadnezzar looked into the fire, he expected to see three burned corpses, but he exclaimed, "Lo, I see four men loose... and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God" (3: 25, KJV). Nebuchadnezzar saw a Christophany, that is, an Old Testament appearance of Christ. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} Isn't it good to know when God doesn't deliver you from fire, He will be with you in the furnace? {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} Lord, I know I will be tried for my faith and I know there are probably some fiery furnaces in my future. I know You can deliver me so I don't have to go into the furnace. But if not, I know You will be with me in the fire and You may get me out

alive, too. I'll come out victorious on the other side. I may come out in death; that will be even more glorious. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} *Amen.*

26He then went to the opening of the furnace, and shouted, "Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, servants of the Most High God, come out and come over here." So they came out of the fire, and the king's officials crowded around them. 27The officials saw that the fire hadn't hurt the bodies of the three. And their hair was not singed, their clothes weren't scorched, and they didn't even smell of smoke. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}
28Nebuchadnezzar said, "Praise to the God of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego. He sent His angel to rescue His servants. They trusted in Him and were willing to die rather than serve or worship any god except their own God. 29Therefore if any person of any race, nation, or language says anything against the 3 men's God, they'll be cut in pieces and their houses turned into rubble. Obviously no other God can rescue like this." {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 30Then the king promoted Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego to higher positions in the province of Babylon. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12}

Daniel 4

The Second Dream of Nebuchadnezzar

1King Nebuchadnezzar sent this message to the people of every race, nation, and language in his empire: "I wish you well. 2I'm pleased to tell you about the miracles the Most High God has done for me. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 3His signs are great, and His wonders are powerful. His kingdom will last forever, and His rule will last for generations.
4"One night when I was in my palace, contented and prosperous, 5I had a dream and visions that frightened me. 6So I ordered all the wise men to come and tell me what my dream means. 7When the magicians, enchanters, astrologers, and future-tellers came, I told them the dream, but they didn't know what it meant. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 8Then Daniel came and I told him the dream. He was called Belteshazzar after my god and the spirit of the God that is in him.
9"Belteshazzar, chief magician, I know that the spirit of the gods is in you, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and that you can solve great mysteries. Tell me what my dream last night means. 10While I was lying bed I saw a huge tree in the middle of the earth. 11It grew very tall and strong. It was so tall that everyone could see it. 12It had lots of leaves and fruit for everyone. Wild animals lived in its shade, birds made nests in its branches, and everyone was fed from it. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}
13"Then in my dream I saw a messenger, a divine being, coming down from heaven. 14He shouted, 'Cut down the tree, lop off its branches, shake off the leaves, and scatter its fruit. Chase away the animals and birds. 15But leave the stump and its roots in the ground, bound with a band of iron

and bronze. Let him be drenched with dew, and have him live with the animals. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 16Let him be like an animal instead of a human for seven years. 17Heavenly messengers have decreed that the Most High is sovereign over the world's kingdoms and gives those kingdoms to anyone He chooses including even the least qualified.' {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 18That was my dream. Now what does it mean? None of my wise men can interpret it, but I'm sure you can, because the spirit of the gods is in you." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

19At first Daniel (also called Belteshazzar) was puzzled and alarmed. The king said, "Don't let the dream or its meaning upset you." Daniel said, "I wish the dream applied only to your enemies. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 20You saw a huge and strong tree that everyone can see. 21It had lots of leaves and fruit and was a shelter for animals and birds. 22You are that tree. You are strong and great, and your greatness everyone can see, and your rule is to the ends of the earth.

23"You saw a messenger, a divine being, coming down from heaven and saying, 'Cut down the tree, but leave the stump, with a band of iron and bronze while it remains in the ground. Let him be drenched with dew, and have him live like wild animals for seven years.'" {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 24This is what the dream means, and what the Most High has said will happen to you. 25You'll be removed from people and will live with wild animals, and you'll eat grass like a cow, and be drenched with dew. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} After living like this for seven years, you'll realize that the Most High is over all the world's kingdoms and gives them to anyone He chooses. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 26But why leave the stump of the tree with it? This means that you'll receive your kingdom back again when you've admitted that heaven rules. 27Therefore, O king, stop sinning and do what is right and be kind to oppressed people. Then you will be well again." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

28All these things happened to Nebuchadnezzar, just as Daniel said. 29A year later as he was walking on the flat roof of his palace in Babylon, the king said, 30"I have built this great city of Babylon and my palace, by my own power and to express my royal authority." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 31As he was still saying these words, he heard a voice from heaven saying, "Your royal authority will be taken from you. 32You'll be removed from people, and you'll live with wild animals, and you'll eat grass like a cow. You'll be like this for seven years until you realize that the Most High is over all the world's kingdoms and that He gives them to anyone He chooses." {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11}

33Immediately these things happened. Nebuchadnezzar was removed from people, and he ate grass like a cow. His body was wet with dew, and his hair grew like an eagle's feathers and his nails grew like bird's claws.

There is an eternal struggle in the hearts of all people over who will control their lives. Everyone wants to be a king. Will they let God control their lives, or will their ego sit on the thrones of their lives? Who will be glorified with your life? Will God get the glory over all you say and do, or will you glorify yourself? {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} The problem in this chapter is that Nebuchadnezzar had conquered more territory than anyone else before him. No one could defeat him, and no nation could defend itself against him. Yet God demonstrated that He is greater than Nebuchadnezzar. Lord, I realize Your absolute power; You can do anything You want. I realize Your absolute sovereignty; You are supreme. Forgive me when I've exalted myself for selfish reasons; I realize You have given me all I have, I praise You for giving me what You want me to have. Not I, but Christ. You must increase, I must decrease. Amen.

34"After the seven years, I, Nebuchadnezzar looked up to heaven, and I was no longer insane. Then I praised and worshiped the Most High, who lives forever. I said, 'His rule is forever, and His kingdom will last for generations. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 35People are nothing compared to Him. He does as He pleases in heaven and on earth. No one can challenge Him by asking, 'What are You doing?' {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

36"When I was no longer insane, God restored my honor and glory and my kingdom. My advisers and officials looked up to me again, and I was restored as head of my kingdom and with greater honor than before. 37Now I praise and exalt and glorify the King of heaven, because He always does what is just and true, and He can humble those who are proud." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Perhaps Nebuchadnezzar was converted after this humbling incident. He recognized that the LORD is the "Most High God." He recognized that "God gave me back my great honor and power as king" (4:36). God won the battle and Nebuchadnezzar became a worshiper of the Lord of heaven. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} Lord, will I see Nebuchadnezzar in heaven? If I do, Nebuchadnezzar won't be the greatest ruler there. It will be Jesus Christ, the King of the Ages, and the King of Kings. Amen. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

Daniel 5

The Handwriting on the Wall

1In the year 539 B.C. King Belshazzar gave a great festival for a thousand of his nobles and they all drank wine together. 2He gave orders to bring in the gold and silver cups that his predecessor Nebuchadnezzar had taken from the temple in Jerusalem. Belshazzar wanted him and his nobles to drink wine from them. 3So the cups were brought in, and Belshazzar and his nobles, his wives, and his concubines drank from them, and 4as they did so, they praised their gods made of gold, silver,

bronze, iron, wood, and stone. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16}

There had been other drunken festivals that were not judged by God. There were probably many other sins that didn't destroy the Babylonian kingdom. The thing that angered God was that "they brought the gold vessels that had been taken from the temple of the house of God which had been in Jerusalem; and... drank from them" (5:3). What sacrilege! What blasphemy! It's almost as if Belshazzar wanted to defy God. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} Lord, I will be careful never to blaspheme Your name or any sacred thing. I will never defy You, I fear Your anger and judgment. Lord, be merciful to me in my ignorance and blindness. Amen.

5 Suddenly they saw the fingers of a human
hand writing on the plaster wall near a
lampstand. The king watched as the hand
6 wrote, and his face turned pale and he was
so terrified his knees knocked together
and his legs were so weak he couldn't
stand. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}
7 Belshazzar called in the enchanters, astrol-
ogers, and future-tellers, and he said to
them, "Whoever can read this writing and
can tell me what it means will be clothed
in purple, the color of kings, and will have
a gold chain around his neck, and he'll
be the third ruler in the kingdom, after
Nebuchadnezzar and Nabonidus. {159
False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} 8 The king's
wise men couldn't read the writing or
explain what it meant. {48 Blinded-Prayer,
James 4:2-3} 9 So king Belshazzar grew
more afraid and his face grew more pale.
Also his nobles were mentally shattered.
10 When the queen mother heard what was
happening, she went to the banquet hall,
and she said, "O king, may you live forever.
Don't be alarmed. And don't look so pale.
11 A man in your kingdom has the spirit of
the gods in him. {377 Presence of God-
Prayer, Ps. 16:11} In your father's days this
young man had great insight, intelligence,
and wisdom. In fact Nebuchadnezzar
made him chief of the magicians, enchant-
ers, astrologers, and future-tellers. 12 Daniel
has a sharp mind and has a lot of knowl-
edge, and he can interpret dreams, explain
riddles, and solve difficult problems. {382
Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} He
can tell you the meaning of the writing."
13 So when Daniel was brought to the king,
the king asked, "Are you Daniel, one of
the captives my predecessor brought here
from Judah? 14 I've heard that the spirit
of the gods is in you, and that you have
intelligence and unusual wisdom. 15 My
wise men and enchanters couldn't read
this writing on the wall or tell me what
it means. 16 I've heard that you can inter-
pret things like this {450 Spiritual-Insight
Prayer, Ps. 119:18} and can solve difficult
problems. If you can read and explain this
wording, I'll clothe you in royal purple
robes and place a gold chain around your
neck, and make you the third highest ruler
in my kingdom."
17 Daniel answered, "No need to give me
any gifts or rewards. Give them to someone
else. But I'll read and explain the words
on the wall. {466 Supernatural-Praying,

Acts 15:18} 18The Most High God gave your predecessor Nebuchadnezzar sovereignty, majesty, glory, and honor. 19People of every race, nationality, and language feared him. He killed those he wanted to kill and kept alive those he wanted to live. He promoted those he wanted to promote, and demoted those he wanted to put down. 20But when he became filled with pride, God took from him his throne and his majesty. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 21He was removed from being with people and he had the mind of an animal. He lived with wild donkeys and ate grass like a cow, and his body was drenched with dew. Then he realized that the Most High God rules over the world's kingdoms and appoints anyone He wants to rule over them. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

22"You, his successor, O Belshazzar, have not humbled yourself before God, though you knew all this. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 23You have defied the Lord of heaven {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} by drinking from the cups brought from the temple. You and your nobles and wives and concubines all drank wine from them as you praised the gods of silver, gold, bronze, iron, wood, and stone, idols that can't see or hear or know anything. You have not honored the God who gives you life and controls your future. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 24Therefore He sent the hand that wrote on the wall. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 25This is the message: *Mene, Mene, Tekel, Parsin*. 26These words mean this: '*Mene*' means 'Numbered'—'God has numbered the days of your reign and brought it to an end.' 27'*Tekel*' means 'Weighed'—'You have been weighed on the balances and you have been found lacking.' 28'*Parsin*' means 'Divided'—'Your kingdom will soon be divided and given to the Medes and Persians.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

29Then Belshazzar had Daniel clothed in a royal purple robe and placed a gold chain around his neck, and made him the third highest ruler in the kingdom. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} 30That very night Belshazzar, the Babylonian king, was killed, {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} 31and Darius the Mede ruled over Babylon, starting at age 62. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

The reaction of God was swift in two ways. {169 Fleece-Prayer, Judg. 6:36-40} First God sent a message, "The same hour" (5:5). Talk about a way to kill a party. A man's hand began writing on the wall. Then the second reaction by God was that the Babylonian kingdom fell in one night. It was October 12, 529 B.C., when the Medes and Persians took the city of Babylon in one night. Sometimes the siege of a city as big as Babylon would last several years, but God's reaction was swift. Lord, teach me the principle of instantaneous obedience. Because You sometimes punish instantaneously, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} I will obey quickly. When I'm slow to obey, have mercy. Sometimes I don't know better because I'm

blind. Show grace and teach me what to do. I will do it as quickly as possible. Amen.

Daniel 6

Daniel Is Thrown into the Lion's Den

[1]Darius the Mede divided the kingdom into 120 provinces with a governor over each province. [2]He also chose Daniel and two others to supervise the governors and to watch out for the king's interests. [3]Daniel was more capable than all the other 122 leaders, and so Darius planned to put him over the whole kingdom. [4]The 120 governors didn't like this idea so they tried to find some fault in the way Daniel handled his government affairs. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} But they couldn't find anything wrong, because he was faithful and always responsible.

There is much jealousy in the work place. People who are ruled by their sin natures will hate you because of your ethnic background, language, your education or lack of it and because of your work ethic or walk with God. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} There seem to be several reasons why the co-presidents "sought to find some charge against Daniel" (6:4). Lord, I can't help how fellow workers respond to me, but I am responsible how I react to them. I will love them for Christ, and like Daniel; I will pray for them and I will be faithful to You, as was Daniel. Amen. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[5]They said, "The only way we can accuse Daniel is in connection with his religion." {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Daniel was always faithful to God in every situation. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} He was faithful when first taken captive as a teenager, and later as an elderly statesman. Daniel was faithful to God whether his king was Nebuchadnezzar or Belshazzar, and whether he was ruled by Babylon or Medo-Persia. Lord, I pledge myself to You to always be faithful. Even like Daniel, I will be faithful to death. I will be faithful to You because You have been faithful to me. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24, KJV). Amen.

[6]So the 122 went as a group to the king and said, "O King Darius, may you live forever. [7]We princes and advisers and others have agreed that anyone who prays to any god or man in the next month except to you should be thrown to the lions. [8]So we suggest you issue an order that can't be changed like a law of the Medes and Persians. [9]So King Darius signed the law. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18}

[10]Daniel heard that the law had been signed. But he kept on praying as usual in his upstairs room {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} with its windows opened toward Jerusalem. He prayed on his knees

three times every day just as he had always done. [11]The officials went to Daniel's house and found him praying. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} [12]So they went to the king and reminded him that if anyone prayed to any god or man except to him, that person would be thrown to the lions. The king said, "Yes, the order still stands, as part of the laws of the Medes and Persians, which can't be withdrawn." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [13]Then they said, "Daniel, one of the captives from Judah, has ignored your order. He still prays three times a day. [14]This upset the king because he wanted to rescue Daniel. He spent the rest of the day trying to find a way to get Daniel out of this situation. {222 Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer)} [15]In the evening the men went again as a group to Darius and said, "Remember that the laws of the Medes and Persians can't be changed."
[16]So the king gave the order and Daniel was thrown into the lion's den. Darius said to him, "I hope the God you serve will rescue you." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [17]A stone was placed over the opening to the den, and the king sealed it with his royal seal and the seals of his officials, so that no one could rescue Daniel. [18]Darius ate no supper and had no evening entertainment, and that night he couldn't sleep. {144 Esther Fast and Prayer, Est. 4:16}

We see a remarkable fact in this story. An unsaved pagan king is concerned about Daniel and spends the night fasting for Daniel. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} Lord, may I have such a deep influence on the unsaved around me that they would seek You as their Lord. Amen.

[19]Early in the morning the king got up and ran to the den. [20]He called anxiously to Daniel, "Daniel, servant of the living God, has your God whom you worship been able to rescue you from the lions?" {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [21]Daniel answered, "O king, may you live forever. [22]God sent an angel who shut the lions' mouths so that they couldn't hurt me. I'm innocent, having done you no wrong." {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}

Did you see in the story that God sent an angel to shut the lions' mouths? {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} How did the angel do it? Did the angel take away the lions' hunger? Did the angel put up an invisible fence that the lions couldn't cross? Did the angel constrain the hungry lions to not eat? Whatever way, God used an angel as an instrument to save Daniel. Lord, I claim the protection of Ps. 91:11, "You, Lord, will give Your angels charge over me, to keep me safe in all my ways" (ELT). Amen.

[23]The king ordered that Daniel be lifted out of the den. Not a scratch was on him because he had trusted in his God. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [24]Then the king gave orders to throw into the den the men who had falsely accused Daniel, along with their wives and children. The lions

jumped on them and killed them before they even reached the floor of the den. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

The world has a slogan, "Don't get mad, get even." That was not Daniel's way. Daniel was a man of prayer, and we too must pray, that is, pray for protection and pray for those who persecute us. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} Jesus said, "Love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:27-28). {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} Why? "For in doing so you will heap coals of fire on his head" (Rom. 12:20). Don't try to get even. God keeps score. Let God punish them as God punished the king's cabinet who conspired against Daniel. Remember, God can hit back harder than you. Lord, I will keep my spirit sweet, and I will not return evil for evil. When someone criticizes me, I will not retaliate, but I will pray for him to get saved. I will bless my opponents. Lord, send angels to protect me. Amen.

25Then Darius wrote to all the people, races, and languages in his kingdom: "May all of you enjoy peace and success. 26I now issue an order that in every part of my kingdom people must fear and reverence the God of Israel. He is the living and eternal God. His kingdom will never be destroyed and His reign will never end. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 27He rescues and He performs amazing miracles in the heavens and on earth. And he has rescued Daniel from the lions." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 28Daniel prospered during the reign of Darius and on into the reign of Cyrus, the Persian. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

Daniel 7

Daniel's Dream about the Four Animals

1In the first year of Belshazzar's reign in Babylon (553 B.C.) Daniel had a dream and saw visions as he was lying on his bed. He wrote down the dream. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} 2He said, "In my vision I saw a wind storm stirring up the Mediterranean Sea, with strong winds blowing from all four directions. 3Four huge beasts each one different from the others, came out of the water.

4"The first beast was like a lion with eagles' wings. As I watched, its wings were plucked off, and it was standing on its back feet like a human.

5"Then the second beast I saw looked like a bear. It was raised on one side and had three ribs in its mouth between its teeth. I heard a voice saying, 'Get up, and devour many people.'

6"A third beast looked like a leopard. It had four wings like those of a bird on its back, and it had four heads. It had great authority to rule.

7"The fourth beast I saw was frightening and powerful. With large iron teeth it crushed and devoured its victims and stomped on whatever was left. It was

unlike the other three beasts. And it had 10 horns. 8Suddenly another small horn appeared, and it tore out three of the 10 horns, roots and all. This small horn had human-like eyes and it spoke boastful words. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

9"As I watched, thrones were put in place, and the Ancient One, the LORD, sat down to judge. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} His clothing was white like snow, and his hair was white like wool. His throne was aflame with wheels ablaze, 10and a fiery river was flowing from Him. Millions of angels served Him. The court session began, and books were opened." {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

Here is a picture of God the Judge who will judge the world at the end of this age. He is seen having a fiery river flowing from Him (7:10). Lord, Your judgment in the future at the end of the age will be vicious and complete. But then the judgment of sin by the death of Jesus Christ was vicious and complete. Lord, because You have judged my sins in Christ, I will not be punished by the future coming judgment. Thank You for Your grace. Amen. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

11"I continued to watch because of the little horn's boastful talking. Then the fourth beast was killed, and his body was burned. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12Authority was taken from the other three beasts, but they continue to live a little longer. 13Then I saw someone who looked like a man, coming in the clouds. He approached the Ancient One and was led into His presence. 14He received authority, honor, and royal power over all the world's nations. People of every race, nationality, and language worshiped Him. His rule will be forever; it will never be destroyed. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

15"I was troubled by what I had seen, and my visions bothered me. 16So I asked one of the angels standing by the throne what this all meant. {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} He gave me this explanation: 17'These four large beasts represent four kingdoms. 18But in the end the saints of the Most High will be given the kingdom and they will rule forever.'{18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

19"Then I asked about the fourth beast, which differed from the other three and was so fierce-looking. It devoured its victims with its iron teeth and bronze claws, and stomped on whatever was left. 20I also asked about the 10 horns on the fourth beast and the little horn that appeared later and destroyed three of the other horns. This was the horn that looked worse than the 10 and that had human-like eyes and spoke boasting words. 21This little horn was fighting against the saints and was winning. 22But then the Ancient of Days judged in favor of the saints of the Most High. Then the saints possessed the kingdom. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

23"Then he said to me, 'This fourth beast is the fourth power that will rule the world.

It will differ from the other three, devouring the world and trampling it down. [24]Its 10 horns are 10 kings that will rule that empire. Then another king, different from the 10, will destroy three of the 10. [25]He will speak against the Most High, make life hard for the saints, and try to change the Jewish festivals and laws. And they will be under the little horn's control for three and a half years. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[26]"'Then the court will decide the case, and take away his power and destroy him completely. [27]Then the power and greatness of all the kingdoms in the world will be given to the saints of the Most High. They will rule forever, and all rulers will worship and obey him.' {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [28]That concludes the dream and its interpretation. I was frightened by all of this and my face was pale with fear. But I didn't share this with anyone." {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Daniel 8

Daniel's Vision of the Ram and the Goat

[1]In Belshazzar's third year of his reign (551 B.C.) I saw another vision similar to the one with four beasts. [2]In my dream I was at the fortress of Susa, standing beside the Ulai River. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [3]I saw a ram with two long horns standing beside the river. One of the horns was longer than the other horn though it began to grow later than the shorter one. [4]The ram charged against everyone to the west, the north, and the south. No one could stop it and no one could help its victims. It did as it pleased, and it became great. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

[5]Suddenly a male goat appeared from the west. It was going so fast its feet didn't touch the ground. This goat had a big horn between its eyes, [6]and it was going toward the two-horned ram that was standing beside the Ulai River. The goat charged at the ram in anger. [7]He hit the ram so hard that he broke off the ram's two horns, and the ram was helpless. The goat knocked him down and trampled on it.

[8]The goat became very powerful, but at the peak of his power its large horn was broken off. In its place grew four big horns pointing to the north, east, south, and west. [9]From one of these four came a small horn with great power. It moved toward the south and east and toward the wonderful land of Israel. [10]It was so powerful it even attacked the angels, and threw some of them on the ground and trampled on them. [11]He even opposed the Commander of the angels by doing away with daily sacrifices and destroying the temple. [12]But some angels wanted to destroy him, but they were kept from doing so. But the temple ceremonies were not carried out properly. The horn succeeded in everything it did, and yet truth was not upheld. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[13]Then a saint asked another, "How long will these events last? How long will the daily sacrifices be withheld and how long will the rebellion continue that causes things to be desolate? And how long will

the temple and the angels be trampled on?" [14]The other answered, "It will take 1,150 days counting the morning and evening sacrifices, and then the temple will be restored." {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}

[15]As I was trying to understand this vision, someone who looked like a human suddenly appeared in front of me. [16]Then a voice near the Ulai River said, "Gabriel, tell this man the meaning of his vision." [17]As Gabriel approached me, I was terrified and I fell to the ground. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} He said, "Son of man, the events you saw relate to future times." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [18]I went into a deep sleep and then he touched me and helped me get up. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} [19]Then Gabriel said, "I'm here to tell you what will happen in the time of wrath. Your vision pertains to future times. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [20]The ram with two horns represents the kings of Media and Persia, [21]and the male goat represents the king of Greece. The large horn between its eyes represents the first king of the Greek Empire. [22]The four large horns on the goat represent four sections of the empire with four beings, but not one of them will be as great as the first king of Greece. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

[23]"At the end of their rule a fierce king, a master of deception, will come to power. [24]He'll be very strong, but not by his own power. He'll cause a lot of destruction and he'll succeed in whatever he does. He'll put down powerful men and devastate many saints. [25]He'll be very deceitful and think of himself as better than anyone else. When they think they are safe, he'll destroy them. And he'll even stand against the Prince of princes. He'll be destroyed, but not by a human. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[26]This vision about the 1,150 days is true. But these things won't happen for a long time, so don't tell anyone about them yet." {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4}

[27]I was exhausted, and I was sick for several days. Then I got up and carried on with my work for the king. But I continued to be troubled by the vision because I couldn't fully understand it. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2}

Daniel didn't understand what he saw, heard, or even wrote down. At the end he wrote, "I was very disturbed about the vision. I did not understand what it meant" (8:27). An important principle is that "The New Testament reveals what the Old Testament conceals." We learn about God's coming kingdom on earth and His final judgment in the pages of the New Testament. Lord, I will study Your Word to understand as much as I can. Sometimes I don't get it the first time I read a passage, but I know there is something there, because usually I see it later on. The more I understand Christ, the more I understand the Old Testament. Amen. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

Daniel 9

Daniel Prays for Israel

[1]Darius the Mede, son of Xerxes, became king of the Babylonians in 539 B.C. [2]In that year as I was reading the prophecies of Jerusalem, I learned that Jerusalem was to be desolate for 70 years. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [3]I pleaded with the Lord God in prayer and fasting; and I wore burlap clothing and sprinkled ashes on my head. {98 Daniel Fast and Prayer, Dan. 1:8}

Daniel read what Jeremiah wrote and believed it. Daniel read that Israel would be enslaved to the Babylonians for 70 years. Daniel realized the 70 years were over, so he began praying for the Lord to take him and his people back to the Promised Land. Lord, I will believe what You promise, and I will claim Your promises in prayer, just as did Daniel. Amen. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13}

[4]I prayed to the LORD my God and confessed: "O Lord, you are a great and awesome God. You keep Your agreement of unfailing love to those who love You and obey You. [5]Our people have sinned and done wrong by rebelling against You and ignoring Your commands and regulations. [6]We have not listened to Your servants the prophets who represented You in giving Your messages to our kings, princes, ancestors, and all our people. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6}

[7]"Lord, You are righteous, and we are ashamed. This is true of all of us, including our people in Judah and Jerusalem and all Israel, and those who are in distant lands, wherever You scattered them because of our being unfaithful to You. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [8]O LORD, we and our kings, princes, and ancestors are ashamed because we've sinned against You. [9]But You, the Lord our God, are merciful and forgiving, even though we have rebelled against You. [10]We've disobeyed You, the LORD our God, and we've not followed the laws You gave us through Your servants, the prophets. [11]In fact every one of us has disobeyed your law and turned from You, refusing to obey You. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

"Therefore the punishments written in the law of Moses, Your servant, have been poured out on us because of our sin." {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6}

There is a principle of "identificational repentance." {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} ***That*** *means we identify with the sins committed by our forefathers, and confess them to God. God doesn't forgive their personal sins because we confess their sins. No, each person is responsible to God for his own sin. But we identify with their sins because the consequences of their sin affects us. We confess their sins so the consequences (the curses) of their sins are removed and we don't have to suffer them. Daniel is in captivity because of his people's sins, so he confesses their sins to God so he can*

return to the Promised Land. Lord, forgive the sins of America, and don't judge us. Be merciful to America and hold back Your hand of judgment. Send revival to America and bring my nation back to You. Amen.

12"You have done exactly what You warned us and our rulers about. No disaster has ever matched what You did to Jerusalem. 13The disaster on Jerusalem has come about just as it is written in the law of Moses. Yet we have not asked for Your favor by turning away from our sins and attending to the truth. 14You have brought on us the disaster You planned, because You are righteous in everything. And yet we did not obey You. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

15"O Lord our God, You brought honor to Yourself by rescuing Your people from Egypt with great power. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} But we have sinned and done wrong. 16O Lord, in view of Your righteous deeds, please turn Your anger away from Jerusalem, Your city, Your holy hill. Because of our sins and the sins of our ancestors, other nations ridicule us. {232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6} 17Our God, please hear Your servant's prayer. For Your reputation, Lord, look with favor on Your desolate temple. 18O my God, please listen to my prayer {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} and see the desolate condition of the city that bears Your name. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} I'm not asking these requests because we deserve help, but because You are so merciful. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 19O Lord, please hear my request, and O Lord, please forgive us. O Lord, please hear and act. For Your sake, O my God, please do not delay; because Your people and Your city bear Your name." {511 Urgent-Prayer, Luke 11:1-11}

20I kept on praying, confusing my sins and the sins of my people Israel, pleading with the LORD my God for Jerusalem, His holy hill. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 21As I was praying, Gabriel, the angel I saw in an earlier vision came to me swiftly about midafternoon, the time of the evening sacrifice. 22He said, "Daniel, I've come to give you insight and understanding. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 23As you began to pray, I received an answer, and I've come to tell you because God thinks highly of you. So here is the meaning of the vision. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

24"A period of seventy 'sevens' has been decreed for Your people and Your holy city. In that time transgressions will be ended, sin will be done away with, guilt will be atoned for, eternal righteousness will be brought in, prophetic visions will be confirmed, and the temple will be anointed." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

This is the closest we come to actually predicting the time Jesus Christ would come on earth the first time. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} The vision says it begins when the command is given to rebuild the walls. The vision says 69 weeks. (A week means the number 7. So 69 x 7 =

483 years till Messiah comes, that is, until Jesus comes.) Lord, I see this truth because I believe Your Word. This is an amazing prediction. It all comes in answer to Daniel's prayer when he asked You, "When?" Thank You for the answer. Amen.

25"Listen and you'll understand. Sixty-nine sets of sevens will pass from the decree to rebuild Jerusalem until the Anointed One comes. Jerusalem will be rebuilt with streets and strong defenses, though these will be perilous times. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}
26"After this 69 sets of 'sevens' the Anointed One will be killed and will be left with nothing. Then a ruler will arise and his armies will destroy Jerusalem and the temple. The end will come rushing in like a flood, and wars and desolate times will continue from them to the end. 27He'll make a treaty with Israel for one set of seven, but after half that time he'll stop the sacrifices and offerings. Then he'll set up a repulsive object in the wing of the temple that will cause desolation. Then the end that is predicted for him will occur." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Daniel 10

Daniel's Vision of a Man

1In the third year of Cyrus, king of Persia (536 B.C.) a message was given to Daniel, also known as Belteshazzar. The message pertained to events that will happen in the future, in times of great wars. 2Daniel wrote, "For three weeks I mourned in sorrow. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 3I ate no rich food or meat and drank no wine and I put no olive oil on my body." {98 Daniel Fast and Prayer, Dan. 1:8}

For three weeks, Daniel was on a limited fast. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} He didn't eat "fancy foods" like desserts or "chef-type" meals. He ate only vegetables. Today, this is called a Daniel Fast. (See The Daniel Fast For Spiritual Breakthrough, by Elmer L. Towns, 2010 www.elmertowns.com.) Daniel was fasting because he was sad. We might want to follow this limited fast when praying seriously about grave matters. Lord, when I need to concentrate on intercession, I will fast and pray. I will hunger and thirst after righteousness, so I can "feed" on Your Word. Amen.

4"On the 24th day of the first month, as I was standing on the bank of the Tigris River, 5I saw a man dressed in linen and wearing a solid gold belt. 6His body was like a green mineral, his face bright like lightning, his arms red like flaming torches, his arms and legs like polished bronze, and his voice like the shouting of many people. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12}
7"Though the people with me didn't see the man, they were so frightened that they ran and hid. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} 8So as I was alone, watching this vision; I felt very weak, and my face turned pale. 9Then at the sound of his voice I fell face down in a deep sleep. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}

10"He raised me up to my hands and knees, {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} 11and said, 'Daniel, God values you highly, and He has sent me to you. Stand up and listen carefully to my words.' So I stood up, still trembling with fear. 12Then he said, 'Don't be afraid, Daniel. From the day you asked for understanding, God in heaven heard you, and I have been sent in answer to your prayer. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} 13But the demon over the Persian Empire blocked my way for three weeks. Then one of God's chief angels came to help me. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 14Now I'll explain what will happen to your people, the Jews, in the future. This vision concerns a time yet future.'"

Many times satan or demons oppose us, and we don't even know it. Too often we accept defeat as part of life. Only those who live close to God realize what's happening. Did Daniel know what was happening to him? Not until he was told. Lord, I believe "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Lord, protect me even when I don't realize I'm in trouble. When there is evil, give me wisdom to know what's happening and how I should react. Give me this wisdom only if You think I need it. Amen. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

15While Michael was speaking, I looked at the ground, unable to say a word. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} 16Then one who looked like a man touched my lips, and I said, "This vision has frightened me, and I am very weak. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 17How can I, your servant, talk to you, my lord, when I am so weak and can hardly breathe."

Spiritual warfare takes all our energy away. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} Daniel said, "As for me, no strength remains in me now, nor is any breath left in me" (10:17). Lord, give me strength as I need it. I claim Your promise, "As the day demands, so shall thy strength be" (Deut. 33:25). Teach me to get strength from You so that "I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13). Amen.

18 He touched me again and said, 19"Don't be afraid. God thinks highly of you. Calm yourself, take heart, and be strong." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} As he spoke these words, I felt stronger and I said, "Please speak, my lord, for you have made me feel strong." {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27}

20He replied, "Do you now see why I have come? I must leave soon to fight the demon of the Persian Empire, and after that to fight the demon of the Greek Empire. 21But first I'll tell you what is written in the Book of Truth. (No one is here to help me against these two demons, except Michael, who guards the nation Israel.)" {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7}

Daniel 11

The Future after Darius

1"Also I have been protecting and helping Darius the Mede in his first year as king."

This is one of the most difficult chapters in Scripture to understand. It deals intricately with people and places in the Near East. I cannot understand it without help. Lord, help me to understand what is difficult. Help me to act on what is plain to know. Amen. *{450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}*

2"What I am about to tell you will certainly happen. Three more kings will rule over Persia. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} Then a fourth one, who will be very wealthy, will use his wealth to turn everyone against the Greek Empire.
3"Then a strong king will come to power and will do whatever he pleases. 4But suddenly, at the height of his power his kingdom will break apart and will scatter in four directions—north, south, east, and west. The kingdom will not be ruled by any of his descendants, nor will the kingdom be as powerful as it once was.
5"The king of the South will become strong, but one of his own officials will become even more powerful. 6Years later they'll become allies, and the daughter of the king of the South will marry the king of the North. But she'll lose her power and she, her husband, and her supporters will be killed. 7Later one of her relatives will become ruler of the southern kingdom. He'll enter the fortress of the king of the North and defeat him. 8He'll take their idols, metal images, and valuable articles of gold and silver to Egypt. Then he'll not bother the king of the North for a long time. 9Years later the king of the North will invade the southern kingdom, but he'll go back to his own country. 10The sons of the king of the North will gather a great army, will sweep down like a flood, reaching the fortress of the king of the South. 11This will make the king of the South angry, and he'll defeat the king of the North. 12This will make the king of the South proud, 13but the king of the North will gather an even larger army than he had before, but he'll be defeated.
14"Many will rise against the king of the South, but the forces of the king of the South will be defeated. 15Then the king of the North will capture a fortified city. The best troops of the South won't be able to stand against this onslaught. 16The invader will do as he pleases, including even capturing the Holy Land. 17He'll try to make peace by giving the king of the South a bride from the northern kingdom, but this plan won't work. 18Then he'll defeat some coastal cities, but a military commander will defeat him and he'll lose his pride. 19He'll go back to his own country but will be defeated and will never be seen again.
20"The next king of the North will try to collect taxes to advance the glory of his kingdom. But in a few years he'll be dead, but not in battle or because of someone's anger. 21The next king of the North will be a scoundrel, who didn't come from a royal line. He'll take over the kingdom by flattery and deceit. 22He'll destroy armies including a priest. 23He'll make a treaty but he'll break it. 24He'll invade a wealthy province, something his ancestors never did. Then he'll share with his followers the wealth of the rich.

25"He'll gather a large army and attack
the king of the South, but the king of the
South won't be able to defeat the king of
the North. Even though he'll have an army
much larger, he'll be destroyed 26by men
in the royal court and most of his soldiers
will be killed.
27"The two kings will meet at a conference
table, and lie to each other. But their plans
will not succeed because God has already
decided what will happen. 28The king of
the North will go home with great trea-
sures. On the way he'll oppose the people
of the holy covenant.
29"At God's appointed time the king of
the North will invade the southern king-
dom again, but this time it'll be different.
30Warships from the west will come to
attack him, and he'll be discouraged and
will return home. On the way he'll take
out his anger on God's people of the holy
covenant and he'll reward those who turn
from the covenant. 31He'll send troops into
the temple to pollute it and to do away
with the daily sacrifices. Then he'll set up a
repulsive object that will cause desolation.
32He'll flatter those who are unfaithful to
God and influence them to side with him,
but the people who are faithful to God
will resist the king.
33"Those who are wise will teach many
people, though many of them will die by
the sword or be burned alive, and others
will be robbed and jailed. 34They'll receive
a little help, but many of them will not be
honest. 35Some of the wise people will suf-
fer, but this will result in their being pure
and spotless until the end, which is yet to
come.
36"This king will do as he pleases. He'll
claim to be greater than any God, {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} even blas-
pheming the true God. He'll be success-
ful until God is no longer angry with His
people." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty,
Gen. 45:5}

We see many characteristics of the antichrist in this passage. (1) He will exalt himself (11:36), (2) he will reject God (11:37), (3) he is a strong, self-willed man (11:36), (4) he will desecrate the temple in Jerusalem (11:31; Matt. 24:15), (5) he shall be a persuasive speaker (11:36), (6) he knows a strange god (satan) (11:38-39), (7) he has hatred toward the Jews (11:41). Lord, keep me from the Spirit of the antichrist (1 John 2:18); I will worship my LORD and Savior, Jesus Christ. Amen. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

37"He'll reject the gods of his ancestors
and the god desired by women. He'll
reject all gods, 38and he'll worship only
the so-called god of fortresses, whom his
ancestors never knew. He'll give it gold,
silver, precious stones, and other expensive
items. 39With the help of this so-called
god, he'll capture many fortresses. And
he'll honor people who worship the idol,
and he'll give them positions of authority
and wealth and land.
40"At the time of the end the king of the
South will attack the king of the North.
But the king of the North will respond by
attacking him with chariots, cavalry, and
a navy. He'll invade many nations, going

against them like a flood, [41]including the Holy Land. But Moab, Edom, and Ammon will escape. [42]Egypt is one of the many countries that will not escape. [43]The king of the North will take Egypt's great treasures of gold and silver, and he'll conquer Libya and Ethiopia. [44]He'll be disturbed by news from the east and the north, and he'll set out in anger to destroy many. [45]Then he'll set up his royal tents between the Mediterranean Sea and Mount Zion. His time will come to an end, and no one can help him." {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

Daniel 12

The End of Days

[1]"At that time Michael, the great angel who protects your people, will come at a time of suffering {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} greater than any since nations came into existence. But every one of your people whose name is written in the Book will be rescued." {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14}

You can have confidence in your relationship with God {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} because, "Everyone whose name is written in God's book will be saved" (12:1). Lord, You don't terrorize Your followers, neither do You threaten to excommunicate them. Rather, Lord, Your followers have great confidence. "This is our confidence that we have in Him" (1 John 5:14). Lord, I rest in the assurance of my salvation, and I will not give away my confidence for fear of doubt. Amen.

[2]"Many whose bodies are dead and buried will rise from the dead, some to everlasting life {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} and others to eternal shame and dishonor. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]Those who are wise will shine as bright as the sky, and those who show others how to live uprightly will shine like the stars forever." {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30}

God promises David will be raised in the resurrection, "Many people who have died will live again, some of them will wake up to have eternal life. But some will wake up to find shame and disgrace forever" (12:2). Lord, my body shall sleep in death until the resurrection, then it will awake to eternal joy with You. Amen.

[4]"But you, Daniel, seal up this book until the end times. Many people will go everywhere, searching for the knowledge in it." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

[5]Then I, Daniel, saw two angels, one on this side of the Tigris River and one on the other side. [6]One of them said to the man clothed in linen, who was standing above the river, "How long will it be before these shocking things will happen?" {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24}

[7]The man clothed in linen, who was above the river, lifted his hands toward heaven and said, "In the name of God who lives

forever, I state that it will all happen in three and a half years. When the suffering of God's people comes to an end, then all these things will have happened." {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17}
[8]I heard his answer, but I didn't understand. So I said, "How will all this finally end?" {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [9]He replied, "Don't continue to be concerned about this, Daniel, because the message is sealed up until the end times. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [10]Many people will have their lives made pure and clean, but the wicked will continue to be wicked. The wicked won't understand any of this, but the wise will understand. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[11]"From the time the daily sacrifices are stopped and the repulsive object that results in desolation is set up, there will be 1,290 days. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [12]God will bless those who reach the end of the 1,335 days. [13]And so Daniel, be faithful until the end. You will rest, and then at the end of time you will rise from the dead and receive your reward." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Daniel is promised death and that he will not return to the Promised Land, for which he prayed. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} He was told he will die, "You, go your way till the end; for you shall rest, and will arise to your inheritance at the end of the days" (12:13). The Lord has promised all of us will die, "It is appointed unto men once to die" (Heb. 9:27). But we have the promise of Jesus, "I will come again and receive you to Myself" (John 14:3). Lord, I put my future in Your hands. I know I must die, and I'm not good with pain, so "I want to die well," as John Wesley said. But maybe, Lord, I'll live until the rapture. "Even so, come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Amen. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Hosea

Ch 1: Hosea's Wife and Children 1238
Ch 2: Unfaithful Gomer-Unfaithful Israel 1239
Ch 3: Hosea Accepts His Unfaithful Wife Again 1240
Ch 4: LORD Blames Israel 1241
Ch 5: LORD Judges Israel 1242
Ch 6: Return to the Lord 1243
Ch 7: Israel Rebels 1243
Ch 8: Israel Continues to Sin 1244
Ch 9: Hosea Announces the Punishment of Israel 1245
Ch 10: The Coming Judgment 1246
Ch 11: LORD Still Loves His People 1247
Ch 12: The Nation of Israel Is a Liar 1248
Ch 13: LORD Is Very Angry with Israel 1249
Ch 14: Hosea Pleads with Israel to Change 1250

HOSEA

Key Words: *Not my people* (Hosea 1:9)

Key Verse: "For ye are not my people, and I will not be your God" (1:9).

Theme: Hosea is told to marry a woman with a predisposition to adultery as a picture of Israel who has a predisposition to worship false gods. God established a "covenant of love" with the Jews when He led them out of Egypt. But Israel constantly worshiped the idols and gods of the surrounding nations. The rough language of Hosea 2:2-7 is a picture of the Lord's disgust at Israel's spiritual adultery. In Israel, the penalty of adultery was death (Lev. 20:10), so when God tells Hosea to receive back his wife, it's a picture of the grace of God to receive back Israel who rejected Him. Then Israel will say, "Thou art my God" (2:23).

In Hosea you'll learn that the Lord is a demanding God who punishes our unfaithfulness to Him, but He has another side. God is long-suffering to you and will forgive and receive you. Pray that you will be protected from backsliding, but also pray for forgiveness when you sin, "the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). *Lord, forgive me of all my sin—ignorant sin, and otherwise—cleanse me by the blood of Jesus Christ, Your Son. Amen.*

Hosea 1

Hosea's Wife and Children

1 I'm Hosea son of Beeri. The LORD gave me these messages when Uzziah, Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were kings of Judah and Jeroboam, son of Jehoash, was king of Israel. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
2 The LORD said to me, "Hosea, Israel has been unfaithful to Me. So go marry a prostitute and have children by her." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 3 So I married Gomer, daughter of Diblaim, and she became pregnant and bore a son. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} 4 The LORD told me to name the boy Jezreel. He said this because the descendants of King Jehu had murdered people in Jezreel. 5 In fact God said that in Jezreel he would break Israel's power. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
6 Gomer became pregnant again and gave birth to a daughter. The LORD told me to name her Lo-Ruhamah, which means "Not-Loved," because He said He would no longer

show love to the Israelites or forgive them.
7"But," the LORD said, "I'll show love to the people of Judah. I'll deliver them, but not by the sword or bows or cavalry. Only I will save them." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
8Gomer became pregnant again and had a second son. 9The LORD said, "Name him Lo-Ammi, which means 'Not My people,' because Israel is not My people, and I'm not their God." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, this story is difficult to understand, but You deal with people in difficult situations. You accept people where You find them, and lift them to where they should be. Do that with me; lift me up to where I should stand for You. Amen.

10"However, the time will come when Israel will become a great nation and its people will be as numerous as the sand on the seashore. They are now called 'Not My People,' but in the future they'll be called, 'You Are Children of the Living God.'
11Israel and Judah will be united under one leader and they'll return back to their land. This will be a great day for Jezreel." {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Lord, make me sensitive to You every time I open the Bible to read Your Word. Because You speak, I will answer. Because You reveal Yourself, I will learn. Because You direct, I will obey. Amen.

Hosea 2

Unfaithful Gomer–Unfaithful Israel

1"You'll call your brothers Ammi (meaning 'My People'), and you'll call your sisters Ruhammah (meaning 'The Ones I Love').
2"Tell Israel she is no longer My wife and I'm no longer her husband. Tell her to remove her suggestive clothing and quit being a prostitute. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 3If she doesn't I'll strip her naked as she was on the day she was born. I'll let her die of thirst and be like a dry desert. 4I'll not love her children, because they are not My own. They were conceived in adultery. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 5Their mother was a prostitute and she said, 'I'll run after my lovers and sell myself to them for food, water, wool, linen, and olive oil.' {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
6"I, the LORD, will block her with thorn bushes so that she can't find her way.
7She'll chase after her lovers but won't catch them. She'll look for them but not find them. Then she'll think, 'I may as well go back to my husband. I was better off with him than I am now.' {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 8She didn't realize that I was the one who gave her grain, new wine, olive oil, and even gold and silver she used in worshiping Baal.
9"So I'll now hold back the harvest wine and grain, and I'll take back the wool and linen clothing I gave her, 10and I'll strip her naked while her lovers look on. No one will be able to rescue her. 11Also I'll stop all her celebrations, including her new moon festivals, Sabbath days, and other

festivals. 12She said her vines and fig trees were her lovers' payment for sex. But I'll ruin those vineyards and fig trees; they'll become weeds, and wild animals will eat them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 13I'll punish her for all the times she burned incense to Baal, and wore jewelry and earrings to attract her lovers. I, the LORD have spoken these words." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

14"I'll win you back again by leading you into the desert and speaking tenderly to you. 15I'll give back your vineyards to you, and I'll change Trouble Valley into Valley of Hope. You'll respond to Me as you did long ago when I rescued you from Egypt. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 16From then on you'll call me your husband, not your master. 17I'll no longer let you even mention the names of the Baals. 18I'll encourage the animals, birds, and creatures that move on the ground not to harm you. And I'll remove all weapons of warfare from the land so you can live in peace. {45 Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 19You'll be My wife forever, and I'll show you justice, fairness, love, and compassion. 20I'll be faithful to you. Then you'll know Me as your LORD. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

21"In that day I'll tell the sky to send rain on the earth. {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 22The earth will answer the cries of the grain, grapes, and olive oil for rain. And they'll sing together 'Jezreel' (meaning 'God Plants'). 23I'll plant you, Israel, for Myself in the land, and I'll show love to those I called 'Lo-Ruhamah' (meaning 'Not My Loved One'). And I'll say to those I called 'Lo-Ammi' (meaning 'Not My People'), you are now My people. And they'll say, 'You are my God.'" {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, once I was a stranger to grace; I followed my selfish ways and rebelled against Your laws. Thank You for the Holy Spirit who convicted me of sin, and thank You for forgiveness that comes through the cross of Christ. Now I am Your child and I belong to You. I submit to Your plan for my life. Work Your perfect will in my life. Amen.

Hosea 3

Hosea Accepts His Unfaithful Wife Again

1Then the LORD said to me, "Go love your wife again even though she was an adulteress. This will show that I love Israel, even though they worship idols and enjoy the cakes made with raisins." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 2So I bought her back for 15 pieces of silver and 10 bushels of grain and some wine. 3I said to her, "You are to remain in my house and be faithful to me and not have sex with anyone including me." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

4This illustrates that for a long time the Israelites will be without a king or prince, and without sacrifices at the temple, and any way of getting guidance from God. 5But later Israel will turn back to the LORD and David their king. They'll come to the LORD with fear and trembling,

and He'll be good to them. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

The prophet predicts five things about Israel, "The children of Israel shall abide many days without a (1) king... (2) prince... (3) sacrifice... (4) priestly vest... (5) teraphim" (3:4, KJV). This prophecy has been remarkably fulfilled in Israel since the time of Christ (that is, A.D. 70). Israel has retained her identity, "shall abide many days" (3:4) but without a king, or kingly succession, sacrifices, or temple. Lord, I believe You are not finished with Israel, but will fulfill Your promises to restore her to prominence and they shall occupy the Holy Land in peace. Because You will keep Your promise to a nation, I know You will keep Your promises to me. I'm waiting in faith. Amen.

Hosea 4

LORD Blames Israel

1 You Israelites, listen to the LORD's Word
as He files a lawsuit against you with
these charges: "You are not faithful to the
LORD, and you do not show kindness,
and you have no knowledge of God. 2 You
swear, lie, kill, steal, and commit adultery.
Violence is everywhere and one murder
follows after another. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 3 This is why your land is
a desert and everyone is dying, including
people, wild animals, birds, and fish.
4 "Don't try to blame someone else. You
priests are at fault. 5 You and your prophets
will stumble in daylight. 6 And you Israel
are being destroyed because you don't
know Me. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} Your priests are to blame
because you refuse to obey Me. So now
I refuse to recognize you as My priests.
Because you've forgotten My laws, I won't
bless your children. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} 7 By adding more
priests you increased your sin against Me.
They exchanged their high position for the
disgrace of idols.
8 "The priests like it when the people
bring sin offerings to them because then
the priests can eat. 9 Since the priests are
wicked, so are the people. That explains
the saying, 'Like priests, like people.' 10 The
priests will eat, but they'll still be hungry.
And though the people are prostitutes,
they won't have children. That's because
they have rebelled against Me and been
unfaithful to Me.
11 "You drink wine and so you can't think
straight! 12 How stupid that you are asking a piece of wood to tell you what to do.
Do you think the way a stick falls can tell
you the future? How foolish! Wanting sex
at pagan shrines has caused you to serve
other gods and to desert God. 13 You offer
sacrifices to idols in hilltop shrines, and
you burn incense to your gods in the shade
of oak, poplar, and other trees.
"Your daughters and daughters-in-law
became prostitutes. 14 But I won't punish
them because you men are sinning with
harlots and shrine prostitutes. You are so
foolish! And so you will come to ruin.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
15 "Israel, though you are a prostitute, don't
influence Judah in that direction. Stop

worshiping idols at Gilgal and don't go to Beth-Aven (which means 'House of Wickedness'). {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 16Your worship is not genuine as you take oaths in like a heifer, so much so that I can't put you out to pasture like lambs. 17Israel, forget about your idols. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18You men get drunk and then sleep with prostitutes, and you love your shameful ways. 19A whirlwind will sweep you away, and you'll die in shame." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, by Your holiness You should destroy me and all Your people because we are not perfect. We fall short in so many areas. Forgive us. Look on us in mercy, not judgment. When You see our sins, look on the cross of Christ who died for our sins. Thank You for Your love and acceptance in Christ. Amen.

Hosea 5

LORD Judges Israel

1"You priests, leaders of Israel, and members of the royal family, listen to these words that are for you. You trapped My people with idols at Mizpah and Tabor, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 2and you dug a deep pit to trap them. 3I know all about you, Israel; you can't hide from Me. By turning to prostitution, you have become spiritually corrupt. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 4You can't return to Me because of your sinful deeds. You are so given over to prostitution that you can't know Me.

5"Your arrogance works against you, and you'll stumble in your sin, and so will Judah. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6When you come with your flocks and herds to offer sacrifices to Me, it'll be too late. You won't find Me because I've turned from you. 7You've been unfaithful to Me, giving birth to illegitimate children. So at the new moon festivals, you and your wealth will disappear. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1}

8"Blow the trumpet in Gibeah and in Ramah. Raise the battle cry in Beth-Aven. Lead into battle, you soldiers from Benjamin. 9When I punish you, you'll be a pile of rubble. 10Judah's leaders are as sinful as people who move boundary stones to extend their territory. Because of this I'll pour out My wrath on them like a waterfall. 11I'll oppress and trample you, Israel, in judgment because you insist on worshiping idols. 12I'll destroy you, Israel, the way moths ruin wool, and Judah, I'll destroy you like dry rot ruins wood. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

13"When Israel and Judah saw how weak they were, Israel turned to Assyria's great king. But he couldn't cure them. 14Israel and Judah, I'll be like a lion, tearing them to pieces and carrying them off and no one will be able to rescue them. 15Then I'll leave them alone and go back to Jerusalem until they admit their guilt and look to Me for help from their misery." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

Lord, teach me to properly pray. When my prayers are not answered, teach me why. Correct me when I pray for the wrong thing. Correct me when I don't properly intercede. And when I have sin in my life, convict me of my sin so I can repent. Forgive me for any hidden sin, or if I sin presumptuously (Ps. 19:13). Thank You for Your patience and grace. Amen. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3}

Hosea 6

Return to the Lord

1 Let's return to the LORD. He has torn us
to pieces, but He can heal us and bandage
our wounds. {399 Repentance-Prayer,
Matt. 3:2, 8} 2 He'll restore our strength so
we can live in His presence. {377 Presence
of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 3 Let's do our
best to know Him, and He'll respond to us
as surely as the dawn will come each morn-
ing and rain will come in early spring. {450
Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, I'm parched and thirsty, so come rain on me. I have some "mercy drops" falling on me, but I want a refreshing shower. I'm stagnant, I want the showers that awaken and grow fruit in my life. Lord, I'm waiting for rain. Amen. {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

4 "Israel and Judah, what shall I do with
you? Your love for Me vanishes like the
morning mist or dew. 5 That's why I sent
My prophets to cut you to pieces and to
slaughter you with My words. My judg-
ments on you were as sharp as lightning.
6 I'd rather you show mercy than offer Me
sacrifices. And I'd rather you know Me
than bring Me burnt offerings. {268 Judg-
mental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
7 "Like Adam, you betrayed Me by break-
ing our agreement. 8 Everyone in Gilead
is wicked, and your hands are covered
with the blood of your victims. 9 Gilead's
people are robbers, lying in ambush for
their victims. Your priests are robbers in
ambush, murdering travelers on the way
to Shechem, and they practice every kind
of sin. 10 What a terrible thing I've seen
in Israel. My people have defiled them-
selves by worshiping false gods. 11 Judah,
your time of punishment is coming, but I
wanted so much to bless you." {383 Prom-
ise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14}

Lord, You punish Your people to correct them so they will live righteously. I will learn from Your discipline, I will live as holy as I can in my sinful flesh. Amen. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

Hosea 7

Israel Rebels

1 "I wanted to heal you, Israel, but your sins
were too great. Everyone in Samaria is a
liar, a thief, or a bandit. 2 You don't seem to
realize I'm watching you." {268 Judgmen-
tal-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

O Lord, I wish I were perfect, but I am "prone to wander." When I give into my fleshly passion, I feel the temptation of sin. Forgive me for paying attention to my fleshly passion. Cleanse me by the blood (1 John 1:7). Create a clean heart within. Amen. {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

3"Your king and princes are glad to know about your sins. 4You are all adulterers, burning with desire like a hot oven, whose fire smolders in the night and in the morning flames like a raging fire. 5-6On royal holidays, your princes get drunk, and the king makes a fool of himself as he drinks with those who make fun of him. 7You killed your kings, and no one calls for help. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3}
8"You Israelites associate with foreigners who are as worthless as a small cake cooked on only one side." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, I don't want to be a cake half-baked. Give me balance in all things. May I balance prayer with outward service. May I balance inward love with outward worship. Amen. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

9"Worshiping foreign gods has sapped your strength, and you don't seem to realize it. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} You are like an old man with graying hair who is weak. 10Your pride has kept you from returning to Me your God. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
11"Also you Israelites have become like a senseless bird, going first to Egypt and then flying to Assyria. 12But I'll catch you in a net, and I'll punish you for your sinful ways. 13How terrible it will be for you, My people, who have rejected Me. Because you rebelled, you deserve to die. I wanted to rescue you, but you told Me lies. 14You don't pray to Me with sincere hearts. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} Instead you sit on your couches and wail. And you cut yourselves as you ask Baal and other false gods to give you good crops. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
15"I taught you and made you strong, but now you plot against Me. 16You look everywhere for help except to Me, the Most High God in heaven. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} You are no more useful than a crooked bow that misses its target. Your leaders will die because they insulted Me, and the Egyptians will laugh at you." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Hosea 8

Israel Continues to Sin

1"Sound the alarm. The enemy descends like a vulture on My people, because they've broken our agreement and ignored My laws. 2Israel, you asked that I help you. {324 Non-Answer to Prayer, Ps. 18:41} 3But it's too late. Your enemies will chase you because you rejected everything that is good. 4You chose kings and princes but you didn't check with Me. You made idols from silver and gold and that has led to

your downfall. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [5]Samaria, I'll have nothing to do with this calf-idol you made; I'm so angry with you. Will you never be innocent again? [6]Some human hands made this calf. I certainly didn't. Therefore it must be smashed to pieces. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
[7]"You've sown the wind, and so you'll reap the whirlwind. The stalks of wheat wither and produce no grain. If you do harvest some grain, enemies will steal it and eat it."

Lord, forgive every sin I've ever done, and forgive my thoughts of sin that never become acts. Please don't judge me for any of my sins, Christ took my punishment. I will sow seeds of love, joy, peace, patience, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and self-control (Gal. 5:22-23). Amen. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

[8]"Israel you are ruined. You are useless as a broken pot. [9]Like a wild donkey looking for a mate, you've gone to Assyria. In fact you've sold yourself to many lovers. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [10]But yet I'll gather you together, and then you'll suffer under the burden of the great king.
[11]"You built many altars for sin offerings, but they are altars of sin. [12]I wrote out My many laws, but you said they weren't for you. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} [13]You eat the meat of your own sacrifices, but they mean nothing to Me. I'll remember your sins and punish you. Then you'll go again to Egypt. [14]You've forgotten Me, your Creator. You built palaces and great fortified cities. But now I'll send fire on your cities and burn your fortresses." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I will remember You when I arise in the morning because You created sleep to give me enjoyable rest. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} I will remember You when I work because You have given me strength to do my task in life. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} I will remember You when I sit down to eat because You bring food out of the earth to strengthen me. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} I will remember You all day for each day that I live. But most of all, I'll remember You as my Maker. Amen. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:12}

Hosea 9

Hosea Announces the Punishment of Israel

[1]"Don't rejoice as others do, for you've been unfaithful to Me and you've been like a prostitute, earning wages at every threshing floor. [2]Your harvests won't give you enough food to feed your people, and you won't have enough grapes for wine. [3]I won't let you stay here in the land. You'll be taken to Egypt and Assyria where you'll eat ceremonially unclean food. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [4]You won't pour out wine offerings to Me, and I won't be pleased with your sacrifices. They'll be polluted like the food eaten by

mourners. You may eat this food to feed yourselves, but you may not offer it to Me.
5"What will you do on your festivals?
6Even if you escape alive from Assyria, Egypt will conquer you and you'll be burned in Memphis. Your silver treasure will be covered with weeds, and thorns will grow in your tents. 7Your time of punishment has arrived. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} You'll get what you deserve, and you will know it. You say the prophets are fools and God's messengers are crazy, and this is because your sins are so many and you're filled with hatred. 8The prophets are My watchmen, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} but you set traps for them and you hate them even in My temple. 9You are as bad as what they did in Gibeah years ago. God won't forget; He'll punish you for your sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
10"When I found you, loving you was like finding grapes in the desert. When I saw your ancestors, it was like seeing first ripe figs. But then you deserted Me for Baal-Peor, giving yourselves to that awful idol. Soon you became as vile as that god.
11Your glory will fly away like a bird. And your children will die at birth, or die in the womb, or not even be conceived. 12Even if your children do survive, I'll take them from you. How terrible it will be when I turn from you. 13Israel, you like Tyre, are in a pleasant location. But you'll lead your children to be slaughtered." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
14LORD, give them wombs that don't give birth and breasts that give no milk. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
15"I hated you at Gilgal because of your sin there. So I'll no longer love you because your leaders are rebels." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, this verse scares me, for I'm not perfect; I have ignorant sin in my life. Don't ever stop loving me. I claim Your promise, "He retaineth not His anger forever" (Mic. 7:18). I claim Jesus my High Priest "who ever liveth to make intercession for me" (Heb. 7:25, ELT). I claim life because You promised "he shall live forever" (John 6:51). Amen. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1}

16"Like a plant you, Israel, are blighted, your roots are withered, and you bear no fruit. If they bear children, I'll slay them.
17I'll reject you because you've disobeyed Me, and you'll roam from one nation to another." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Hosea 10

The Coming Judgment

1"How prosperous you are, Israel. You are like a vine loaded with grapes. But as you grew more grapes, you built more altars to foreign gods. And as you prospered, you built more idols."

Lord, I will live for You first, then for my family, and then friends, next for the poor, and finally for my nation. Forgive me of my selfish obsession with my pleasure, or my belongings, or my ambition. May I find

joy in living for others. Amen. {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4}

2"You're deceitful, so you must now be destroyed. I'll break down your foreign altars and smash your sacred stones. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 3You'll say, 'We don't have a king because we don't reverence You. But so what? What could a king do for us?' 4You make promises you don't intend to keep. So justice is like poisonous weeds in the fields.

5"You people in Samaria are concerned about the calf-idol at Beth-Aven. People and priests mourn over it because its glory has been stripped away. 6When you are taken as captives to Assyria, your idol will be carried there. But then people will laugh at you for worshiping this idol. 7Your king will disappear like a chip of wood in a stream. 8The pagan shrines at Bethel (which means "House of God") will be destroyed. Thorns will grow over those altars, and you'll beg the mountains and hills to fall on you. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

9"Israel, since that time in Gibeah, you've never stopped sinning. 10I'll punish you by bringing nations against you. 11You were like a trained heifer threshing grain. But now I'll put a yoke on your neck, and you and Judah must plow the hard ground." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, serving You is easy, like the heifer treading in the grain mill. But serving sin is hard and agonizing. I will serve You joyfully for the joy it gives me. Amen.

12"Plant seeds of justice and you'll harvest My love. Now is the time for you to seek Me so I can shower righteousness on you. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 13But you've planted evil and harvested deception. You have depended on your own strength and on armies to keep you safe. 14But now war will break out, and your fortifications will fall just as they did when Shalman destroyed Beth-Arbel. Mothers and their children were beaten to death against rocks. 15Bethel, this will be your fate too because of your great sin. When that day comes, your king will be destroyed." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Hosea 11

LORD Still Loves His People

1"Israel, when you were a child, I loved you as a father loves his son. And I called you out of Egypt." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

God says of Israel, "I... called My son out of Egypt" (11:1). It's a picture of God delivering the nation of Israel from Egypt. But these words are quoted by Matthew and applied to Jesus (Matt. 2:15), because there are 3 similarities. First, both Jesus and Israel were objects of the Father's love. Second, both were called "My son" because Jesus was eternally begotten (Ps. 2:7, John 3:16) and Israel was generated by the Father's promise (Gen. 12:2-3). Third, both were in Egypt. Jesus as a

refugee from the tyranny of Herod, and Israel held in slavery by Pharaoh. Lord, thank You for prophecy given here that was fulfilled in the baby Jesus. I know everything about Jesus is true because what was predicted about Him was fulfilled accurately. I praise You for working all things together for good. Amen.

2"But the more I called you, the more
you rebelled, and you kept on sacrificing
to Baal and burning incense to idols. 3I
taught you how to walk, leading you by
the hand. But you ignored Me. 4I led you
with kindness and love. I lifted the yoke
from your neck so you could eat. I bent
down to feed you. {292 Love-Abounding
Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
5"But since you refused to listen to Me,
you'll go back to Egypt and Assyria will
rule over you. 6War will enter your cities,
and your enemies will break through your
gates. 7You are determined to reject Me.
You call Me the Most High, but I won't
honor you. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8}
8"Israel, I can't give you up. I can't destroy
you as I destroyed Admah and Zeboiim.
My heart goes out to you. 9I won't destroy
you in My fierce anger, all because I'm
God and not some human. I'm the Holy
One, so I won't demolish you. {292
Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
10"When I roar like a lion, you'll come
trembling from the west. 11You'll come
from Egypt like a flock of birds and from
Assyria like doves. I'll bring you home
again and settle you in your homes," says
the LORD. 12"You, Israel, tell Me lies and
are deceitful, and you, Judah, reject Me,
the faithful Holy One." {135 End-Times
Prayer, Rev. 22:20}

Hosea 12

The Nation of Israel Is a Liar

1"You people of Israel chase the wind and
feed on the whirlwind all day long. You're
filled with lies and violence; you've made a
treaty with Assyria, and you've sent gifts to
Egypt." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa.
59:1, 2}

Lord, I recommit myself to You this day, to do Your will today. I will feed on Your Word and I will fellowship with You in prayer. I will not feed on the wind, for I get nothing from the world, the flesh, and the devil. Amen. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

2"Now I'm bringing a lawsuit against
Judah, and I'll punish you for your sins.
{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
3Before you were born, you struggled with
your brother Esau in the womb; and when
you became a man, you fought against Me.
4At Bethel you wrestled with an angel and
won. Weeping, you begged the angel to
give you a blessing. {160 Family-Heritage
Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 5There at Bethel you
met Me—the LORD God Almighty—
face to face—The LORD is My name. 6So
return to Me, show love and justice, and
always wait patiently for Me. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
7"Israel, your merchants cheat by using
dishonest weighing scales. 8You boast, 'I'm

very rich, and I've gotten all this wealth by myself. I didn't get it by sinning.' {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [9]I'm the LORD your God who rescued you from Egypt. You'll live in tents again, as you do every year in the Festival of Shelters. [10]By visions and parables My prophets have warned you of My coming judgment. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[11]"Gilead is wicked and worthless. And in Gilgal people sacrifice bulls on altars that are like stones lined up in a field. [12]Jacob, you went to Syria to get a wife by tending sheep. [13]Then I used Moses, a prophet, to rescue Israel from Egypt and to care for them. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [14]You people of Israel have angered Me, so I'll now make you pay for your sins." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Hosea 13

LORD Is Very Angry with Israel

[1]"It used to be that when your leaders spoke, every one of you in Israel shook with fear and respect. But then you sinned by worshiping Baal, and this sealed your doom."

Lord, remind me that compromise with sin will lead to spiritual weakness, and when I add one sin to another sin, I will weaken myself so much that I can't stand. Lord, strengthen me by Your standards, as I take my stand for righteousness. Amen. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}

[2]"But now you keep on sinning by using silver to make idols that are skillfully designed by craftsmen in the shape of calves. You offer humans as sacrifices, and you kiss these idols shaped like calves. [3]Therefore you'll vanish like the morning mist and early dew, and you'll disappear like chaff blowing away from a threshing floor and like smoke from a chimney. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[4]"I'm the LORD your God, who rescued you from Egypt. I'm the only God you know and the only one who can take care of you. [5]I cared for you in the dry, hot desert [6]When you had eaten and were full, then in your pride you forgot Me. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [7]So I'll attack you like a lion and like a leopard watching for you on the roadside. [8]And I'll rip you to pieces like a bear robbed of her cubs. I'll devour you like a lion.

[9]"Because you are against Me, your Helper, I'll destroy you. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [10]You wanted a king and rulers. So now where is your king and your leaders? [11]In My anger I gave you kings, and then I removed them.

[12]"Israel, I've kept a record of your sins. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [13]You're like a child who refuses to be born when it's time. [14]Yet I'll free you from death and the grave. One day, O Death and the Grave, I'll destroy you and I'll show no mercy."

Lord, I trust Your Word and I know one day I'll be raised to stand with Jesus before You, the Father. I rest on Your promise. Amen.

15"The tribe of Ephraim prospered more
than the other tribes. But I'll send from
the desert an east wind that'll dry up the
land. 16Your springs and wells will disap-
pear, and your treasures will be looted, all
because you rebelled against Me. You'll
be killed in war. Children will be dashed
to death against the ground, and preg-
nant women will be ripped open." {235
Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Hosea 14

Hosea Pleads with Israel to Change

1"Israel, return to Me," your LORD. "Your
sins have caused you to fall. 2When you
return to Me, say, 'Please forgive our sins
and receive us back so we can praise You.
{399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I will worship You with my lips, for they speak what is in my heart. Nothing I could give You would be greater than to give You my heart. Amen. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

3"'We now admit that Assyria can't save
us. We'll never again worship idols we've
made and call them our gods. Only You
show mercy to orphans.' {361 Praise for
Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}
4"Israel, I'll cure you of your idolatry, and
My love for you will know no limits, for
My anger is gone. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer,
2 Cor. 2:10} 5I'll refresh you like dew from
heaven. Then you'll blossom like lilies, and
your roots will go deep like cedars in Leba-
non. 6Your branches will spread out like an
olive tree and be as fragrant as the cedars
of Lebanon.
7"You'll return from captivity, and people
will enjoy your shade and they'll grow like
grain. You'll blossom like a well-watered
vineyard and be as well-known as the wine
from Lebanon. {135 End-Times Prayer,
Rev. 22:20} 8O Israel, stay away from idols.
I'll take care of you. I'll be to you like an
evergreen tree, giving you fruit all year
long. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10}
9If you are wise, you'll know what I mean
and if you are discerning, listen carefully.
My paths are true and right. If you're righ-
teous, you'll follow My paths. But sinners
stumble and fall." {449 Spiritual-Growth
Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

Lord, I love You and I understand what You say about sin; but more importantly, I will show my love by obeying Your words. Thank You for giving me spiritual insight. Amen. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Joel

Ch 1: The Threat of Locusts 1253
Ch 2: The Day of the LORD Is Near 1254
Ch 3: The LORD Will Judge the Nations 1256

JOEL

Key Words: *The Day of the LORD* (Joel 1:15)

Key Verse: "Whosoever shall call on the name of the LORD shall be delivered" (2:32).

Theme: Joel predicts a coming locust-judgment from God on the nation because of her sins against God calling it "The day of the LORD." The plague and drought will be so devastating that the nation cannot sacrifice offerings to God. The second half of Joel (2:28-3:21) predicts the future repentance and restoration of the Jews. Joel teaches us to pray for the true meaning of revival, that is, "God pouring His presence on His people" (2:28-32) and God is safety for all who call upon Him (2:28-32). *Lord, forgive me of all my sin and restore me to Your fellowship. Pour out Your presence on me in revival. Amen.*

Joel 1

The Threat of Locusts

1 I'm Joel son of Pethuel. This is the message the LORD gave to me.
2 Listen, you leaders and everyone else in the land. Has anything like this ever happened before? 3 Tell your children about it. And have them tell your grandchildren and great-grandchildren. 4 After the cutting locusts ate crops, the swarming locusts ate what was left. Then came two other kinds of locusts. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
5 You drunkards, wake up and weep because all your grapes are gone. 6 Like locusts, a powerful nation with troops too numerous to count has invaded your land. They have teeth and jaws like a lion. 7 This army of locusts has destroyed My grapevines and fig trees, stripping off their bark and leaving the branches white. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, open my eyes to sin in my life so I can repent before judgment comes. Lord, I pray against the sin of my nation, I repent for my nation before judgment comes. Forgive us! Have mercy! *{232 Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Neh. 1:6}* ***Amen.***

8 Grieve like a young woman mourning for her fiancé who died. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 9 No grain offerings or drink offerings are available to offer in the temple

and the priests mourn. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 10The fields have no crops, and the grain, wine, and olive oil are gone. 11You farmers and vine growers, weep, because there's no wheat or barely or other crops. 12Grapevines have dried up. And so have the fig trees, pomegranates, date palms, and apple trees, so that all joy is gone. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

13You priests who serve at the altar, wear burlap clothing in your grief. Lie all night at the altar, weeping because there are no more grain offerings or drink offerings at the temple. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 14Announce a time to not eat {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and call the people together. Urge the leaders and all the people to go to the temple and pray. {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6} 15Soon destruction from Shaddai, the Almighty, will come. That will be a terrible day. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

16Our food is gone, and there's no more celebrating at the temple.

Lord, I call my own private solemn assembly (serious meeting). Show me any hidden sin or ignorant sin. Forgive me by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7-10) and don't judge me. Be merciful. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} ***Amen.***

17Seeds rot in the ground and grain crops die. Our barns are empty with no grain stored in them. 18Cattle groan with hunger for pasture and wander around, and sheep bleat because of lack of food. 19LORD, we need Your help. Heat has devoured our pastures and burned up all the trees. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 20Wild animals have no water because the streams are dried up and the pastures are burned. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, my service is not about me, but about You. I submit to You the source of my ministry. Fill me with Your power, and Your message. Guide me to the place of ministry, and give me spiritual power to accomplish what You send me to do. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} ***Amen.***

Joel 2

The Day of the LORD Is Near

1"Blow the trumpet in Zion to sound an alarm. All you people tremble because the day of My judgment is at hand. 2That day will be dark and gloomy, with black clouds overhead. A mighty army will appear like dawn spreading across the mountains. This army is powerful like no other army before or after it." {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

3Flames surround them. Before they invaded, our land was like the Garden of Eden, but now it is a desert. 4These "soldiers" look like horses, and they run like fast chariots. 5They sound like chariots as they leap over mountains. They make a terrible noise like the rumbling of chariots, or like a fire sweeping across a field to consume straw, or like an army going into battle. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4,

9} 6The sight of them is frightening. 7They climb over walls like soldiers, and they march in line, without losing rank. 8They don't push each other; they keep marching straight ahead. No weapon can stop them. 9They swarm over city walls and enter into our homes, crawling through windows like thieves. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10As they approach, the earth shakes and the heavens shake. The sun and moon grow dark, and the stars don't shine. 11The LORD leads this army with countless troops, and they follow His orders. The day of the LORD's judgment is so terrible that no one can endure it. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

12"Return to Me now," says the LORD. "Come back to Me with all your heart. Give up eating, and cry and mourn. {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6} 13Don't tear your clothes in your grief; instead come to Me with broken hearts. Return to Me {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} because I'm gracious and merciful, I don't easily get angry, and I'm full of love. I'm not anxious to punish you." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Lord, serious sin demands serious fasting and repentance. All sin is serious to You, so open my eyes to see the comprehensiveness of my sin so I will repent with all my heart. Help, Lord. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} Amen.

14"Who knows? Perhaps I'll bless you {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} so that you'll again have enough for grain offerings and drink offerings for Me, your God. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

15"Blow the trumpet in Zion. Call everyone together and show your sorrow by going without food. {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6} 16Have everyone come, including adults, children, babies, and even newlyweds. 17You priests, serving in My presence, should weep {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} between the porch and the altar and pray that I'll spare My people. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} Don't let other nations make jokes about us. Don't let them say, 'Where is their God? He must be helpless.'

18"I'm concerned about My land, and I take pity on My people. 19You prayed and I said, 'I'm sending you enough grain, new wine, and olive oil to satisfy your needs. I'll never again let the nations laugh at you. 20I'll chase the army from the north away from you, sending them into a parched desert where they'll die. Some will be driven into the Dead Sea and some into the Mediterranean Sea. The stench of the rotting corpses will be terrible. I'll do great things for you. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 21So don't be afraid, but be glad and rejoice because of these great things I'll do for you.'"

22Wild animals, you don't need to be afraid of starving because pasturelands are again becoming green, trees are bearing fruit, and fig trees and vines are covered with figs and grapes. 23You people of Zion, be glad in the LORD, He'll send you lots of rain in both the fall and spring. 24Threshing floors will be filled with grain, and the jars

will be filled with new wine and olive oil. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}
25"I, the LORD your God, will give you back the crops the locusts ate. They were like a great army I sent to you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 26Again you'll have plenty of food, and you'll praise Me, the LORD your God, {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} who has done miracles for you. You'll never be put to shame again. 27You'll know that I'm here with you {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} and that I alone am the LORD your God and there is no other god. As I said, you'll never be put to shame again. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}
28"Later I'll pour out My Spirit on everyone, {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} and your sons and daughters will prophesy. Your old men will dream dreams, and your young men will see visions. 29In those days I'll also pour out My Spirit on My servants, both men and women. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} 30I'll work wonders in the sky and on the earth. There'll be blood and fire and clouds of smoke. 31The sun will turn dark, and the moon will be red like blood before My terrible day of judgment arrives." {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

Lord, I want Your Spirit poured out on me. I will find the pitcher and stand under the spout so the oil of the Holy Spirit will pour on me. I'm here! {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} Amen.

32"I'll save everyone who calls on My name. As I said, My people on Mount Zion and in Jerusalem {417 Samuel Fast and Prayer, 1 Sam. 7:6} will escape judgment, for I've chosen some to survive." {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Joel 3

The LORD Will Judge the Nations

1"At that time I'll restore Judah's and Jerusalem's prosperity again. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 2I'll bring together the nations that scattered you, My people, and I'll bring them to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} and I'll punish them for dividing up My land. 3Those nations cast lots to see which of you would be their slaves. Also, they sold boys to pay for prostitutes and they sold girls to have money to pay for wine. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
4"You people of Tyre and Sidon and you Philistines, are you trying to get even with Me for something I've done? If so, I'll get even with you quickly. 5You've taken My silver and gold and treasures and have taken them off to your pagan temples. 6You've sold My people to the Greeks, who took them far away from their homeland. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.} 7But I'll bring them back home, and I'll do to you what you did to them. 8I'll sell your sons and daughters to Judah, who'll sell them to the Sabeans far away. I, the LORD, have spoken these words."

9"Announce to the nations: 'Prepare for war. Get the soldiers ready for the attack. 10Melt your plows into swords and make spears out of garden tools. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Let the weak say that I'm strong.'"

Lord, there is a time for war, so I will prepare for an enemy. There are also times of peace, so I will live peacefully in Your presence. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} Amen.

11All you nations, come quickly, and LORD, bring Your warriors. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 12Bring the nations' armies to the Valley of Jehoshaphat, where the LORD will judge them. 13Let the sickle do its work, for the harvest is ripe. Tread the nations like grapes in the winepress and let the vats be filled, for the nations' wickedness is great. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 14"Thousands are waiting in the valley of decision for My decisions, because the day of judgment will soon come. 15The sun and the moon will be dark, and the stars won't shine." {510 Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2}

Lord, I read in Scripture what will happen in the end times. Since I know what will happen, I am spiritually prepared. I know You as Savior, and in the end times, I will be saved. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} Amen.

16"I'll roar from Zion like a lion, and I'll thunder from Jerusalem. Then the sky and the earth will shake. But I'll be a refuge and a strong fortress for My people. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 17Then they'll know that I'm the LORD their God in Zion, My holy hill. Jerusalem will be holy, and foreign nations will never again invade her. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

18"New wine will drip from the mountain vineyards, and cattle and goats will produce lots of milk. Water will fill Judah's dry riverbeds, and a stream will flow from My temple to water Acacia Valley, east of the Dead Sea. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 19Egypt and Edom were both cruel to Judah, killing innocent people. 20Judah will be inhabited forever, and Jerusalem will endure for many generations. 21I, the LORD, will live on Mount Zion with My people, {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} and I'll forgive them of their sins." {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, I live in a time of testing where I must live triumphantly over sin. I must face threats of all types, and triumph over them. Lord, I yearn for peace and security. I yearn to live with You. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} Amen.

Amos

Ch 1: Punishing Israel's Neighbor Nations 1260
Ch 2: Moab, Judah, and Israel 1261
Ch 3: They Ignore God 1262
Ch 4: Oppression 1263
Ch 5: A Song of Grief 1264
Ch 6: Israel Will Be Destroyed 1265
Ch 7: A Vision of Locusts 1266
Ch 8: A Vision of a Basket of Summer Fruit 1267
Ch 9: Israel Cannot Escape the LORD 1268

AMOS

Key Word: *Prepare* (Amos 4:12)

Key Verse: "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel" (4:12).

Theme: Amos predicts the coming destruction of Israel, Judah and the surrounding nations. He prophesied the destruction of Jeroboam's kingdom when it was strong and prosperous, and his prediction seemed unlikely to happen. Yet 50 years later the kingdom was completely destroyed. This teaches us to claim the promises of God in prayer, even when it seems an answer may not be in sight. *Lord, I will heed Your warnings and will turn away from sin. I know You speak the truth and will punish sin. Protect me by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). Amen.*

Amos 1

Punishing Israel's Neighbor Nations

1 I'm Amos. I raised sheep near Tekoa when Uzziah was king of Judah and Jeroboam
was king of Israel. Two years before the earthquake (in 760 B.C.) the LORD
gave me several messages about Israel. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
2 I said,
"LORD, when You roared like a lion from Your temple on Mount Zion and thundered
from Jerusalem, the shepherds' pasturelands and the grass on Mount Carmel dried up and
turned brown." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
3 The LORD answered, "The people of Damascus, Syria's capital, have sinned not just
three times, but four. And so I'm angry with them. They threshed My people in Gilead
as grain is threshed with iron teeth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
4 So I'll send fire on
King Hazael's palace, and I'll destroy Ben-Hadad's fortresses.
5 I'll break the gate of your
city, and I'll destroy the king in the Valley of Aven (meaning 'Wickedness') and I'll destroy
the king in Beth-Eden. And you people of Syria will be taken back to Kir as slaves. I, the
LORD, have spoken." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
6 The LORD then said, "The people of Gaza in Philistia have sinned not just three times,
but four. And so I'm angry with them. They sold My people as slaves to Edom. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7 So I'll set fire to the walls and fortresses of Gaza.
8 I'll kill the
people of Ashdod and the ruler in Ashkelon and the people of Ekron. The few remaining
Philistines will perish. I, the Sovereign LORD, have spoken. {268 Judgmental-Praying,
Acts 5:4, 9}

9"I, the LORD, then said, 'The people of Tyre have sinned not just three times, but four. And so I'm angry with them. Like Gaza, the people of Tyre sold My people as slaves to Edom, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} breaking their treaty with Israel their brother. 10So I'll set fire to the walls and fortresses of Tyre.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

11"I, the LORD, then said, 'The people of Edom have sinned not just three times, but four. And so I'm angry with them. They chased their relatives, Israel, with the sword, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and they were fierce in their anger. 12So I'll set fire on Teman, and Bozrah's fortresses will be destroyed.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

13"'I, the LORD, said, 'The people of Ammon have sinned not just three times, but four. And so I'm angry with them. When they attacked Gilead to extend their property, they ripped open the pregnant women of Gilead. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14So I'll send fire on the walls of Rabbah, and its fortresses will be destroyed. War cries on the day of battle will be heard, and violent winds will blow. 15Her king and his officials will be taken into captivity.' I, the LORD, have spoken." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, it's not I, but Christ. You are my message to others. May I faithfully tell others what You will do for them, before I tell them of Your punishment for sin. Lord, keep reminding me that punishment begins with those closest to You. I repent of my sin, and seek forgiveness. I turn from my sin and cling to You. Amen. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

Amos 2

Moab, Judah, and Israel

1Then the LORD said, "The people of Moab have sinned not just three times, but four. And so I'm very angry with them. They burned the homes of Edom's kings. 2I'll send fire on Moab and I'll destroy the palace in Kerioth. Shouts of battle will be heard, along with the trumpet blast. 3I'll destroy Moab's ruler and his officials will go with him. I, the LORD, have spoken." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

4Then the LORD said, "Judah has sinned not just three times, but four. They have rejected My law and refused to follow My decrees. They have been led astray by the false gods their ancestors worshiped. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5So I'll send fire on Judah and burn down Jerusalem's fortresses." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

6Then the LORD said, "Israel has sinned not just three times, but four. And so I'm angry with them. They've sold honest people for money, and they sold needy people for the price of a pair of sandals. 7They take advantage of poor people, and they aren't fair to people who are oppressed and helpless. My holy name is not honored, because a man and his son sleep with the same woman. 8They lie down beside altars wearing clothing taken as security for loans. In

the temple of their god they drink wine bought with money received from fines. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
9"When you entered Canaan, I destroyed the Amorites, who were as tall as cedar trees and as strong as oak trees. I destroyed their fruit and their roots. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 10I brought you out of Egypt and led you in the desert 40 years. Then I gave you the land of the Amorites. 11Also I chose some of your sons to be prophets and others to be Nazarites. You know this is true, you people of Israel," says the LORD. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}
12"You sinned by making the Nazarites drink wine and by telling the prophets not to prophesy. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
13"So I'll crush you as a cart crushes when it is loaded with too much grain. 14Your fast soldiers will stumble as they run to escape. Your strong soldiers will lose their strength and their lives. 15Your archers will fall; fast runners won't be fast enough to get away; and horsemen won't be able to run fast enough. 16Your bravest soldiers will run away. I, the LORD, have spoken." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, You also punish those close to You. I'm close to You so I will discipline my mind so I'll not think about evil. I'll keep my heart so I'll not desire sin. I'll guard my hands and feet so I'll not take sin to myself. I desire holiness; keep me pure. Amen.

Amos 3

They Ignore God

1"You people of Israel, hear this word from Me. I rescued you from Egypt. 2I chose only you from among all the nations on the earth. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} That's why I must punish you for your sins. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
3"Two people don't walk together unless they've agreed to do so. 4And a lion doesn't roar unless it has caught a victim. And he doesn't growl in his den if it hasn't caught anything. 5A bird doesn't get caught in a trap if no bait has been set out. A trap doesn't spring shut when nothing is there to catch. 6In a similar way people aren't afraid if a trumpet doesn't signal an attack. And disaster doesn't come to a city unless I've planned it. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 7In fact I, the Sovereign LORD, do nothing without revealing My plans to My servants the prophets." {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}
8The LORD has roared like a lion, so naturally people are afraid. Since the Sovereign LORD has spoken, I'll prophesy His message. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
9Announce this to Ashdod in Philistia and to Egypt, and tell them to come to the mountains of Samaria in Israel so they can see the unrest and injustices in that city. 10"My people," the LORD says, "don't know how to do what is right. They load their fortresses with loot that has been robbed."

[11]The Sovereign LORD says, "An enemy will overrun the land and destroy your fortresses and loot your belongings. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [12]Only a few in Samaria will escape alive. Like a shepherd pulling a lamb's two leg bones or part of an ear from a lion's mouth, so I'll rescue a few people in Samaria with just parts of their beds and couches." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[13]The Lord, the LORD God Almighty, says this against Israel: [14]"When I punish Israel for her sins, I'll demolish the pagan altars at Bethel {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and even the corners of the altars will be cut off and fall to the ground. [15]I'll destroy the beautiful winter and summer homes of the wealthy. Their houses and palaces decorated with ivory will be demolished." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, I search my heart and actions for sins; I don't want to offend You. If I have hidden sins, show them to me. If I have unconfessed sins, remind me and I will repent and beg forgiveness. I fear Your punishment of sins among Your followers. I love You with all my heart, and I seek Your blessing on all I do. God, remember me in mercy. Amen. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Amos 4

Oppression

[1]"You women of Samaria are like fat cows. You abuse the poor and needy and you always ask your husbands to bring you another drink. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [2]I, the Sovereign LORD have affirmed that the time will come when you'll be taken away like fish on hooks. [3]You'll be dragged through holes in your city walls, and you'll be thrown out toward Mount Hermon. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[4]"Go ahead and sin in Bethel and Gilgal. Bring sacrifices every morning and a tenth of your crops every third day. [5]Present bread made with yeast as a thank offering. Also bring freewill offerings you can brag about. For you Israelites love to do this," says the Sovereign LORD. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

[6]"I caused food to be lacking in every town, and yet you haven't returned to Me," says the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [7]"Also three months before harvest time I hold back the rain. I let it rain on some towns but not on others, and some fields had rain, and others didn't and they dried up. [8]People staggered from one town to another for a drink of water, but there was never enough. Still you didn't come back to Me," says the LORD.

[9]"I struck your farms with blight, and locusts devoured your fig trees and olive trees. But still you didn't come back to Me," says the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]"Therefore I did terrible things to you just as I did in Egypt. Your young men died in war and their horses were slaughtered. Your camp was filled with the stench of death. But still you didn't come back to Me," says the LORD. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

11"Therefore I destroyed some of your cities, as I destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah. You who survived were like a burning stick snatched from fire. But still you didn't come back to Me," says the LORD. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 12"Therefore I'll bring on you all these calamities I've mentioned. So get ready to meet Me, your God, when I come in judgment. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13I created the mountains and the wind, and I reveal My thoughts to man. I turn dawn into darkness and I tread on mountains under My feet. I am the LORD God Almighty." {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Lord, I repent of my sin and beg Your forgiveness. Do not punish me, but look on Christ who was punished for my sin. You are powerful; strengthen me to serve You. You are high and lofty, I worship You. Speak Your will to me, I will listen. You created all things; I realize everything I have comes from You. You are the high and lofty One, I adore You. Amen. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

Amos 5

A Song of Grief

1Listen, Israel, to this lament song: 2"Israel, you have fallen and you'll never rise again. You lie deserted in your land with no one to help you get up." {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 3The Sovereign LORD says, "For every thousand soldiers, who go to battle only a hundred will survive, and for every hundred only 10 will come home alive. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4I keep saying to Israel, 'Return to Me and live. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 5Don't go worship idols in Gilgal, Bethel, or even Beersheba. The people of Gilgal will be carried off into captivity, and Bethel will end up as nothing. 6Return to Me and you'll live. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} Otherwise I'll attack like a fire and you'll be devoured, and Bethel, your gods won't be able to save you from the flames. 7You wicked people twist justice and reject upright living.

8"'I created the stars including the well-known constellations Pleiades and Orion. I turn darkness into the light of dawn and day into night. I draw up water from the oceans and pour it down as rain. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 9I destroy strong soldiers and strong fortresses. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10"'You hate judges and honest witnesses. 11You mistreat poor people and force them to give you grain. You've built expensive homes, but you won't live in them. You've planted vineyards, but you'll drink no wine from their grapes. 12I'm aware of your many sins and the many times you've rebelled against Me. You cheat good people by taking bribes, and you keep the poor from getting justice in court. 13In these evil times wise people keep quiet.

14"'If you want to live, then start doing what is right and stop doing what is sinful. Then I, the LORD God Almighty, will be with you as I've promised. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 15Hate sin and love what is good, and see that justice is carried

out in the courts. Then I, the LORD of the Heavens, will have mercy on you people of Joseph's descendants (that is, Israel) who are left. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
16"'Therefore, I, the Lord, the LORD of the Heavens say this: "Crying will be heard in every town and every street. Farmers will be asked to weep with you and with those who are hired to mourn. 17People will wail in every vineyard, because I'll pass through and destroy them. I, the LORD, have spoken these words."'" {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21}
18How terrible it'll be for you who wish the day of the LORD were here. You think the LORD will rescue you from your enemies. But you're wrong. That day will bring darkness, not light, gloom, not joy. 19You'll run from a lion, but you'll meet a bear. You'll escape from the bear, but when you're home you'll lean your hand against a wall and a snake will bite you. 20The day of the LORD's judging will be a day of darkness. It'll be pitch dark with no ray of light. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
21"I hate your religious festivals and assemblies. 22I won't accept your burnt offerings and grain offerings, and I'll have no regard for your fellowship offerings. 23I don't want to hear your noisy songs, 24and what I want is justice and fairness being like a river that never runs dry. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}
25"For 40 years you wandered in the desert without bringing Me offerings or sacrifices. 26No, you're interested only in your pagan gods—Sakkuth, your king god, and Kaiwan your star god. 27So I'll force you to become captives in a land beyond Damascus. I, the LORD of the Heavens, have spoken these words." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, there is "a time to weep" (Eccl. 3:4, KJV). May I weep over the sins of family and friends, and may I mourn over those who reject You. I know they will be judged in the future, but I weep over them today because I believe the severity of Your promise to judge unrepentant rebellion. Amen. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21}

Amos 6

Israel Will Be Destroyed

1You rulers in Zion and Samaria think you are safe. You are famous and popular, and people go to you for help. But you'll face trouble. 2Look what happened to Calneh, Hamath, and Gath in Philistia. You're no better than they are. 3You try to forget the thought of coming disaster, but your actions bring the day closer. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
4You rich people lie around on beds with ivory posts, while you dine on the meat of the most choice lambs and calves. 5You sing songs on your harps as David did and on other instruments. 6You drink bowls of wine, and you wear expensive perfumes. But you have no concern about the ruin of your nation. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 7Therefore you'll be the first to be led away as captives, and your feasting and lounging around will end.

[8]The Sovereign the LORD of the Heavens, says, "I hate Israel, your pride and your fortresses. I'll surrender your city and your belongings to your enemies. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [9]If 10 of you survive by hiding in a house, they too will die. [10]And if a relative of theirs comes to carry out the corpses to bury them, he may ask, 'Is anyone with you?' And if he answers 'No,' the relative may say, 'Be quiet. Don't mention the name of the LORD.'" [11]The LORD has ordered that big and small houses shall be smashed to pieces.
[12]"Horses can't run on rocks, and oxen can't plow rocks. But that's how you are when you turn justice into poison and you make fairness bitter. [13]You're also stupid in claiming you defeated Lo-Debar and Karnaim on your own. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [14]But I, the LORD of the Heavens, will send a nation against you, Israel. They'll capture Lebo-Hamath in the north and the Arabah Valley in the south." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

LORD, I am uneasy in a world of sin. I am uneasy when Your people are hard-hearted and think only of enjoyment and pleasure. LORD, make me uneasy in an evil world, and give me ease in Your presence. Then I will seek You and worship You. Amen. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Amos 7

A Vision of Locusts

[1]The Sovereign LORD gave me a vision of locusts attacking our crops. "This will happen," He said, "after the king's share has been harvested and before the rest of the grain has been harvested." [2]When the locusts ate every crop in the land, I said, "O Sovereign LORD, how can our nation survive when it's so small?" {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [3]The LORD decided then not to fulfill this vision. He said, "I won't let the nation be destroyed."
[4]Then the Sovereign LORD showed me another vision in which He was getting ready to punish His people with a great fire {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} that would burn up everything on earth and the ocean. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [5]Again I said, "O Sovereign LORD, won't You please stop? How can our nation survive when it's so small?" [6]Again the LORD decided not to do this either. {131 Effective-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7}
[7]Then the LORD showed me a vision of Himself standing beside a wall that had been built using a plumb line. He was checking to see if the wall was straight.[8]Then He said to me, "Amos, what do you see?" I said, "A plumb line." Then the LORD said, "I'm using this plumb line to show My people they don't measure up and I won't ignore their sins. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [9]The pagan shrines of your ancestors will be destroyed, and I'll bring a sword against the family of King Jeroboam." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
[10]Then Amaziah the priest of Bethel sent this message to Jeroboam king of Israel. "Amos is plotting against you right here in the center of Israel. Our nation can't put up with this any longer. [11]He's saying that you'll be killed and

the people will be taken into captivity." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 12Then Amaziah said to me, "Amos, get out of here and go back to Judah and prophesy there. 13Don't prophesy any more here in Bethel, especially at the king's sanctuary." 14I answered, "I'm not a prophet or the son of a prophet. I was a shepherd and I took care of sycamore-fig trees. 15Then the LORD told me to leave my flocks and go prophesy to His people Israel. 16You are now telling me not to prophesy against Israel and to stop preaching against the house of Isaac (that is, the people of Israel.) {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 17Here's what the LORD says to you: 'Your wife will become a prostitute, and your sons and daughters will be killed. Your land will be divided up and you, Amaziah, will die in a foreign country. Israel will be captives away from their homeland.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, my nation is given over to pleasure and they ignore Sunday worship. Lord, forgive them and draw them to worship. My nation is consumed by greed, and they worship money. Lord, forgive them and give them a passionate love for You. Their time is spent fulfilling the lust of the flesh (sex) and the lust of the eyes (stuff) and the pride of life. Lord, forgive my nation; teach them to make the main thing, the main thing. Amen. {248 Intercessor's Intercession-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

Amos 8

A Vision of a Basket of Summer Fruit

1The Sovereign LORD showed me {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} a basket of ripe fruit, 2and He asked me, "What do you see, Amos?" I replied, "A basket of ripe fruit." Then the LORD said, "This fruit means that My people are ripe for punishment. I'll wait no longer. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 3Instead of singing in the temple, people will cry. Dead bodies will be everywhere, so you should be silent. I, the LORD, have spoken these words. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

4"Listen to this, you who crush the needy and wipe out the poor. 5You want the new moon festival to be over so you can sell grain, and you want the Sabbath day to be over so you can sell wheat. You want to reduce the amount of grain you sell and increase the price by cheating with dishonest weighing scales. 6You mix chaff with the wheat. And since the poor don't have any money, you buy them as slaves for a piece of silver or even a pair of sandals." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

7The LORD says, "You take pride in your ancestor Jacob, but I'll remember your sins. 8The earth will tremble because of your deeds, and everyone will mourn. The land will be like the Nile River that rises up at flood time and then sinks back down. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

9In that day, I, the Sovereign LORD, will make the sun go down at noon, and I'll

turn daylight into darkness. [10]I'll turn your religious festivals into times of mourning and your singing into weeping. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} In sorrow you'll wear burlap clothing and shave your heads. This will be like mourning for the death of an only son. It will be a terrible day. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]"The days are coming," says the Sovereign LORD, "when there'll be not only a shortage of food and water, but also a famine of hearing My words. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} [12]You'll go everywhere from sea to sea and from north to east and south to west, searching for a message from Me, but you won't find it. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [13]In that day lonely young women and strong young men will faint because of thirst for My Word. [14]You who worship the idols of Samaria, Dan, and Beersheba will fall and will never rise again." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

LORD, teach me instant obedience, because You mean what You say. I don't want any of my shortcomings to move You to judgment. If I don't instantly obey, it's not because of my lack of love; it's my old heart of unbelief. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Transform me, LORD; keep my heart soft toward You. I pray for unsaved Jews everywhere today that they may be saved. I know You have a great plan for them in the future, but for today, save Israel. Amen.

Amos 9

Israel Cannot Escape the LORD

[1]Then I saw a vision of the LORD standing by the altar in the temple. He said, "Smash the tops of the temple pillars so hard that the foundations will shake. Make the pillars fall on the people below and kill them. Others who are left I'll kill with the sword. No one will escape. [2]They may dig to the depths of the grave, but I'll reach down and get them. Or if they climb to the heavens, I'll bring them down. [3]If they escape to Mount Carmel, I'll find them. If they try to hide from Me at the bottom of the ocean, I'll tell My sea monster to bite them. [4]If they are taken as captives by their enemies, I'll kill them with the sword; I'll hurt them, not help them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[5]When the LORD of the Heavens touches the earth, it melts and the people mourn. He makes the ground rise and then fall, like the Nile River. [6]He built His palace in the heavens, and its foundation is the earth. He draws up the water from the ocean and pours it down as rain. He is the LORD. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

[7]"Israel, I'm the LORD God, and you and the Ethiopians are equally important to Me. I brought you out of Egypt, but I also brought the Philistines from Crete, and the Arameans from Kir. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [8]I've seen what a sinful nation you are, and so I'll destroy you from the face of the earth. But I'll not completely destroy the descendants of Jacob," says the LORD. {160

Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 9"At My command you Israel will be persecuted by other nations as grain is sifted in a sieve with not one kernel falling to the ground. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10All you who are sinners will die by the sword, including those of you who say you'll never get caught.

11"In that future day I'll restore David's fallen kingdom. {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} I'll build it from the ruins and set it up just as it used to be. 12And you Israel will capture Edom and other nations that follow Me. I, the LORD, have spoken, and My words will come true. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 13The days are coming when there'll be such a harvest that the grain and grapes will grow faster than they can be harvested. The mountains will be covered with vineyards. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 14I'll bring back My people from captivity, and they'll rebuild their towns and live in them. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} You'll plant vineyards and gardens and eat their crops. 15I'll firmly plant you in the land I've given you, and you'll never be uprooted from your land again. I, the LORD God, have spoken these words." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, I bless Your holy name from the depths of my heart. I lift holy hands to worship You in Your presence. I stand before You with praise on my lips and in prayer, I magnify You. Thank You for the transforming power of worship. Amen. {541 Worship Prayer, John 4:23}

Obadiah

Ch 1: The Edomites Will Be Humbled 1271

OBADIAH

Key Word: *Edom* (Obadiah 1:1)

Key Verse: "The pride of thine heart hath deceived thee, thou that dwellest in the clefts of the rock, whose habitation is high; that saith in his heart, who shall bring me down to the ground? Though thou exalt thyself as the eagle, and though thou set thy nest among the stars, thence will I bring thee down, saith the LORD" (1:3, 4).

Theme: Obadiah prophesies against a tribal nation named Edom or Esau. Edom means "red," and perhaps the people got their name when Esau was born, "The first (Esau) came out red, all over like a hairy garment" (Gen. 25:25). So the Edomites came from Esau, and were named "red" after their father. But Esau "despised" the spiritual birthright of the people of God. He didn't want to be God's man to carry on the Abrahamic promise. They are also called "red" because they lived up in the "red" rocks south of the Dead Sea.

Nothing is known about Obadiah except that his name means "servant of the LORD." Nothing! This tells us four things. First, being a servant of God is more important than your family background or experiences or preparations. Second, the message of the servant of the Lord is more important than the messenger. Third, don't bring attention to yourself in ministry, but rather bring attention to the message God gives you to deliver. Finally, the greatest thing that can be said of all of us is we are "a servant of the Lord." *Lord, may I be like Obadiah; may I be Your faithful servant and deliver Your message faithfully. Amen.*

Obadiah 1

The Edomites Will Be Humbled

1 The LORD God gave Obadiah a message about Edom, {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} and this is what He said: "I, the LORD, have sent a messenger with orders for the nations to attack Edom." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, family is important, and Esau, the family head, made a bad decision out of his greedy heart that influenced his line. The people took on the characteristics of Esau and continually

"fought" against the children of Jacob. Lord, I am not responsible for the family into which I am born, but I am responsible for my future. Lord, I will rise above the weaknesses of my parents and be strong for You, my God. My decisions will always be governed by the principle, "The Lord first." Amen.

2"Edom, I'll make you small among the nations and they'll despise you. 3You will live in a rock fortress, making your home high in the mountains. In your pride {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} you ask, who can reach us up here? 4You may soar as high as an eagle and build your nest, as it were, among the stars, but still I'll bring you down. I, the LORD, have spoken. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
5"If thieves break in at night, they take only what they want. People who harvest grapes always leave some on the vines." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

The Edomites trusted in their mountain stronghold, but they were vanquished and their territory occupied. Only those who trust in God have any security at all. Lord, I do not trust in houses, policemen, armies, or retirement funds. I trust You to protect me. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} I will use those resources for protection, but my trust is in You. Amen.

6"But Edom, you'll be completely wiped out and all your hidden treasures stolen. 7Your allies can't be trusted. They'll trick you and set a trap for you, but you won't be aware of it. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
8"In that future day," the LORD says, "I'll destroy all your wise men. 9Soldiers from Teman will be frightened, and your descendants of Esau will be wiped out. {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}
10Because you were cruel to your relatives, the descendants of Israel, you'll be ashamed and destroyed forever."

Just as Esau swore to kill Jacob, so the Edomites hated the sons of Jacob from that day on (Gen. 27:41). Lord, family prejudice is strong, and it's passed from father to children. Hatred and prejudice will stop with me. I will love and pray for my physical and spiritual relatives. Lord, transform my negative feelings into Your love and compassion. Amen.

11"You stood and watched as foreign soldiers went to Jerusalem and carried off their wealth and cast lots to divide the loot. You were just like one of Israel's enemies.
12"You looked down on your brother Israel in the time of his misfortune. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} You shouldn't have been glad and boasted when your relatives were taken as captives.
13You shouldn't have looted their towns in the day of their disaster or gloated over the destruction of your relatives in the day of their disaster. 14You shouldn't have stood at the crossroads, killing your relatives who tried to escape. You shouldn't have handed the survivors over to their enemies in that terrible day of trouble."

The Edomites rejoiced when Jerusalem and the temple were destroyed by the Babylonians and Nebuchadnezzar. Then they joined the looters to pillage the treasures of Israel. Finally, when Jews were trying to escape, the Edomite army captured them and sold them into slavery. Lord, the Edomites did a hateful thing, and You never forgot. You sent Obadiah to announce a punishment greater on Edom than on the Israelites. They would be wiped out completely. That scares me. Don't wipe me out for I have sinned. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} I plead the blood of Christ to forgive all my sin, and You promised to remember my sins no longer. Thank You, Lord, for cleansing and forgiveness. Amen.

15"The day of the LORD's judgment for all nations is approaching. As you have done to Israel, so it will be done to you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 16I forced the people of Judah to drink the wine of My wrath. Now the nations will do the same, drinking continually and disappearing without a trace. 17But Mount Zion will be a refugee {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} for those who escape. It will be holy, and Jacob's descendants will possess its land. 18Jacob's descendants will be a fire that will burn Edom like straw. No survivors will be in Edom. I, the LORD, have spoken." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19People from the Southern desert will occupy Edom's mountains, and those who live in the foothills of Judah will possess Philistia, {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Ephraim, and Samaria. And Benjamin will occupy Gilead. 20Those who return from captivity to their land of Canaan will occupy the Phoenician coast as far as Zarephath. And those who return from captivity who are in Shepharad will capture the towns of the Southern Desert. 21Those the LORD has saved will go up to Mount Zion and will rule over Edom. And the kingdom will be the LORD's. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

Jonah

Ch 1: Jonah Disobeys the LORD 1276
Ch 2: Jonah Prays to the Lord 1277
Ch 3: Jonah Obeys the Lord 1278
Ch 4: Jonah Becomes Angry at the Lord 1279

JONAH

Key Word: *Prepare* (Jonah 1:17; 4:6, 7, 8)

Key Verse: "And should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand and their left hand; and also much cattle?" (4:11).

Theme: Jonah was a bigoted Jew who was unwilling to preach repentance to an enemy of Israel, that is, Nineveh. This book tells how God dealt with Jonah to motivate him to preach to unsaved Gentiles.

Jonah is a picture (type) of Christ who was raised from the dead then carried salvation to the Gentiles. Jesus gives credibility to the historical reliability of Jonah (Matt. 12:39-41) and the fish's belly was a picture of Jesus' entombment. To reject the historical accuracy of Jonah being swallowed by a great fish is tantamount to rejecting Jesus' credibility and reliability. As you read Jonah, search your heart for any excuses or resistance to your obligation to share the gospel with lost people. *Lord, I will go give the gospel to any person or race. Forgive me for any racism I've had in the past. Give me a love for all people, everywhere. Amen.*

Jonah 1

Jonah Disobeys the LORD

1 The LORD gave this message to me, Jonah son of Amittai: 2 "Go to the great city
of Nineveh and say to the people, 'The LORD has seen how wicked you are
and so He'll punish you.'" {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 3 But Jonah went in
the opposite direction to Joppa and boarded a ship headed for Tarshish in Spain, hoping
to escape from the LORD. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 4 The LORD sent a
strong wind over the sea, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} causing a violent
storm that threatened to break the ship in pieces. 5 All the sailors were afraid, and so they
prayed to their gods. They threw a lot of cargo overboard to make the ship lighter. Jonah
had gone below deck and was sound asleep. 6 The captain went to Jonah and said, "How
can you sleep in a storm like this? Pray to your God. Maybe He'll have pity on us and will
keep us from perishing." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

7The sailors said, "Let's cast lots to see who
is to blame for this terrible storm." So they
did, and the lot fell on Jonah. {364 Praise for
God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 8They asked
Jonah, "What have you done to bring this
storm on us? Where are you from? What's
your nationality?" {160 Family-Heritage
Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 9Jonah answered,
"I'm a Hebrew, and I worship the LORD,
the God of heaven, the one who made the
sea and the land." {539 Worship-Ministry
Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 10This frightened the
sailors because he had already told them
he was running away from the LORD.
{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
11The storm kept getting worse so they
asked Jonah, "What shall we do to you to
stop this storm?"
12Jonah said, "Toss me into the sea and
the storm will stop. I'm the cause of this
terrible storm." {399 Repentance-Prayer,
Matt. 3:2, 8} 13The sailors tried even
harder to get the ship to the shore. But
they couldn't, and the storm kept getting
worse. 14Then they prayed to the LORD,
"Don't make us die for this man's sin. {510
Unsaved-Prayer, Acts 10:2} Don't hold us
guilty for killing an innocent man. You
sent this storm on us for Your good rea-
sons." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}
15Then they tossed Jonah into the sea, and
the storm stopped immediately." {124
Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen.
32:30} 16This caused the sailors to recog-
nize the LORD's great power, and they
offered Him a sacrifice and made prom-
ises to Him. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}
17Then the LORD sent a big fish to swal-
low Jonah. And Jonah was inside the fish
for three days and three nights. {364 Praise
for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Jonah 2

Jonah Prays to the Lord

1When he was in the fish, Jonah prayed to
the LORD, his God. 2He said, "I prayed
to you, LORD, when I was in trouble, and
You answered me. {440 Sin-Realization
Prayer, Eph. 4:22} From deep in the world
of the dead I called to You for help, and
You listened. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1
John 1:9} 3You threw me to the bottom of
the ocean, and great waves swirled around
me and over me. 4I felt I was no longer in
Your presence and would never see Your
temple again. {399 Repentance-Prayer,
Matt. 3:2, 8} 5I was almost drowned by
the waves that closed in around me, and
seaweed was wrapped around my head.
6I sank below the underwater mountains,
and I felt I would be a prisoner there for-
ever. But You, LORD, rescued me from
the pit. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
7"My life was slipping away, but I remem-
bered You, LORD, and I prayed to
You in Your holy temple. {399 Repen-
tance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 8People who
worship false gods turn from You who
offers them mercy. 9But I'll offer sacrifices
to You with songs of praise, and I'll keep
the promises I made to You. {480 Thanks-
giving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
I'm so grateful that You can deliver me
from problems."

Lord, I call out to You because You've answered in the past. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} Also, I call to You because You've promised to answer those in trouble. "This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles" (Ps. 34:6). Lord, thank You for hearing and answering in the past. Also, thank You for the promise that You will answer in the future. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} Thank You for Your care of me. Amen.

10 Then the LORD told the fish to vomit up Jonah on the shore. And it did. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Jonah 3

Jonah Obeys the Lord

1 The LORD spoke to Jonah a second time. He said, 2 "Go to the great city of Nineveh and give My message of judgment. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 3 This time Jonah obeyed and went to Nineveh. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} It was such a large city that it took three days to walk all through it.

Lord, thank You for every time in the past You've delivered me. I would not be faithful to follow You today if You had not been faithful first to bring me back to Yourself. Amen.

4 After walking in the city for a day, Jonah said, to the people, "In 40 days Nineveh will be destroyed." {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 5 But the people of Nineveh believed God's message, and they all decided to go without eating and to wear burlap clothing to show their sorrow for their sin. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

6 When Nineveh's king heard what was happening, he too wore burlap clothing. And he sat down in the dust. 7 He and his officials sent this order throughout the city. "Not one of you or your animals is to eat or drink anything. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} 8 Wear burlap clothing and even cover your animals with burlap. Pray to the LORD with all your heart, and give up your sinful ways and stop all your violence. 9 Perhaps God will have pity on us and hold back His fierce anger so we won't perish." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I have seen You do supernatural things to deliver me and others. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Thank You for Your power to accomplish Your will. Thank You for Your grace to give me a second chance. Amen.

10 When God saw that the people of Nineveh stopped their evil ways, He had pity on them and didn't destroy them as He had threatened to do. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Lord, help me see beyond the sin of any person, to see Your greater plan in the world. Lord, thank You for not completely rejecting me each time I disobey because of ignorance,

or because of weakness, or because of a rebellious heart. I yield to You, now. I will do what You command. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} I will speak what message You give me. I worship You for giving me mercies and a second chance. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Amen.

Jonah 4

Jonah Becomes Angry at the Lord

[1]When Jonah learned that the Ninevites turned from their evil ways, he became very angry. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [2]He complained to the LORD and said, "Before I left home, I knew You would do this to Nineveh. That's why I went toward Tarshish. I know You are gracious and loving, slow to get angry, and filled with love. And I know You can easily cancel Your plans to destroy wicked people. [3]But, LORD, let me die. I'd rather be dead so that what I predicted about Nineveh's downfall won't happen." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Lord, forgive me for my stupid anger when I've gotten peeved at You, or became angry at the way things were going in my life. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Give me eyes to see Your plan. Amen.

[4]The LORD said, "Do you have a right to be angry?"

[5]Jonah went east of the city and made a shelter and sat within its shade, and he waited to see what would happen to the city. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [6]Then the LORD made a vine grow up over Jonah to give him some shade. Jonah was very pleased with this. [7]At dawn the next day God had a worm chew the vine, and it withered. [8]When the sun came up, a scorching wind from the east beat down on Jonah's head and he became faint. Jonah said, "I wish I could die. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [9]But God said to Jonah, "Do you have a right to be angry about the vine?" Jonah said, "Yes, I do. I'm so angry I want to die." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

[10]The LORD said, "You're concerned about the vine, though you didn't take care of it. And it grew overnight and then died. [11]But Nineveh has more than 120,000 people living in spiritual darkness, and many cattle are there too. Shouldn't I be concerned about that great city?" {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, I believe You bring small things into my life to prepare me for Your will. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Help me see Your hand in the small things that enter my life (such as a vine and worm), as well as the large things (national revival). {273 Large-Praying, Acts 4:23-31} Lord, give me wisdom to always do Your will when I know it, and to reflect a Christian attitude at all times. Amen.

Micah

Ch 1: Micah Warns the People 1281
Ch 2: Judgment against Those Who Oppress Others 1282
Ch 3: Judgment against the Leaders 1283
Ch 4: The LORD Will Rule Forever 1284
Ch 5: A Ruler Will Come from Bethlehem 1285
Ch 6: The LORD Speaks Out against Israel 1286
Ch 7: Do Not Put Your Trust in Men 1287

MICAH

Key Word: *Hear* (Micah 1:2; 3:1; 6:1)

Key Verse: "Hear, all ye people; hearken, O earth, and all that therein is: and let the Lord GOD be witness against you, the Lord from his holy temple" (1:2).

Theme: Micah prophesied between 750 and 725 B.C. and was a contemporary of Isaiah, Hosea, and Amos. He focused on Samaria (Israel the Northern Kingdom) and Jerusalem (the Southern Kingdom of Judah). He had a dual theme of judgment of sin followed by future restoration. He had a strong sense of social justice in the courts (3:11; 7:3) in business (6:10-12), in places of authority and power (2:1-9; 3:1-10; 6:12; 7:2-6).

Micah preached against a Jewish religious system that had much ritual but little repentance or holiness. Therefore a person's responsibility was "to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God." (6:8). *Lord, keep me from looking for my spirituality from religious tradition and meetings. May religious "things" only be methods that point me to You. Amen.*

Micah 1

Micah Warns the People

1 I'm Micah from Moresheth. The LORD gave me these messages in the form of
visions about Samaria and Jerusalem when Jotham, Ahaz, and Hezekiah were
kings of Judah. 2"Listen, everyone. All the people in the world, listen carefully. I, the Sov-
ereign LORD, have accusations against you from My holy temple. {223 Holiness-Prayer,
1 Peter 1:16} 3I'm coming down from heaven to walk on the high places of the earth."
{136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

Lord, I know You are everywhere present, but sometimes I act like the unsaved, that is, that You are only in heaven. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Forgive me when I think You don't know what's happening on earth. Help me feel Your constant presence with me in all I do. Help me do everything for Your approval. Amen.

4"They melt beneath Me and valleys split
apart like wax in a fire and like water rush-
ing down a hill. 5This is happening because
of the sins of Israel, Jacob's descendants.
Samaria led Israel to sin, and the pagan
altars at Jerusalem made Judah sin. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
6"So I'll make Samaria a heap of rubble, a
place where only vineyards can be planted.
I'll roll the stones of her walls to the valley
below, and expose her foundations. 7I'll
smash her idols to pieces, {268 Judgmen-
tal-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and the wages paid
to the temple prostitutes will be destroyed
by fire. The temple gifts provided to pros-
titutes in Samaria will be used as wages to
pay prostitutes in other countries."
8Because of this I, Micah, will weep and
walk around naked and barefoot in sor-
row. I'll howl like a wild dog and moan
like an owl. 9The peoples' wounds can't
be healed. It has come to the attention of
Judah even to the gates of Jerusalem. {248
Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}
10Don't tell our Philistine enemies in Gath,
and don't even cry. You people in Beth-
Leaphrah (meaning "House of Dust"), roll
in the dust to show your grief. 11And you
people of Shaphir (meaning "Beautiful"),
you'll go as captives naked and ashamed.
The people of Zaanan (meaning "One
Who Goes Out") will not go outside their
walls. The people of Beth-Ezel (meaning
"House Next Door") mourn because no
one helped them. 12The people of Maroth
(meaning "Bitter") wait for help, but
disaster has come from the LORD even
to the gate of Jerusalem. {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
13You people of Lachish, get your chariots
ready. You caused Jerusalem to sin. 14Give a
going-away gift to Moresheth. The town of
Achzib (meaning "Deception") deceived
the kings of Israel, because it promised
help but couldn't give it. {268 Judgmen-
tal-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 15You people of
Mareshah (meaning "Conqueror") I'll
bring a conqueror to capture your town.
And Israel's glorious king will go hide in
the Adullam Cave. 16Shave your heads in
mourning, for the children you have will
be taken away as captives. Make yourselves
as bald as a buzzard in your grief for your
children who'll be taken to a foreign coun-
try. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Micah 2

Judgment against Those Who Oppress Others

1How terrible it will be for you who lie
awake in bed, plotting evil plans. Then at
dawn you quickly carry out those plans
you have the power to do. {440 Sin-Reali-
zation Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Holy Spirit, come guard the doorway into my mind. Turn evil thoughts away. Put positive thoughts there about You so I can worship You always. Amen. {224 Holy Spir-it-Praying, Jude 20}

2You grab any field or house you want, and
you cheat people out of their homes and
their land. {218 Help the Oppressed by
Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9} 3Therefore the LORD
says, "I'm planning disaster against you,

{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and you won't be able to escape. You'll no longer be able to walk proudly in the streets.
4"People will make fun of you by singing, 'We're ruined, and God takes Israel's fields and has given them to traitors.'"

Lord, I accept the truth that everything I own and have is given to me by You. I yield it all to You. Help me manage it all for Your glory. Amen.

5So you'll have no one to say how your land is to be divided.
6You'll say, "Don't prophesy such things." These disasters will never happen. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, give me a loving heart when I share with others the message of Your holiness and punishment of sin. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} May I never use the message of Your judgment in a callous way. Amen.

7Descendants of Jacob, don't say the LORD did these things because He was angry. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} If you do what is right, He'll bless you. 8Yet you people, like an enemy, steal clothes from soldiers returning home from battle. 9Also you take over the homes of women and cheat their children of their inheritance. 10You thieves, get out of here. This is not your land {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} because of all your sin that has ruined the land completely. 11The only kind of prophet you want is the one who says he'll prophesy if you pay him enough wine. But he's a liar and a deceiver.
12"In that future day I, the LORD, will gather together those of you who are left. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} I'll bring you together as a shepherd gathers his sheep, and there'll be many of them. 13I'll break down the gate and lead them out of captivity. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} I, your King, will guide you." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Micah 3

Judgment against the Leaders

1You rulers of Israel, listen. You're supposed to know right from wrong, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 2but you hate what is good and you love what is evil. You skin my people alive, tearing their flesh from their bones.

Lord, forgive my rebellion and if there's only a small rebellious attitude hidden in my heart, reveal it to me. I will confess it and repent of it. Give me a passionate love of goodness and a passionate hatred of evil. Amen. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:2}

3You eat their flesh, break their bones, and cook it in a pit. 4Someday you'll ask the LORD to help you, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} but He won't because of your sins.

Lord, I don't want any sin or dumb thing on my part to block my prayers. Forgive all my

sin—known and hidden—give me a sensitive heart to know Your will. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} When You don't answer my prayers, I yield all results to Your plan and purpose. Amen.

5This is what the LORD says to false prophets: "You're leading My people astray. If someone promises you security, you give him food. But if he refuses to pay you, you declare war on him. 6You'll live in the dark with no visions or messages from Me. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} The sun will set for you prophets and the daytime will be dark. 7You prophets and fortune-tellers will be ashamed, covering your face because you have no message from Me." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, I don't want to be a hypocrite. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} I Know You are with me, I experience the fruit of Your abiding life (John 15:1-8). Thank You for the satisfaction I get from Your presence. Amen.

8As for me, Micah, I'm filled with power from the Spirit of the LORD, {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} I'll speak about justice and tell Israel his sins. 9So you leaders of Israel, listen to my message. You hate justice and you twist the truth. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 10You build Zion by murdering people and you build Jerusalem by your wickedness. 11You leaders accept bribes for dishonesty, and you priests and prophesy but only if you are paid for it. You say that because you are depending on the LORD, then no disaster will come to you. 12Therefore Zion will be plowed like an open field, and Jerusalem will be a heap of ruins, and a hill with thorns will cover the area where the temple now stands. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Micah 4

The LORD Will Rule Forever

1In that future day, {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} the temple of the LORD in Jerusalem will be the most important place on earth. People from every nation will go there to worship. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 2Many nations will say, "Let's go to the mountain of the LORD God of Jacob. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} He'll teach us His ways so we can obey Him." In those days Jerusalem will be the place where God's teachings and His Word will be taught. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 3He'll settle disputes between many distant nations. The nations will beat their swords into plows {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} and their spears into pruning hooks. Nations will stop going to war against each other, and will stop training for war. 4Everyone will live peacefully and without fear with his own grapevines and fig trees. The LORD of the Heavens has promised this. 5Other nations will worship their idols, but we'll follow the LORD our God forever. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7}

Lord, I like figs and I enjoy resting in the shade of a tree. Help me to work hard today and fight against evil knowing future rest is coming. Amen. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

6 The LORD says, "In that future day, I'll
gather My people who are lame, and who
were captives, and all those into whose
lives I brought grief." {74 Coming-King-
dom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Lord, I'm glad You love lost, straying sheep. You went after Paul the Apostle and brought him home. You also come after me. I wouldn't be saved, except You chose me, came after me, and convicted me of my sin. Then You put me under Your loving care and healed my "crippledness." Now Lord, I pray for my friends and relatives who are straying, bring them back home. Amen.

7 "The lame and the former captives will
be strong again. {274 Last-Days Prayer,
2 Tim. 3:1} I, the LORD, will rule from
Mount Zion as their King forever. 8 Jeru-
salem, you are like a watchtower looking
over My people, or like a hill over My
people, the Daughter of Zion. You'll rule
again as you did before. {135 End-Times
Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 9 Jerusalem, why are
you screaming? Don't you have a king?
Have you no counselors? Why are you in
pain like a woman in childbirth? 10 Yes, you
should groan in pain because you must
leave the city for the open fields, and then
you'll be taken as captives to Babylon.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But later
I'll rescue you from there from your ene-
mies. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps.
67; Matt. 6:9}
11 "Many nations are surrounding you, and
they are anxious to see you destroyed. 12 But
those nations don't know I, the LORD,
have gathered them together to grind
them like grain on a threshing floor. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13 O inhabi-
tants of Jerusalem, destroy these nations,"
says the LORD. "You can break them to
pieces as if you had iron horns and bronze
hoofs. You'll give their wealth to Me, the
LORD of the earth." {18 Anticipating His
Return, Rev. 16:17}

Micah 5

A Ruler Will Come from Bethlehem

1 Jerusalem, call your troops together
because the enemy is surrounding your
city. They'll strike Israel's ruler in the face.
2 But you, Bethlehem Ephrathah, are one
of the smallest towns in Judah. But one
of your people will rule Israel, one whose
ancestry goes back to ancient times. {18
Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

God predicted the Messiah would be born in Bethlehem (5:2). This prediction is historically verified by the Septuagint and the Dead Sea Scrolls. Then God moved Mary and Joseph from Nazareth to Bethlehem by the decree of Caesar Augustus, another historically verified date. Bethlehem demonstrates God's power to predict the future and

His ability to control contemporary events so that "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28).
"O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie! Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by; yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light; the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight." Amen. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

3"I, the LORD, will abandon Israel until this ruler is born, and his family returns from captivity. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4I'll take care of them as a shepherd cares for his sheep, in My power and My reputation as the LORD their God. My people will live securely, and everyone will know of My greatness, 5and I'll give them peace. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} If Assyria attacks you, I'll raise eight rulers to lead you against him. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6You'll defeat the Assyrians, and I'll rescue you from them if they cross our borders to invade our land. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
7"Some of Judah's descendants will survive and will be refreshing like dew and rain. 8They're now scattered, but they'll be strong like a lion pouncing on sheep, with no one to rescue them. 9They'll defeat their enemies, and all foes will be destroyed." {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

Lord, You seemed to be the victim on the cross, but You were victorious over death by the resurrection. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} *Now come be victorious in my life. I yield myself to You, come take control of my life. Come give me victory over any sin in my life, and give me victory over trials and problems I face on this earth. I look forward to the final day of victory with You in heaven, when I shall at last be triumphant over all things. Amen.*

10"In that future day," says the LORD, "I'll destroy your horses and chariots, 11and your cities and fortresses. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 12I'll put an end to your witchcraft and your fortune-telling. 13I'll destroy the idols and sacred stones you've made so that you'll no longer be able to bow down to them. 14I'll also get rid of your Asherah poles and destroy the towns where those idols stand. 15I'll take vengeance in anger against all the nations that refuse to obey Me." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Micah 6

The LORD Speaks Out against Israel

1The LORD said to His people, "State your case before the mountains and the hill. 2I call on the mountains and the earth's foundation to hear My complaint and charge. 3My people, how have I wronged you? Answer Me. 4I rescued you from Egypt where you were in slavery, and I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to lead you. 5Don't forget that Balak, king of Moab, wanted to have you cursed and that Balaam, son of Beor, blessed you instead.

And remember how I, the LORD, taught you as you traveled from Shittim to Gigal." {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

6What can we bring to the LORD to make up for what we've done? {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Shall we sacrifice year-old calves? 7Will the LORD be pleased with thousands of sheep and thousands of rivers of olive oil? Or shall we offer the firstborn child in each of our families as payment for our sins? 8No, the LORD doesn't want any of these! Instead he wants us to do what is good, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} to see that justice is done, to love mercy, and to walk in humility before Him.

Lord, I won't try to impress You with a gift of money, things, or wonderful feats done for You. I give You myself and pledge to walk as honestly as I know how. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} Give me a love for mercy and give me the ability to treat others fairly. Amen.

9"I'm the LORD, and it makes sense for you to respect Me. I'm calling everyone in Jerusalem to pay attention to My rod of punishment. 10You wicked people, I won't forget the treasures you've stolen and your cheating by using dishonest weighing scales. 11I'll punish your merchants for using dishonest scales and weights. 12You rich people are violent, and everyone tells lies.

13"Therefore I'll wound you because of your sins. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 14You'll eat but not be satisfied. You'll store up goods but end up with nothing. What you save will be captured by your enemies. 15You'll plant crops but not harvest them. You'll press your olives but not get enough olive oil to do you any good. And you'll tread your grapes but you'll get no juice for wine. 16You've followed the sinful ways of King Omri and King Ahab. So I'll now destroy you, and people of other nations will ridicule and insult you." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Micah 7

Do Not Put Your Trust in Men

1I'm so miserable. After the harvest I can't find any grapes or figs to eat. 2Godly people are all gone, and no one is left who does right. Everyone is a murderer, setting traps for their own brothers. 3They use both hands in doing evil. Rulers and judges demand bribes. Powerful people work with others in getting what they want. 4Even the best of them is prickly as a thorn bush, and the most honest of them are worse than a hedge of thorns, injuring any who come in contact with them. The judgment your prophets predicted is coming swiftly, and you'll be confused.

Lord, when everyone else does their own thing, and calls evil good, I will follow You. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Though no one else is concerned with personal integrity, I will be holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} Lord, I judge

myself by Your standard, not my standard. I want to be like Jesus. Amen.

5Don't trust anyone, not even your neighbors or friend or your wife. 6Sons dishonor their fathers, and daughters despise their mothers. Daughters-in-law oppose their mothers-in-law. Your enemies are right in your own home. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
7But I, Micah, determined to look to You, the LORD, for help. I wait for You, and I know You'll hear me. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} 8My enemies, don't be glad because of my troubles. I've fallen, but I'll get up. I'm sitting in darkness, but You, LORD, are my light. 9I've sinned against You, and so I must bear Your wrath. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} But I know You'll take up my case and make things right for me. You'll bring me out of darkness into light, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and I know You'll make things right. 10My enemy will be ashamed and yet will say, "Where is the LORD your God? Can't He help you?" But I'll see my enemies trampled in the mud in the streets. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12}
11Judah, the day is coming when your towns will be rebuilt and your borders extended. 12People from Assyria, Egypt, and Babylonia, and elsewhere will come and honor you. They'll even come from the Euphrates River and from many distant seas and mountains. 13But the lands will be desolate because of the sins of the people who live there. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
14Lord, shepherd Your people in open pasturelands. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} We are isolated like sheep in a fortress. So let us enjoy the pastures in Bashan and Gilead as we used to do.

Lord, that's my prayer; come Shepherd, lead me beside still waters. Let me lie down in Your green pastures. Lead me in right paths. Walk with me through the valley of the shadow of death. Protect me from the fear of evil. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Protect me with Your rod and staff. Feed me from Your table, prepared in the presence of enemies. Anoint me with healing oil and let me dwell in Your house forever. Amen.

15The LORD says, "Yes, I'll work miracles for you just as I did when I rescued you from Egypt. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 16Nations will be ashamed when they see what I'll do for you. Embarrassed, they'll be speechless and they'll not even be able to hear. 17They'll realize they are lowly creatures, like snakes and other creatures that crawl on the ground. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} They'll come trembling out of their dens and will reverence Me, and none will be afraid of you, Israel." {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}
18No other God is like you, LORD. You pardon the sins of Your people, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and You don't stay angry forever because You enjoy showing mercy. 19You'll have compassion

on us, {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} and
You'll trample on our sins and toss them
into the sea. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:10} [20]You'll be true to Jacob and
Abraham, as You promised our ances-
tors years ago. {305 Mercy-Appreciation
Prayer, Hab. 3:2}

Nahum

Ch 1: The LORD Is Angry 1292
Ch 2: Nineveh Will Be Destroyed 1293
Ch 3: Nineveh Is Doomed 1294

NAHUM

Key Word: *Nineveh* (Nahum 1:1)

Key Verse: "The LORD is good, a strong hold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him. But with an overrunning flood he will make an utter end of the place thereof, and darkness shall pursue his enemies" (1:7, 8).

Theme: Little is known about the prophet Nahum, the Elkoshite (1:1) and nothing is known about Elkosh; even its location is unknown. Nahum prophesied 200 years after Jonah preached repentance (852 B.C.), to Nineveh and the city turned to God (Jonah 3:1-10). But Nahum does not call for repentance, but warns of the city's destruction that occurred in 612 B.C. Therefore, Nahum preached around 650 B.C.

Nineveh stands for false religions among Gentiles, and thus represents all morally corrupt cultures that will be judged by God. "There is no healing" (Nah. 3:19) for morally corrupt apostasy, only complete judgment by God (Rom. 1:18-32). But in the middle of a message of God's awesome vengeance is a picture of God's protection for those who put their trust in Him, "A strong hold in the day of trouble" (Nah. 1:7). Yes, "God is jealous, and the LORD revengeth" (1:2), but "the LORD is good" (1:7). *LORD, I look for Your mercy to me as You judge sin. Amen.*

Nahum 1

The LORD Is Angry

1 I'm Nahum from Elkosh. This is the message the LORD gave me about Nineveh.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 2 "I'm a God who wants you to worship only
Me. In My anger I take revenge on those who oppose You and I express My wrath to My
enemies. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 3 I'm slow to get angry, and I'm powerful. I
don't let the guilty go unpunished. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} I show
My power in whirlwinds and storms, and clouds are like dust under My feet. 4 I rebuke the
ocean and it dries up, and I can make rivers run dry, the pastures of Bashan and Carmel
wither, and the flowers of Lebanon fade. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 5 Moun-
tains quake in My presence, and hills melt away." The earth and people on it tremble at

Your presence. [6]Can anyone endure Your wrath and anger, which flashes out like fire and shatters rocks? {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}

Lord, sometimes You do things so quickly I'm amazed. Sometimes it seems like circumstances dictate that You can never solve a problem. Yet You do. So Lord, when the daylight is almost gone and hope is lost, I trust in You. Amen.

[7]LORD, You're so good. You protect those who face trouble, and You care for those who trust in You. [8]You destroy Your enemies, including Nineveh, like a terrible flood, and You pursue Your enemies into the darkness of night. [9]Don't plot against the LORD. He'll stop you in your tracks, and He won't need to do it again. [10]You'll be tangled in thorns, and you'll be so drunk you'll be like dry thorn bushes burning in a fire. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]Who is this king of yours, Nineveh, who is making evil plans against You?

[12]The LORD says this: "Assyria, you are great in numbers, but you'll be cut down. I've punished you, but I won't do it again. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [13]I'll break the yoke of the Assyrians from your neck and release you from them." [14]Assyria, the LORD says this about Nineveh: "Your name will be forgotten. I'll destroy the carved images and idols in your temple. And I'll send you to the grave because you are of no account."

Lord, You may delay judgment, but You will never cancel it. I have come to You for forgiveness of sin and I trust You for eternity in heaven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} I know it will happen, Hallelujah! Amen.

[15]Look, Judah. A messenger is coming down from the mountain with good news of peace. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} Celebrate your festivals. Keep the promises you made to God. The enemy from Nineveh will not invade your country again, for they'll be completely destroyed.

Lord, I trust You to take me through the valley of the shadow of death. If my destination is earthly life on the other side of the valley, I trust You for it. If my destination is heaven on the other side of the valley, I trust You for it. {215 Heaven's Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} I will go anywhere as long as You go with me. Amen.

Nahum 2

Nineveh Will Be Destroyed

[1]Nineveh, you are surrounded by enemy troops: so guard your fortresses, and prepare for battle. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [2]The land of Israel lies empty after your attacks; they're like trees with broke branches. But the LORD will restore their honor and power. [3]Nineveh, your enemies' shields are red and their uniforms are scarlet. The metal on their chariots glistens in

the sun, and the soldiers swing their spears.
4The chariots rush through the streets like
flaming torches and lightning. {267 Judg-
ment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 5An officer gives a
command, but his soldiers stumble as they
hurry to the walls to set up their defenses.
6The river gates are open, the enemy has
entered, and the palace collapses.
7Nineveh's people will be taken captives,
and slave girls will mourn like doves.
They'll beat their breasts in sorrow.
8Nineveh is like a pool with leaking water.
People shout, "Stop!" but the people keep
going. 9Enemy soldiers shout, "Loot the
silver and gold. The city is full of treasures
and vast wealth." 10Nineveh is doomed.
Her people's hearts melt and their knees
are weak. People tremble and their faces
are pale. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts
5:4, 9}

Lord, teach me to believe that nothing is impossible for You. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} If You can destroy world empires, then You can remove any barrier that blocks Your work today. Amen.

11Where now is that great Nineveh, lion
of the nations, where the people, like lions
and cubs, had nothing to fear. 12Nineveh
was like a lion, crushing your enemies to
feed your cubs and filling your city with
captives. 13"I'm against you, Nineveh," says
the LORD of the Heavens. "I'll burn your
chariots, and an army will kill your young
soldiers (lions). You'll never again bring
back loot. And you'll never again send
messengers to demand submission." {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Nahum 3

Nineveh Is Doomed

1How terrible it will be for Nineveh, the
city of murders and lies. She is full of loot
and victims. 2Listen to the cracking whips,
rumbling wheels, galloping horses, 3clat-
tering chariots, swords and spears flash-
ing, and soldiers stumbling over numerous
dead bodies. 4This is all because Nineveh
was a beautiful prostitute, using her charms
and witchcraft to enslave nations. {267
Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
5"I'm against you," says the LORD of the
Heavens. "I'll lift up your skirts over your
face so the nations can see your nakedness
and shame. 6I'll cover you with filth and
show everyone how terrible you are. 7All
who see you will be amazed that you are in
ruins. Yet no one regrets your destruction."
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
8Nineveh, do you think you're safer than
the city of Thebes on the Nile, protected
by the water? 9Thebes trusted in Ethiopia
and Egypt, and Put and Libya were her
allies. 10But Thebes was taken captive, and
her babies were dashed to death at every
street corner. Soldiers drew straws to see
who would get Egypt's officers as servants.
All her leaders were taken away in chains.
{135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
11Nineveh, you'll stagger like a drunkard
and will hide in fear. 12Your fortresses are
like first-ripe figs. They'll fall to the attack-
ers as easily as figs fall into someone's

mouth. 13Your troops will be weak and helpless as women. Fire has consumed the bars on your gates, and the enemy will rush right in your city. 14You are under siege, so draw water and strengthen your defenses. Start making bricks to repair your walls. 15Yet fire will devour you, and swords will cut you down. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} The enemy will consume you like wheat attacked by locusts. You'll not escape even if you multiply like locusts. 16Merchants, numerous as the stars, filled your city with vast wealth. But like locusts they'll strip the land and then fly away. 17Your guards and officials are like locusts. They settle on a fence on a chilly day, but when the sun comes out, they fly away. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18King of Assyria, your officials and leaders lie dead. Your people are scattered on the mountains, but there is no shepherd to gather them and lead them. 19Your wound can't be healed; your injury can't be cured. Everyone who hears this news about you is glad because you were so cruel to so many.

Lord, You are concerned with the cities of the world. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} You are concerned about New York, London, Tokyo, Beijing, and New Delhi. During the Bible times You were concerned with the great cities that influenced world culture, peace and war. But Lord You are most concerned with Jerusalem then, and Jerusalem now. I will keep an eye on Jerusalem to see what You are doing in the world. Lord, my schedule is not important; Your schedule is all that matters. I yield my life to do Your will. I yield my times to do what You want me to do. I pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and hence; I pray for the peace of the world. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} Amen.

Habakkuk

Ch 1: Habakkuk Complains to the LORD..... 1297
Ch 2: The Lord's Vision from the Prophet..... 1298
Ch 3: Habakkuk Prays to the LORD..... 1299

HABAKKUK

Key Word: *Silence* (Habakkuk 2:20)

Key Verse: "But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (2:20).

Theme: Habakkuk never mentions the nation of Assyria which was destroyed in 612 B.C. so we assume he wrote after that date. He describes Babylon as a great force, but God's people are not yet subdued to them (began in 605 B.C.) so he writes between these two dates. Habakkuk asks why God's justice is silent. Habakkuk is like people today who ask when trouble approaches, "Where is God?" People today see victorious evil winning over God's people, and ask, "Why is God silent?"

Habakkuk announces God will judge Judah for her spiritual sins and rejecting the Lord. But Babylon is so violent and morally wicked Habakkuk asks, "Why is God's judgment silent against this Gentile nation?" He was not reluctant to question the purpose of God.

Finally, Habakkuk realizes God reigns in heaven no matter what happens on earth, "But the LORD is in his holy temple: let all the earth keep silence before him" (2:20). *Lord, forgive me when I question You in unbelief, or I don't trust Your plan for my life. Amen.*

Habakkuk 1

Habakkuk Complains to the LORD

1 I'm Habakkuk the prophet. And this is the message the LORD gave me in a vision.
2 How long, O LORD, must I call for help, but You don't listen. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} I cry out "Violence," but You don't save us. 3 Why do I have to keep looking at injustice, {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} destruction, violence, strife, and conflict? {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 4 Laws aren't enforced, and justice is not carried out in the courts. There are more wicked people than righteous ones, and they twist the laws.
5 The LORD answered, "Look at the nations and be completely amazed. I'm going to do something that will amaze you. You won't believe it even if someone told you. {466

Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [6]I'm raising up the Babylonians, a cruel and vicious nation who'll march across the world defeating many towns. [7]People fear them and they do as they please. [8]Their horses are swifter than leopards, and they are more fierce than wolves hunting at sunset. Their horsemen come from distant lands, and they swoop down like falcons to pounce on their prey.

[9]"They are determined to be violent, as they swoop down like the desert wind, picking up captives like sand. [10]They make fun of rulers and all their defenses. And they pile up mounds of dirt against their walls and capture cities. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [11]They sweep past like the wind and are gone. They worship their own strength."

[12]O LORD, my God, my Holy One, You are eternal, and You'll not let us die. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} O LORD our Rock, You are cursing Babylonians to punish us for our sins. [13]You can't tolerate sin in any form. So why are You silent when the wicked take advantage of people like us who are better than they are?

[14]We are like fish to be caught and killed. We are like sea creatures with no ruler. [15]Our wicked enemies pull us up with hooks and fishing nets, and they are glad. [16]Then they worship their nets and burn incense in front of their nets. They say that these nets have made them rich and provide choice foods. [17]Will You let them keep hauling in their nets and destroying nations with no money? {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, forgive me for every time I've complained in the past. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Help me see Your purpose in my life, and give me faith to accept what I can't understand. I don't like all the evil I see around me. I yearn for a place like heaven where people live together in harmony. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} When You take the sin nature out of me, and everyone else, then maybe we'll have that peace in heaven that so many of us desire. Amen.

Habakkuk 2

The Lord's Vision for the Prophet

[1]I'll climb to my watchtower and wait to see what the LORD will say to me and how He'll answer my complaint. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7}

Lord, I too will meet You in a private place where I can focus my whole mind on You. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} I will go there on a regular basis to watch and pray. When I reach out to touch You, Lord, reach back and touch me. Amen.

[2]The LORD replied, "Write My answer in large letters on a tablet, so that a runner can read it and tell others what it says. {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [3]These things won't happen right away. My words, which speak of the future, will be true so wait for them patiently. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14}

4"Proud people trust in themselves, but the righteous will live by their faith." {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31}

Lord, I will write down the lessons You are teaching me. {369 Prayer-Journey Prayer, Ps. 126:5-6} Make them clear to me as I attempt to write them in an understandable format. Amen.

5Wine betrays these proud Babylonians, and they are never at rest. They are as greedy as death itself, taking people as captives. 6But all their captives will mock them and will say, "How terrible it will be for you who pile up loot you've stolen and who cheat others." 7Your debtors will demand payment, and this will frighten you. 8You robbed many nations so they'll rob you. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} And you've murdered many people and destroyed their property.

9How terrible it will be for anyone who gets rich by unjust means. You tried to be free from harm like an eagle building a high nest. 10You've brought shame on yourself and your family because of what you've done to others. 11The stones in the walls of your houses and the ceiling beams will speak against you.

12How terrible it will be for you who build cities with money gained from murders and robbery. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13The LORD of the Heavens has promised that the nations' wealth will turn to ashes. They work hard but all for nothing. 14But the time will come when people will know and honor the LORD {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} just as the waters fill the sea.

15How terrible it will be for people who get their neighbors drunk so they can gaze on their nakedness. 16Soon it'll be your turn, and you'll be filled with shame instead of praise. So drink and be exposed. Drink from the cup of the LORD's judgment and vomit will cover you. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 17You cut down the trees of Lebanon, and now you'll be cut down. You terrified wild animals you caught in your traps. Now you'll be in terror because of your murders and violence everywhere.

18What did you gain by worshiping man-made idols? It's a lie to think they could help you. And it's foolish to trust in idols you made and that can't talk. 19How terrible it will be for those who tell wooden idols to come to life and tell stone images to wake up. They can't guide you in any way. They may be covered with gold and silver, but they have no life. 20The LORD is in His holy temple, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} and so everyone should be silent in His presence. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3}

Habakkuk 3

Habakkuk Prays to the LORD

1I Habakkuk sang this prayer before the LORD. 2"I've heard about You, LORD, {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} and I'm amazed at what You've done. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} Turn from Your anger and be merciful, {304

Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} and help us as You helped our ancestors in the past."

Lord, that's my prayer today. I am filled with awe as I read Your Word; do such miracles again in my life. Revive Your work in my heart. Revive Your church. Revive our nation before it's too late. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} Do it quickly, do it now. Amen.

3 You're the God who led us across the
desert to Teman in Edom and came from
Mount Paran. Your brilliance fills the
heavens, and people everywhere praise
You. 4 From Your hands flash rays of bril-
liant light, and You rejoice in Your great
power. 5 You caused evil people to be struck
with terrible diseases. 6 When You stopped,
the earth shook and You made the nations
tremble in fear. Old mountains and hills
may collapse, but Your ways, O LORD,
will last forever. {364 Praise for God's Sov-
ereignty, Gen. 45:5} 7 The people living in
tents in Cushan and Midian are in fear of
You.
8 O LORD, were You angry with the riv-
ers and streams when You attacked with
Your horses and chariots? 9 You were ready
with bows and arrows. You split open the
earth with rivers. {93 Creation-Inspired
Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 10 The mountains
watched and trembled, as raging waters
swept by. The deep waters cried out in sur-
render to You, the LORD. 11 The brilliance
of the sun and moon faded in view of the
brightness of Your lightning.
12 In Your anger You walked across the land
and trampled on the nations. {139 Ene-
my-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 13 You
rescued Your people and saved Your cho-
sen people. You crushed the leaders of
the wicked, and stripped him from head
to foot. 14 With their own weapons You
defeated them when they rushed out to
destroy us, thinking they could easily
defeat Israel. 15 Then You trampled the sea
with Your horses, and the water piled high.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
16 When I heard this message, my heart
pounded, my lips quivered with fear, {523
Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} and
my legs were weak. But I'll wait patiently
for the disaster that will strike the people
who invaded us. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps.
27:14}
17 Fig trees may have no blossoms, no grapes
may be on the vines, and no olives may be
on the trees. And the fields may be bar-
ren, and flocks may die in the fields, and
cattle stalls may be empty. 18 Yet I'll rejoice
in the LORD and be joyful in the God of
my salvation. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps.
5:11} 19 You, my Sovereign LORD, give me
strength. You make my feet as sure as those
of a deer, and You help me stand on the
mountains. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen.
17:1} For the music director to be accom-
panied with stringed instruments.

Zephaniah

Ch 1: The Day of the LORD's Anger Is Coming ... 1302
Ch 2: Seek the LORD ... 1303
Ch 3: The Sins and Salvations of Jerusalem ... 1304

ZEPHANIAH

Key Words: *The day of the LORD's anger* (Zephaniah 2:3).

Key Verse: "Seek ye the LORD, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgment; seek righteousness, seek meekness: it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the LORD's anger" (2:3).

Theme: Zephaniah (means the LORD hides) was the great-great-grandson of Hezekiah, the king who reformed and brought revival to Jerusalem. Then Zephaniah prophesied during King Josiah, also a revival king. Zephaniah wrote before A.D. 612 because he predicted Nineveh will fall. He also prophesied prior to Josiah's 18th year (622 B.C.)

Zephaniah's key words, "The day of the Lord's anger" described Nebuchadnezzar's invasion—judgment, but he also predicts the restoration of Israel and God's blessing on them. *Lord, I know You judge sin because You punished Christ for my sins, and now I enjoy restoration to Your favor and I enjoy spiritual prosperity. Amen.*

Zephaniah 1

The Day of the LORD's Anger Is Coming

1 I'm Zephaniah, son of Cushi, grandson of Gedaliah, great-grandson of Amariah, and great-great-grandson of Hezekiah. The LORD gave me this message when Josiah, son of Amon, was king of Judah. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
2 "I, the LORD, will destroy everything on the earth. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
3 I'll destroy people, animals, birds, and fish. I'll reduce the wicked to heaps of rubble along with all of the human race. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 4 I'll crush Judah and Jerusalem, and Baal will be completely wiped out. I'll destroy Baal's priests so that no one will even remember them. 5 People go on their rooftops to worship the sun, moon, and stars, and the god Molech while claiming to follow Me, the LORD. 6 I'll destroy those who used to worship Me but no longer do and those who no longer ask for Me to guide them." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}
7 Be quiet in the presence of the Sovereign LORD, for the day of the LORD's judgment is near. The LORD has prepared His people for a great slaughter and has consecrated those He has invited. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3}

Lord, everything is in Your hands. Humankind will not pollute itself to death, nor will mankind populate itself into extension. Mankind will not finish the earth with a nuclear explosion. Judgment is in Your hands. I accept it. Amen.

[8]"On that day," the LORD says, "I'll punish the princes and the king's sons and all those who wear pagan clothing. [9]I'll punish those who follow the pagan practices of stepping over the threshold and those who fill their pagan temples with loot gained by violence and deceit. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [10]On that day crying will be heard at Jerusalem's Fish Gate and the New Quarter, and a great noise will be heard in the hills. [11]If you live in the market area, you should wail because everyone who buys and sells there will die. [12]"I'll search Jerusalem with lanterns to find and punish those who are not worried, thinking I won't do anything good or bad. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [13]Their belongings will be looted, and their homes ransacked. They won't live in the new homes they've built, and they won't drink wine from the vineyards they've planted." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[14]That terrible day of the LORD will come soon and quickly. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} On that day strong men will cry bitterly. [15]"My anger will be poured out, and it will be a day of darkness, gloom, clouds, and blackness. [16]A trumpet and a battle cry will be sounded against walled cities and strong fortifications. [17]Because you have sinned against Me, you'll be helpless like a blind person. [18]Your blood and your insides will be poured out into the dust. Your silver and gold will not be able to save you on that day of My wrath. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} The whole land will be overrun by the fire of My jealousy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} I'll speedily get rid of all the people of Judah."

Lord, I fall on my face in humble submission to Your omnipotent plan for the ages. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} I wait silently for Your will to be done. Shhh, everyone, I'm worshiping. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} Amen.

Zephaniah 2

Seek the LORD

[1]Gather together and pray, you shameless nation, before it's too late. [2]Gather while there's still time, before judgment begins and that day of the LORD's wrath sweeps you away like chaff. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [3]Seek the LORD, you who are humble before Him, and obey Him. Do what is right and be humble, and perhaps you'll be safe when the LORD releases His anger. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

Lord, I am ready for judgment on this earth because Christ lives in my heart. I'm as sure for heaven as the promise of Christ who said,

"Those who come to Me, I will in no wise cast out" (John 6:37, ELT). And, I've confessed my sins clearly according to John 1:9, so I'm walking in fellowship with You. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} *Amen.*

4The Philistine cities of Gaza, Ashkelon, Ashdod, and Ekron will be left in ruins. 5How terrible it will be for you people of Philistia who live along the coast and in Canaan because He'll be against you too and will destroy you completely. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 6The coastal area will become a pasture, a place for shepherds' huts and sheep pens. 7The survivors of Judah will pasture their flocks there and in the evening they'll sleep in abandoned houses in Ashkelon. The LORD will care for them {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} and bring His people home from captivity.

8"I, the LORD, have heard Moab and Ammon mocking My people and invading their land. 9Now, as surely as I live," says the LORD of the Heavens, "Moab and Ammon will be completely destroyed like Sodom and Gomorrah. Their land will be covered with weeds and salt pits and eternal desolation. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Those of My people who are left will loot their belongings and will take over their land. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 10They'll be punished by Me, the LORD of the Heavens, because of their pride and their making fun of My people. 11I'll frighten them as I destroy all their idols. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then people of nations from around the world will worship Me. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 12And you people of Ethiopia will be killed by the sword.

13"I'll have the people to the north crush Assyria and make Nineveh a desolate dry desert. 14Wild animals will live in its rubble, and desert owls will live among its ruins and will hoot from its windows. Rubble will block all the doorways, and the cedar paneling will lie open to the wind and weather. 15This is the great city that was secure and boasted, 'No city is as great as I.' But now it is in complete ruins, a place for wild animals to live. Everyone who passes that way will sneer at the city and shake their heads in unbelief." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Zephaniah 3

The Sins and Salvation of Jerusalem

1"How terrible it will be for Jerusalem that rebellious and corrupt city. 2In her pride she doesn't listen to Me. In fact she refuses correction and doesn't trust Me or draw near to Me. 3Her leaders are like boisterous lions hunting for lions, and her judges are like wolves, who attack in the evening and leave nothing in the morning." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, there are corrupt rulers today, just as in Zephaniah's time. Deliver us from the sins of politicians. Lord, there are unscrupulous ministers today, just as in Zephaniah's time. God, save people from those who corrupt

Your Word. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Lord, revive Your people. Amen.

4"Jerusalem's so-called prophets are proud and unreliable. And her priests defile the temple and disobey My laws. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 5But I'm there in the city and I do no wrong. Every morning I see that justice is done, {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} yet the wicked pay no attention and know no shame.
6"I, the LORD, have wiped out many nations, and demolished their fortresses. Now their cities are in ruins and are deserted with no survivors. With the cities destroyed, no one is left to tell what happened. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 7I thought that you would listen to Me and obey Me. Then I wouldn't punish you. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} But you were eager to go on sinning. 8Then I said, 'The time is coming when I'll accuse the nations of their sins. I'll gather all the nations together {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and pour out My anger. I'll consume the earth in My jealousy.'"

Lord, I don't fear the final judgment throne because I am safe in Christ. But I know that all will be judged by two criteria. First, they will be asked if they have believed in Christ. If so, their name is listed in the Lamb's book of life (Rev. 21:27). Second, people will be judged by the "Book of works," that is, what have they done with the light they have (Rev. 20:12, 13). This will determine the severity of their punishment. Lord, it's good to know You are truthful to reward good, and You are truthful to not let one evil deed go unpunished. Amen.

9"'On that day I'll purify the speech of everyone, so that they may worship Me together. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 10My people who live beyond Ethiopia will bring Me offerings. 11Then you'll no longer need to be ashamed. I'll get rid of the proud people among you, and there'll be no arrogance on My holy mountain. 12Those who are left will be the humble and those who trust in Me. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 13The survivors will live right and won't tell lies or deceive each other. They'll eat, live peaceful lives, and lie down in safety with nothing to fear. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
14"'Sing, O daughter of Zion, and shout, O Israel. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} Be glad with all your heart. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 15I'll cause your enemies to leave. And I, the King of Israel, will live with you. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Your troubles will finally be over, and you won't have to worry about harm. 16In that future day people will say to you, "Don't be discouraged or weak. 17I, your God, am with you, and I can rescue you. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} I'll take great delight in you, I'll calm all your fears with My love, and I'll sing with joy because of you."'"

Lord, when You sing over me, I sing back to You the melody and words, I sing: "Holy, Holy, Holy... early in the morning, my song

shall rise to Thee." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} Amen.

18"You who were mourning because of My religious festivals, will no longer be a burden to you. 19I'll punish those who mistreated you, and I'll save the weak and helpless ones. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I'll regather those who have been scattered, and I'll honor My people who were captives, and were mocked and shamed. 20At that time I'll gather you together {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} and bring you home again. I'll give you a good name and I'll praise you among all the nations of the earth. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} They'll honor you when I restore your prosperity in your homeland. I, the LORD have spoken these words."

Haggai

Ch 1: Rebuild the House of the LORD 1309
Ch 2: The LORD's House Will Be Filled with Glory 1310

HAGGAI

Key Word: *Consider* (Haggai 1:5, 7; 2:15, 18)

Key Verse: "Consider your ways. Go up to the mountain, and bring wood, and build the house; and I will take pleasure in it, and I will be glorified, saith the LORD" (1:7, 8).

Theme: Haggai preached to the Jews who came back from the Babylonian captivity (beginning in 520 B.C., Zech. 1:1, 7). He called the people to proper worship as his first priority. He motivated the Jews to rebuild the temple, that is, the house of worship. To do this, he motivated the people to gather the materials to start the work (Hag. 1:7, 8). His key phrase was to "think about" or "consider" the consequences if they didn't, but also consider that the glory of God would fill the house (2:9).

Haggai reminds us that God and His work are more important than our homes, jobs, and material things. If we don't put God first, our prayers won't be answered. *Lord, I surrender everything I have to You—all my belongings—to be used to worship and glorify You. Amen.*

Haggai 1

Rebuild the House of the LORD

1 In August of the second year of the reign of King Darius over Persia, the LORD
told me, Haggai the prophet, to give this message {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1,
14} to Zerubbabel, Judah's governor, and to Joshua, the high priest. {160 Family-Heri-
tage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 2 "I, the LORD, said, 'You say it isn't time to rebuild the tem-
ple.'" {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} 3 Then the Word of the LORD came by
Haggai, saying, 4 "But is it right for you to live in expensive houses when the temple is in
ruins?" {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 5 "But I, the LORD of the Heavens, say, 'Look
at what's happening. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} 6 You've planted a lot, but you've
harvested only a little. You never have enough food to eat, or wine to drink, or enough
clothing to keep you warm. Your income disappears as if you were putting it in pockets
with holes.'" {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, show me where to spend everything. Guide me in managing my money. I will give back to You what I am supposed to give to You. {539 Worship-Ministry Prayer, Heb. 13:15} I will get happiness from You, not from money. Amen.

7"Think of what I said," {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} says the LORD of the Heavens. 8"Go to the hills, bring down timber, and rebuild My temple. Then I'll be pleased with it and I will be worshiped there. 9You hoped for rich harvests, but when you brought your harvest home, I blew it away. Why did I do this? Because My temple is in ruins and you don't seem to care." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3}

The people were greedy. The greater their greed for money, the greater their disappointment with life. Those who find their satisfaction in God find the true meaning of a satisfying life. Lord, I will seek first the Kingdom of God and Your honor in my life, then I will find the secret to the meaning of life. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} Amen.

10"That explains why I'm holding off morning dew and the rain and you have no crops. 11So a drought will wither your grain, grapes, and olives and all your other crops. So you and your cattle will starve, and the drought will ruin everything." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3}

12Zerubbabel and Joshua and a few others who returned from being captives obeyed Haggai's message from the LORD {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and started worshiping Him sincerely. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 13Then I, Haggai, gave this message from the LORD: "I'm with you, and I'll bless you." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 14Then the LORD of the Heavens gave them a desire to work on the temple. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} 15And the work began in September of Darius' second year as king.

Haggai 2

The LORD's House Will Be Filled with Glory

1The next month the LORD told Haggai to 2ask Governor Zerubbabel and High Priest Joshua and all the others this question: {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 3"Does anyone here remember how wonderful the temple used to be? {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Now by contrast it seems like nothing. 4But take courage, because I, the LORD of the Heavens, will be with you to help you. I'm with you," {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} says the LORD of the Heavens. 5"When I rescued you from Egypt, I promised your ancestors that My Spirit would be with you. So don't be afraid.

6"I, the LORD of the Heavens say in just a little while I'll shake the heavens and the earth, the sea and the dry land. 7I'll shake the nations {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev.

22:20} and encourage them to bring their treasures to the temple. Then the brightness of My glory will fill the temple." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Haggai pointed the people to the coming Messiah—Jesus Christ—who eventually would be the final answer to political problems. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} "The desire of all nations shall come" (Hag. 2:7, KJV). Lord, I will work to make my nation the best it can humanly become. Yet, I will look for Jesus who will set up His Kingdom and He will rule the world in peace. Amen.

8"All silver and gold are Mine,'" says the LORD of the Heavens. 9"So the future of this temple will be greater than the first temple. And here I'll bring peace," says the LORD of the Heavens. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Usually the work we do for God is not as big as we want it to be, nor is it as perfect as we want it to be. In the same way the prophet Haggai was encouraging the people not to look at the present size or beauty of the temple. He wanted them to focus their attention on the future temple and what a glorious thing it would be. Lord, put within me a spirit of perfection that no matter what I do, I can always do it better. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} Lord, keep me from getting discouraged with today's church, and remind me of what the future will be like. May I always have a great desire for the One who will come, even Jesus. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} Amen.

10In the next month the LORD of the Heavens told Haggai 11to ask the priests this question: 12"If one of you is carrying some meat in your robe to be sacrificed to God and the clothing rubs against some bread or stew or wine or olive oil or some food, would those foods that were touched be acceptable for sacrifice?" The priests answered, "No." 13Then Haggai said, "If someone becomes ceremonially unclean by touching a dead body, and then brushes against those foods, would the meat for sacrifice be defiled?" The priests answered, "Yes."

Haggai said that contaminated food when it touches good food doesn't become good just by touching it. So the new altar will not become good, just by building it on the site of the former altar (Hag. 2:12-14). Lord, remind me that one little sin pollutes all it touches and one little wrong action corrupts my entire life. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} Lord, I will be holy in heart so I may be holy in life. Amen.

14So Haggai then said, "You people {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} were defiling your sacrifices by selfish attitudes and evil hearts. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 15But from now on things will be better. Before you started laying the temple foundation, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 16when you hoped for a 20-bushel crop, you harvested only 10. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

And when you hoped to get 50 gallons
from the winepress, you got only 20. [17]I
sent blight and mildew and hail on the
work of your hands, but you still didn't
return to Him. {268 Judgmental-Praying,
Acts 5:4, 9}
[18]"'Today you've completed building the
temple foundation, so think now of the
future. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps.
16:11} [19]You haven't yet harvested any
grain, grapes, figs, pomegranates, or olives.
{267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} But I'll
richly bless you from this day onward." {44
Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4}
[20]That same day the LORD gave this mes-
sage to Haggai: [21]"Tell Governor Zerub-
babel that I'll shake the heavens and the
earth and [22]I'll overthrow kings and their
kingdoms. {250 Intercessory Prayer for
Nations, Matt. 28:19} I'll overturn chari-
ots and their drivers, and horses and their
riders will fall as the troops slaughter
each other. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.
17:5} [23]Then when that happens," says the
LORD of the Heavens, "O Zerubbabel
My servant, I'll honor you like a signet
ring on My finger, for I, the LORD of the
Heavens, have chosen you to be My ser-
vant." {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num.
6:23-26}

Zechariah

Ch 1: Return to the LORD 1314
Ch 2: Man with a Measuring Line 1316
Ch 3: A Vision about Joshua 1316
Ch 4: The Golden Lamp Stand 1318
Ch 5: The Flying Scroll 1319
Ch 6: The Four Chariots 1319
Ch 7: Show Justice and Mercy toward Others .. 1320
Ch 8: Jerusalem Will Be Restored 1321
Ch 9: The LORD Will Judge Israel's Enemies 1323
Ch 10: The Lord Restores His People 1324
Ch 11: The Two Shepherds 1325
Ch 12: Jerusalem's Enemies Will Be Destroyed .. 1326
Ch 13: God's People Cleansed 1327
Ch 14: The LORD Will Be King 1328

ZECHARIAH

Key Words: *The Lord of hosts* (Zechariah 4:6)

Key Verse: "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts" (4:6).

Theme: Zechariah began prophesying in 520 B.C. about 2 months after Haggai prophesied. The Babylonian kingdom had previously fallen to the Medo-Persian Empire in 539 B.C., and a year later, King Cyrus specifically predicted by Isaiah 44:24-28; 45:1-13, issued a decree which allowed some of the Jews to return to their homeland (2 Chron. 36:22-23 and Ezra 1:1-11; 2:1 ff.). Approximately 42,000 of the exiles made the long trip under the leadership of Zerubbabel and Joshua (Ezra 2:2, 64). By 536 B.C., the first group had arrived in Palestine and laid the foundation of the temple. However, because of opposition from neighboring peoples, work on the temple stopped (4:4-5).

Construction was not resumed until God raised up two prophets (Haggai and Zechariah) 16 years later. They preached to motivate the Jewish people to complete the reconstruction project. The combined preaching of these two prophets—Haggai and Zechariah—was perhaps the most effective preaching ever. The people began building the temple immediately, and didn't stop until it was finished. *Lord, thank You for effective preachers of Your Word. May Your preachers be effective today. Use me as You used Haggai and Zechariah. Amen.*

Zechariah 1

Return to the LORD

1 I'm the prophet Zechariah, the son of Berechiah, and the grandson of Iddo. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} In the fall of the second year of Darius' reign as king of Persia, the LORD gave me this message: 2 Israel, "I, the LORD of the Heavens, was very angry with your ancestors. 3 But if you return to Me, I'll return to you. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} 4 Don't be like your ancestors who wouldn't listen when prophets told them to turn from their evil ways. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 5 Your ancestors and their prophets have been dead a long time. 6 Everything I said through My prophets happened to your ancestors. So they turned back to Me {440 Sin-Realization

Prayer, Eph. 4:22} and said, 'LORD of the Heavens, You have punished us as You said You would do.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Lord, You never change. You are always angry with disobedience and rebellion. I repent of my laziness, disobedience, and procrastination. Forgive me for my rebellion. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} Help me obey instantly when You speak. Don't deal with me in judgment, but look at me through eyes of grace. Amen.

7In February of the second year of Darius' reign, the LORD gave me, Zechariah, another message. 8I said, "In a night vision {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} I saw a man on a red horse standing among some myrtle trees in a valley. Behind him were riders on red, brown, and white horses. An angel was standing near me, 9and so I asked him who these riders were. 'I'll tell you,' the angel answered. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 10Then the man standing among the myrtle trees said, 'These are the ones the LORD has sent to find out what's happening on the earth. 11Then the riders said to the angel of the LORD, 'We have gone everywhere and have seen that the whole world is at peace.'{250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} 12Then the angel of the LORD said, 'O LORD of the Heavens, You've been angry with Jerusalem and the towns of Judah for 70 years. Will You ever show mercy to them?'"

13The LORD answered with kind words to the angel who then spoke to me. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} 14The angel said, "Shout this message for everyone to hear: 'I, the LORD of the Heavens, love Jerusalem. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 15I'm very angry with other nations that enjoy security. I was a little angry with My people, but the nations punished them more than I intended. 16Therefore I'll show mercy to Jerusalem {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} and My temple will be rebuilt. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 17I, the LORD of the Heavens, say again that the towns of Israel will prosper and I'll comfort the people of Zion.'" {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

Lord, I love those places You love. I love those places where You manifest Yourself to me. I will go back to them when I feel empty. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} But when I can't go physically, I will visit them in my mind. I will seek Your presence everywhere. You have said, "I am with you always, even unto the end of the world" (Matt. 28:20, KJV). Amen.

18Then I saw four animal horns. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 19I asked the angel what they were. And the angel answered, "These horns represent the nations that scattered the people of Jerusalem, Judah, and Israel." 20Then the LORD showed me four blacksmiths, 21and I asked, "What will they do?" The LORD

replied, "They will terrify and crush the four horns." {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

Zechariah 2

Man with a Measuring Line

[1]Then when I looked up, I saw a man with a yardstick in his hand. [2]When I asked him where he was going, he said, "To measure the width and length of Jerusalem." {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [3]Then the angel who was talking with me left and another angel came to meet him. [4]This other angel said, "Hurry and tell that man with the yardstick that someday Jerusalem will be so full of people and animals that many will have to live outside the city walls and yet they'll be safe. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [5]The LORD Himself will be a protective wall of fire around Jerusalem, and He'll be the splendor of the city." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, I know Your protection for Jerusalem will be great, but Your protection of me will be even greater. As much as You love a city, You love people even more. {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} Lord, I feel secure when You protect me. Amen.

[6]The LORD then said, "My people in captivity, run from the land of the north, from Babylon. I scattered you to the four winds, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [7]but I'll bring you back to Jerusalem." [8]Then the LORD of the Heavens sent me, Zechariah, against the nations that oppressed You {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} because He said that anyone who harms you is like hurting His eye. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

Lord, I pray daily, "Deliver me from evil" which means I ask You to deliver me from the evil one. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} If satan can't tempt me to sin, he will try to destroy me with persecution or trials. He even uses accidents to destroy Your people. Protect me by Your presence. Amen.

[9]"I'll raise My fist against your enemies and their slaves will become their rulers. Then you'll know that the LORD of the Heavens has sent Me.
[10]"Shout, O Daughter of Zion, for I'm coming to live among you. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [11]Many nations will turn to Him and be His people, {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} and they'll know that the LORD of the Heavens sent Me to you. [12]Judah will be part of the Holy Land, and He'll again choose Jerusalem as His very own city. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} [13]So everyone, be silent before the LORD because He has come to earth from heaven." {437 Silent-Worship Prayer, Rev. 8:1}

Zechariah 3

A Vision about Joshua

[1]Then the angel who had been talking with me showed me Joshua the high

priest standing in front of the angel of the LORD. And satan was there standing at Joshua's right side, accusing him of many things. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 2The LORD said to satan, "Satan, these accusations are wrong. I've chosen Jerusalem as My holy city, {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} and Joshua, like My people, has been snatched from the fire of captivity."

Lord, I've never seen satan in my presence, but I believe it because You said satan would come to tempt me. Thank You for this picture so I'll protect myself with prayer and the Word of God. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} Lord, give me wisdom to know how to thwart satan's attacks, and give me power to do Your will in victory. Amen.

3Joshua's clothing was filthy as he stood before the angel. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 4So the angel told some people there to remove his clothing. Turning to Joshua the angel said, "Removing these clothes of yours means you and my people are foreign. Now I'll give you new clothes." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

5I, Zechariah, then said, "Could he also have a clean turban?" So they gave him priestly clothes and a turban. 6Then the angel of the LORD said to Joshua, 7"'This is what the LORD of the Heavens says: 'If you follow Me and obey My commands, {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} then I'll put you in charge of My temple and the courtyard. I'll let you be with Me and those angels. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 8Listen carefully, Joshua the high priest and the other priests with you. You are a sign of good things to come, because you, Joshua, represent My Servant, the Branch Descendant of David, whom I'll send.'" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

Christ is called a Branch, which is a description of a live sprout that springs up out of a dead stump. The Kingdom of David that ruled from Jerusalem was cut down by Nebuchadnezzar in 586 B.C. But the great tree that was the Kingdom of David will come back in a sprout—a branch—that will grow. Jesus is the Branch who will rule from Jerusalem in the future millennium. Lord, thank You for the promise that Christ will come back as the Servant-King. What I see predicted in the Old Testament is fulfilled in the New Testament. Truly, Yours is a supernatural book and its promises have transformed me. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} Amen.

9"'And Joshua, I've set a stone in front of you with seven sides. I, the LORD of the Heavens, will engrave this inscription on each of the seven sides: "I'll remove the sins of this land in a single day." 10'On that day,' says the LORD of the Heavens, 'you'll live in peace and you'll invite your neighbors to sit under your vineyard and fig tree.'" {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

Zechariah 4

The Golden Lamp Stand

[1]Then the angel who had been talking with me woke me up [2]and said, "What do you see?" I answered, "I see a golden lampstand {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} with a bowl of olive oil on top of it. Around the bowl are seven lamps, each with seven flames. [3]And I see two olive trees, one on each side of the lampstand." {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [4]I asked the angel what these mean. [5]He said, "Don't you know?" I said, "No, I don't." [6]Then he said, "This is what the LORD says to you: 'I'm the LORD of the Heavens. So don't depend on your power or strength, but on My Spirit.'" {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4}

Lord, I will look to the Holy Spirit who does the real spiritual work. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} It is not me, nor is it human effort. Lord, it's Your Spirit. So today, Holy Spirit come to me, indwell my heart, anoint my words; use me in the work of Jesus Christ. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} I can't do it without You! Amen.

[7]"'Zerubbabel, no mountain, however high, can stand against you. It'll be leveled to the ground. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} Then you'll set in place the east stone of the temple and everyone will shout, "May God bless it, He is very kind."'"
[8]Then the LORD gave me another message. He said, [9]"'Zerubabbel laid the foundation of the temple, and he'll complete it. (Then everyone will know that the LORD of the Heavens sent this message to me.) [10]Don't make fun of this small beginning, {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} because I'm glad to see a work begin and to see the plumb line in Zerubbabel's hand. These seven lamps represent My eyes that see everything in the world." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

The Jews who returned to Jerusalem from Babylon were a small remnant and the wall, temple, and houses of Jerusalem would not be as glorious as the city destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Lord, I will not compare Your inward work within the heart to the outward show of the world. Outwardly the church seems small, but it is powerful to transform drunks, make godly women out of prostitutes, and turn a murderer into an apostle Paul. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} Lord, give me Your eyes to see Your work from the Divine perspective. Forgive my pessimism, and complaint about being small. Lord, help me see Your work or potential for what You're doing and will do. Amen.

[11]Then I asked the angel, "What are those two olive trees on each side of the lampstand? [12]And what is the meaning of the two olive branches that pour oil through two gold tubes?" [13]He asked, "Don't you know?" I said, "No, I don't." [14]Then he said, "They represent two chosen leaders who'll serve the LORD, that is, Joshua the priest and Zerubbabel the leader speaking of the Messiah, who is both Priest and

King." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

Zechariah 5

The Flying Scroll

[1]When I looked up I saw a scroll flying through the air. [2]When the angel asked what I saw, I said, "A flying scroll that is about 30 feet long and 15 feet wide. [3]Then the angel said, "This scroll records God's curse that is going out over all the land. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} One side says that those who stole will be destroyed, and the other side says that those who tell lies will be destroyed. [4]"I, the LORD of the Heavens, say that I'm sending this curse into the home of every thief and everyone who lies. And the curse will be there until every piece of wood and stone is destroyed."

Lord, I will not swear or curse with Your name. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} When and if I have cursed in the past—forgive me. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} Indwell my heart and guard my mouth so I might not sin with a curse or swear word. Amen.

[5]Then the angel who was talking with me said, "Look up and tell me what you see." [6]"I don't know what it is," I said. So he told me, "It's a measuring bushel, and it's filled with the sins of everyone in the land." [7]Suddenly the lead cover came off the basket and in the basket was a woman. [8]The angel said, "The name of the woman is Wickedness," {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and he pushed her back into the basket and put the lead cover back on it.
[9]Then I saw these women flying toward us. They had wings like those of a stork, and they took the basket and flew off with it. [10]I asked, "Where are they taking the basket?" [11]He said, "To Babylonia. They'll build a place for the basket, and there it'll stay." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Zechariah 6

The Four Chariots

[1]Then I looked up again and saw four chariots coming from between two bronze mountains. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} [2]The first chariot was led by red horses, the second by black horses, [3]the third by white horses, and the fourth by spotted gray horses. [4]When I asked the angel who was talking with me what these were, [5]he said, "These are the angels of heaven who stand before the Lord of all the earth. They are going east to do His work of judgment. [6]The chariot with black horses is going north to Babylon. The chariot with white horses is going west after them. The chariot with spotted gray horses is going south."
[7]The red horses were eager to be off and to patrol the earth, {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} so the LORD told them to go so they left at once. [8]Then the LORD said, "Those who went north have quieted my wrath there." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Perhaps God allowed four world rulers to conquer the known world so we could see what could be done—that one day Christ will rule the world. Also, God allowed these empires to express their evil ambitions to show us that human government will never be perfect. But when Christ rules, then peace will come and all men will trust all other men rightly. Lord, I pray the Lord's Prayer, "Thy Kingdom come... on earth as You rule in heaven." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Amen.

9In another message the LORD said,
10"Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah have returned from Babylon. Meet them at the home of Josiah, son of Zephaniah. They'll bring silver and gold from the captives in Babylon, and 11from their silver and gold make a crown and put it on the head of Joshua the high priest. 12Tell him that I, the LORD of the Heavens, say, 'You represent the One who will come who will be called the Branch {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} and He'll build My temple. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} 13He'll receive royal honor {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} and will rule as king. He'll also serve as priest, and there'll be perfect harmony between His two roles as king and priest. 14The crown will be kept in the temple to honor those who gave silver and gold for it—Heldai, Tobijah, and Jedaiah, along with Josiah, the son of Zephaniah. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
15"'Many people will come from other nations to help build the temple. And this will help you know My messages have been from Me, the LORD of the Heavens. All this will happen if you obey My commands.'" {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2}

Zechariah 7

Show Justice and Mercy toward Others

1In December of the fourth year of King Darius' reign as king of Persia, the LORD gave me this message. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 2The people of Bethel sent Sharezer and Regem-Melech and their men to ask the LORD's favor. 3They asked the prophets and priests at the temple of the LORD of the Heavens, "Shall we continue to mourn and go without food in the fifth month of each year, as we've done for so long?" {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

Has a tradition ever lost its meaning to you? Israel fasted and held a solemn service {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} to ask for forgiveness in the 5th month. That was the month the temple and Jerusalem were destroyed. Now the temple was being rebuilt. They asked God, "Do we still have to fast on the 5th month?" Lord, it's good to remember my failures because there I see Your forgiveness and restorative power. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} Lord, I will look back and praise You for Your patience.

Thank You for not destroying me. Now I will serve You with all my heart. Amen.

4The LORD of the Heavens told me 5to tell everyone including the priests, "During your 70 years of captivity when you mourned and went without eating every August and October, did you really do this for Me? {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 6And during your holy festivals you don't think of Me, you think only of pleasing yourselves. 7This is the same message I gave the prophets years ago when Jerusalem and the towns in Judah were filled with people, including the Southern Desert and foothills."

8Then the LORD gave Zechariah this message: 9"'This is what the LORD of the Heavens says: 'See that justice is done, be honest, and show mercy and kindness to each other. 10Don't mistreat widows, orphans, foreign residents, and poor people, and don't plan to hurt each other. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 11Your ancestors turned against Me, and they put their fingers in their ears to keep from hearing My message. 12They hardened their hearts, afraid to hear the words I, the LORD of the Heavens, sent them by My Spirit through the prophets. This is why I was so angry with them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

13"'When I called to them, they refused to listen. So now when they call to Me, I refuse to listen,' says the LORD of the Heavens. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} 14"So I scattered them among distant nations like a whirlwind scattering debris. They lived there as strangers, and their own land became like a desolate desert. No one traveled through it. The land that had been so pleasant was now empty of people and in ruins.'" {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Zechariah 8

Jerusalem Will Be Restored

1The LORD of the Heavens gave me another message: 2"My love for Zion is so great that I'm angry at what her enemies have done to her. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 3I'll return to Mount Zion and live in Jerusalem. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} Jerusalem will be called The Faithful City, The Holy Mountain, and The Mountain of the LORD of the Heavens."

One of the great promises God made to His people was "I will dwell inside Jerusalem." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Jesus' greater promise is, "I am with you always, even to the end of the age" (Matt. 28:20, NKJV). Lord, I am overwhelmed that You would live with me, and You dwell in me (John 14:20). Lord, help me be a good testimony to Your indwelling. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} Thank You for Your presence. I will talk to You as I go about my daily activities. Don't ever leave me. Amen.

4"I say that again older people will walk on her streets using canes, and will sit together and visit. 5And boys and girls

will be playing on the street. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
6"All this may seem impossible now for you, a small and discouraged number of people. But it is not impossible for Me, the LORD of the Heavens. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 7You can be sure that I'll rescue My people from the east and the west, {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 8and I'll bring them back to Jerusalem. They'll be My people, and I'll be their God, faithful and just to them."

Lord, thank You for what You will do for Your people, Israel. I look forward to living with You in the future. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} Now for today, I look to You to protect and guide me. May I glorify You today. Amen.

9"I, the LORD of the Heavens, say, 'Finish the job. Think about what the prophets said {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} when you began laying the foundation of the temple. 10Before work on the temple began, there were no jobs. And if you left the city, you wouldn't be safe because enemies are everywhere. 11But things are different now,' says the LORD of the Heavens. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 12'I'm planting seeds of peace and prosperity among you. Grapevines will have lots of grapes, your ground will produce crops, and dew will be plentiful. Judah and Israel, you'll be a blessing to other nations. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 13You were cursed by them, but no longer. I'll rescue you and make you a blessing to them. So don't be afraid or discouraged. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}
14"'When your ancestors made Me angry, I decided to punish them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 15But now that I've decided to bless Jerusalem and Judah with kindness, I won't change My mind. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} So don't be afraid. 16You must always tell the truth, be fair in court decisions, and be at peace with each other. 17Don't make plans to hurt each other, and don't say something is true when it isn't. I hate all these things' says the LORD." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
18Here's another message to me from the LORD of the Heavens: 19"'The times of mourning and going without food {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} that you have kept in July, August, October, and January will now become festivals of joy. So love truth and peace." {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 20The LORD of the Heavens says that people from around the world will go to Jerusalem. 21People in one city will say to friends in another city, 'Let's go to Jerusalem together to ask the LORD to bless us. {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17} Come join me.' 22So people from every nation, even powerful ones, will come to Jerusalem to seek Me, the LORD of the Heavens, and to ask Me to bless them. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} 23In those days, 10 men from 10 different nations will grab a Jew and will say, 'May we go with you to Jerusalem? We've heard that God is with you.'"

{249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1}

Zechariah 9

The LORD Will Judge Israel's Enemies

[1]This is the LORD's message {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} against Hadrach and Damascus, cities in Syria. "I'm watching everyone, including all the tribes of Israel. [2]I'll judge Hamath, near Damascus, and also Tyre and Sidon, though they are shrewd. [3]Tyre built a strong fortress, and she's piled up silver and gold like dust in the streets. [4]But now I'll make her poor, toss her fortresses into the sea, and burn her to the ground. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[5]"Ashkelon, Gaza, and Ekron will be filled with fear when they see what will happen to Tyre. Gaza's king will be killed, and Ashkelon will be deserted. [6]Foreigners will occupy Ashdod, the Philistines' great city. [7]I'll keep her from eating meat with blood in it or any other unclean food. Surviving Philistines will worship Me and become part of My people. The Philistines of Ekron will join My people, as did the Jebusites. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [8]I'll guard My temple from invading armies. I'll watch these enemies closely {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} so that no foreigners will again overrun My land. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

[9]"O My people, rejoice. Everyone in Jerusalem, shout with joy. Why? Because your King is coming. He is righteous {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} and victorious and humble, riding on a donkey's foal." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

The people were worried about world-conquering armies. Nebuchadnezzar and Cyrus had turned the world upside down. Now God predicts the Messiah will be greater than any conqueror. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} He would enter the world scene on a donkey (a peace animal used for work). Messiah would not come on a giant conquering horse as Alexander the Great. Messiah would be gentle. Jesus fulfilled this prophecy on Palm Sunday. He didn't come to sit on a political throne (eventually He would do this) but Jesus came to sit on the throne of our hearts. When Jesus conquers individuals, He also conquers nations. He will rule from the inside out. Lord, come sit on the throne of my heart; conquer me, rule me, and use me. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Amen.

[10]"I, the LORD, will take away chariots and horses from Israel and warhorses from Jerusalem. I'll break all the weapons of warfare, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and your King will bring worldwide peace and He'll rule from sea to sea. His kingdom will extend from the Euphrates River to all the earth. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

[11]"Because of the agreement I made with you, sealed with blood, I'll free your prisoners from death in a waterless pit. [12]Return to Jerusalem, your place of safety, for there is hope for you. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment

Prayer, John 10:10} [13]Judah is My bow, and Israel is My arrow. I'll take the people of Zion as My sword to attack the Greeks. {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1}
[14]"I'll appear over you, My people, as you are in battle. Your arrow will fly like lightning. I, the Sovereign LORD, will sound My trumpet, and I'll go against My enemies like a whirlwind from the desert in the south. [15]I, the LORD of the Heavens, will protect you, My people, and will defeat your enemies with sling stones. You'll shout in battle like men who are drunk. You'll shed your enemies' blood, enough to fill a bowl. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[16]"I'll rescue you, My people, much as a shepherd rescues a sheep. You'll sparkle in My land like jewels in a crown. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [17]How wonderful everything will be. Young people will thrive on the great amount of grain and new wine." {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

Zechariah 10

The Lord Restores His People

[1]"Ask Me for rain in the spring, and I'll give it. I make storm clouds and send rain to make your fields produce. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [2]Idols give bad advice, fortune-tellers tell lies, and interpreters of dreams tell what doesn't come true. My people wander like sheep who have no shepherd to guide them.
[3]"I'm angry with the shepherds (leaders), and I'll punish them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} I, the LORD of the Heavens, will look after My flock of Judah, and I'll make them strong like a warhorse in battle. [4]From Judah will come leaders who'll be strong like a cornerstone, {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} a tent peg, and a battle bow."

Jesus is the Stone on which God built His work. The people were looking for physical stones for the physical temple, but God tells them He will send the Cornerstone (Eph. 2:20), who is the Messiah. They wanted a place of worship; God tells them to seek the person of worship. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} The Jews wanted to approach God in the new temple; God was telling them their Messiah was the temple. Lord, help me not seek You in places but help me seek Your person. Lord, I will come to You, and build You up as the sanctuary. Lord, I will seek You as the most important object of my worship. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} Amen.

[5]"They'll be like mighty soldiers, trampling their enemies in the mud. I'll be with them as they fight, and their enemy is doomed. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}
[6]"I'll strengthen Judah and Israel because I love them. I'll hear their prayers, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and it will be as though I had never rejected them. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [7]Israel will be like strong soldiers, happy as with wine. And their children will see this and be happy in the LORD. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [8]I'll signal for them,

because I've rescued them. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} From their few members, their population will grow again."

Lord, when You whistle for me, I will come. There were times I didn't come home immediately; forgive me. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} When I come home at Your call, feed me. Amen.

9"I've scattered them like seeds among the nations, but they'll remember Me. They and their children will return {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} 10from Egypt and Assyria and will settle them again as far away as Gilead and Lebanon. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} There'll scarcely be enough room for everyone. 11My people will go safely through a sea of troubles. I'll hold back the waves, and even the Nile River will become dry. Assyria's pride will be put down, and the rule of Egypt over My people will end. 12I'll strengthen My people, and their conduct will glorify Me." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

Zechariah 11

The Two Shepherds

1"Lebanon, open your gates so that fire will destroy your cedar forests. 2Cypress trees weep because the great cedar trees have fallen. And weep, you oak trees of Bashan as you watch dense forests being cut down. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 3Listen to the shepherds weeping {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because their pastures are burned. Listen to the roaring of the lions because the Jordan Valley is in ruins."

4Then the LORD my God said to me, "Go take care of those sheep who are to be slaughtered. 5The people who bring them go unpunished. And the people who sell them will say, 'Praise the LORD, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} I'm rich.' 6I'll no longer have pity on the people of the land. Their wicked leaders will kill them, and they'll turn the land into a desert, and I won't rescue them." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

7So I pastured the sheep who were to be slaughtered. I took two shepherd staffs and named one Favor and the other Union. 8In a month I became impatient with three evil shepherds and got rid of them. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 9I told them I wouldn't be their shepherd any longer. Let the dying die, and the perishing perish; I don't care. And let the others destroy themselves. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10I broke my staff called Favor to show that the LORD had broken His contract with everyone. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 11Those who bought and sold sheep knew that this was a message from the LORD. 12I told them to pay me my wages if they thought they should. So they gave me 30 pieces of silver. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Hundreds of years before Judas betrayed Jesus for 30 pieces of silver, Zechariah predicted the event. God, who knows the future,

willingly sent His son to be betrayed. Notice the phrase, "broke the covenant" (v. 10). Judas covenanted to sell Jesus for 30 pieces. God covenanted to make Israel His people. Do you think when Judas made a different covenant that God broke His covenant with Israel? Note the text said, "This act broke the covenant which God had made with His people" (v. 10). And today the Jews are out of Divine favor (Rom. 11:13-26). Lord, I make a covenant to love and obey You. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} I will follow You and serve You. Thank You, Jesus, for going to the cross for me, even though Judas sold You for 30 pieces of silver. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Amen.

13 The LORD told me to toss the coins to the potter in the temple. So I did.

The prediction of the 30 pieces of silver is so accurate that it even describes Judas trying to return it to the priest, but it was used to buy a potter's field (Matt. 27:3-10). Lord, I am amazed at how accurately You predicted the "selling" of Jesus. I wonder how many people missed this fact when reading Scriptures. Help me not to miss important facts in Scriptures, but give me even deeper insight as I study Your Word. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Of all the small details about the crucifixion of Christ, this one small detail is included, probably because it grieved Your heart and probably because it technically broke Your covenant with Israel. Amen.

14 Then I broke the staff called Union to show that the union between Judah and Israel had been broken. 15 The LORD said to me, "Act like a worthless shepherd. This will picture how 16 I'll give this nation a shepherd, a worthless leader, who won't care for lost sheep and won't heal the sick or feed the healthy. Instead he'll dine on the fattest sheep and even tear off their hooves. 17 How terrible it will be for the worthless shepherd who deserts his flock. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} A sword will cut his arm and make it useless, and it will pierce his right eye and blind him."

Zechariah 12

Jerusalem's Enemies Will Be Destroyed

1 This is a message from the LORD about Israel: "I'm the LORD, who made the heavens and laid the foundations of the earth, {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} and gave breath to humans. 2 I'll make Jerusalem and Judah like a drink that makes nearby nations drunk {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} when they send their armies against Jerusalem. 3 And I'll make Jerusalem like a heavy stone {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} that will crush anyone who tries to lift it. 4 In that future day I'll make every horse panic and every rider frustrated. I'll watch over Judah, but I'll blind her enemies' horses. 5 The leaders of Judah will say, 'The people of Jerusalem are strong because they are trusting in their

God, the LORD of the Heavens.' {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
6"'In that future day I'll make the clans of Judah like a fire pan in a woodpile, or like a burning torch in a haystack. They'll burn up all the neighboring nations, but Jerusalem will be secure. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 7The LORD will give victory to the rest of Judah first, so that Jerusalem and David's royal line won't be proud of their success. 8On that future day I, the LORD, will defend Jerusalem. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} Even the weakest person there will be as strong as David. And his descendants will be like God, like the angel of the LORD going before them. 9On that future day I'll destroy every nation that attacks Jerusalem. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
10"'Then I'll pour out a spirit of grace and prayer on everyone in Jerusalem, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and they'll look on Him whom they pierced and mourn for Him as for an only son who died." {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31}

When Jesus returns, the Jews "will look at Me (Jesus) the One they have pierced" (v. 10). Then they will mourn. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} This is a two-fold mourning. Some who reject Jesus Christ will mourn for the judgment and punishment awaiting them. Other Jewish believers will mourn in regret for what the nation did to Jesus. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} Lord, I will mourn because my sins put Jesus on the tree. If it had not been for me, Jesus would not have had to suffer and die. Yes, He died for others also, but I mourn for my responsibility. Amen.

11"'In that future day everyone in Jerusalem will mourn like the people who mourned for Hadad Rimmon in Megiddo. 12All Israel will mourn with each family mourning, {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} and with the men mourning separately from the women. David's family will mourn, as will the family of Nathan, 13the family of Levi, and the family of Shimei, 14and all the other families, with husbands and wives mourning separately."

Zechariah 13

God's People Cleansed

1"'On that future day, there'll be a fountain where David's descendants and the people of Jerusalem {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} can wash away their sins and impurities. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} 2On that day, I, the LORD of the Heavens, will get rid of every idol. Even their names will be forgotten. And I'll get rid of false prophets and evil spirits that control them. 3If anyone begins prophesying as a false prophet again, his parents must warn him to stop because he's telling lies in the LORD's name. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} If he doesn't stop, then his parents must kill him with a sword. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
4"'No one will then boast of being a prophet, and no one will deceive people by wearing prophet's clothes. 5Instead

they'll say, 'I'm not a prophet. I've been a farmer all my life.' 6If someone asks him, 'What are these scars on your body?' he'll answer, 'I was wounded at the house of my friends.'"

Zechariah begins this chapter with the Lord speaking (v. 2). Then the Lord describes false prophets and the punishment that will come upon them. Then the Lord speaks for the discredited false prophets who make excuses to turn away punishments. Suddenly the conversation switches to the time when Messiah (Jesus) returns and regathers Israel; they will see His pierced hands, then ask, "What are these wounds?" {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Lord, I believe You died for my sins, and You rose the 3rd day to give me new life. I don't have to put my fingers in Your wounds to believe. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} You said, "Blessed are those that have not seen, and yet have believed." Amen.

7"Awake, O sword, against, My shepherd, the one who is My partner," says the LORD of the Heavens. "Attack the shepherd, and the sheep will scatter, and I'll be against the lambs."

The Scriptures predict the disciples would run away when Jesus was arrested and crucified. "Strike the Shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered" (v. 7). I can't imagine the excruciating agony on Jesus to be abandoned by those closest to Him. Lord, I know it pains You when followers turn back. Lord, I will not deny You, nor will I turn back from You. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} I re-commit myself to You, and will follow You. {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} Amen.

8"Only a third of the people in the land will be left alive in the land. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 9This third that remains I'll bring through the fire to purify them, just as silver and gold are tested and purified. They'll call on Me, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} and I'll answer them. I'll say, 'You are My people,' and they'll say, 'The LORD is our God.'" {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9}

Zechariah 14

The LORD Will Be King

1"The day of the LORD is coming {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} when all your belongings will be looted and divided among the soldiers. 2I'll gather all the nations to fight against Jerusalem. The city will be taken, houses robbed, and women raped. Half of the people will be taken into captivity, and the others will be allowed to stay. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

3"Then I, the LORD, will fight against those nations. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 4On that future day I'll stand on the Mount of Olives east of Jerusalem, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} and the mountain will split, forming a wide valley running from east to west." {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

The Bible predicts Jesus will return to earth at the same spot from which He left earth, that is, the Mount of Olives. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} *The angels told the disciples Jesus would return as He left (Acts 1:11). Have you seen all the similarities how Jesus left? He left unexpectedly, and no one knows the time of His return. He went up into heaven, so shall He return from heaven. He went up gradually which is how He will return. His followers saw Him leave, and they shall see Him return. He left when angels were present, so they shall be present when Jesus returns. The certainty of His ascension should give all of us assurance about His return. Lord, I look forward to Your return. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.* {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} *Amen.*

5"You'll escape through the valley for it will
reach to Azal, near Jerusalem. You'll run as
you ran from the earthquake when Uzziah
was king of Judah. Then I'll come with all
My angels and the saints in heaven.
6"The sun, moon, and stars won't shine
{221 Hidden Answers-Prayer, Rom. 11:33-
36} 7because it will be one continuous day.
I know how this can happen. There'll be
no normal daytime and nighttime. In the
evening it will still be light. {524 Waiting
for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}
8In summer and winter life-giving water
will flow from Jerusalem, some toward the
Dead Sea and some toward the Mediterra-
nean. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}
9I'll be King over all the earth and only
I, the LORD, will be worshiped." {316
Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}
10From Geba, north of Jerusalem, to Rim-
mon, south of Jerusalem, all the land will
be flatlands, with Jerusalem raised up to its
original height. It'll be full of people from
the Benjamin Gate to the Old Gate, and to
the Corner Gate, in the northeast part of
the city, and from the Tower of Hananel to
the king's winepresses. 11Jerusalem will be
filled with people and will be safe, never
again to be destroyed. {74 Coming-King-
dom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
12"I'll send a terrible disease on every
nation that fought against Jerusalem.
While standing there, their flesh will rot
away, their eyes will shrivel in their sockets,
and their tongues will rot in their mouths.
13On that future day I'll cause them to
panic in fear. They'll fight against each
other. 14And Judah will be fighting in Jeru-
salem. And the wealth of the neighboring
nations will be looted, including gold,
silver, and clothing. 15The same terrible
disease will hit horses, mules, camels, and
donkeys, and all other animals in the ene-
mies' camps. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}
16"Survivors from those nations that
attacked Jerusalem will go every year to
Jerusalem to worship Me, the LORD of
the Heavens, {541 Worship-Prayer, John
4:23} and to celebrate the Festival of Shel-
ters. 17If any nation refuses to go to Jerusa-
lem to worship Me, the King, the LORD
of the Heavens, they'll have no rain. 18If
Egyptians refuse to join with Israel in
celebrating My festivals, I'll punish them
with the same disease I'll send on other
nations that refuse to go. 19Their terrible

disease will strike Egypt and other nations that don't go to celebrate the festival. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}
20"On that future day the words 'Dedicated to the LORD' {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} will be engraved on the horses' harness bells. And the cooking pots used in the temple will be as sacred as the bowls used at the altar. 21In fact every cooking pot in Jerusalem will be sacred to Me, the LORD of the Heavens. People who come with sacrifices to the temple can use any of the pots to cook their sacrifices. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} There'll be no more merchants trading in My house, the LORD of the Heavens."

Malachi

Ch 1: The LORD Loves His People 1333
Ch 2: The LORD Commands the Priests 1335
Ch 3: Judgment Is Coming 1336
Ch 4: The Day of the LORD Is Coming 1337

MALACHI

Key Word: *Messenger* (Malachi 3:1)

Key Verse: "Behold, I will send my messenger, and he shall prepare the way before me: and the Lord, whom ye seek, shall suddenly come to his temple, even the messenger of the covenant, whom ye delight in: behold, he shall come, saith the LORD of hosts" (3:1).

Theme: The name Malachi means "my messenger." Malachi speaks for the Lord who calls him, "My messenger" (3:1). He is also called, "the Messenger of the Lord of hosts" (2:7). The emphasis of this book is on the message, and not the messenger, that is, Malachi. Therefore, 47 of the 55 verses are personal messages from the Lord. The Lord has always loved Israel in spite of her sin(s). He will still love Israel, and will always love Israel in the future. But Israel has not honored the Lord as a child should honor its father, or a slave should honor its master. Israel's sin—dishonest worship and deceitful rituals.

Malachi emphasizes giving God the best of everything in worship. This principle is still true. *Lord, I give You my whole heart. Pry open my hands from holding tightly to this world. Fix my grip on You. Amen.*

Malachi 1

The LORD Loves His People

1 I'm Malachi. And this is the message the LORD gave me for Israel.
2 "I've loved you deeply," I say. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} But you answer, "How have You loved me?" {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} I reply, "I showed you My love by loving your ancestor Jacob, instead of Esau, Jacob's older brother." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

Lord, thank You for Your love to me. Thank You for all You've done for me. You've given me a good conscience to know right and wrong. You've given me the Scriptures to guide me. You've given Jesus Christ to die for my sins. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} Thank You for everything. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} Amen.

3"I rejected Esau and I destroyed Esau's mountains and turned his land into a desert for wild dogs."

This chapter tells how God "hated Esau" (KJV), but wasn't it Esau who first rejected the spiritual birthright, that is, the opportunity to be the "priest" of the family and intercede for family members (Gen. 25:26-34)? Is God's hatred to Esau a reaction of Esau's rejection? Remember, "Esau despised his birthright" (Gen. 25:34). So Esau did more than turn his back on God, he hated God. Lord, I love You, and all the truths of Your salvation. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:10} I do not understand how anyone could despise You or Your offer of salvation. But they do! I will pray for them. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Amen.

4"If Esau's descendants say, 'We'll rebuild the ruins,' then I, the LORD of the Heavens will say, 'They may try to rebuild, but I'll destroy them again. Their country will be called The Land of Wickedness, and their people will be called Those with Whom the LORD Is Angry. 5When you see this destruction, you'll say "Truly, the LORD's power reaches beyond our borders."' {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5}

6"I, the LORD of the Heavens say to the priests, 'A son honors his father and a servant respects his master. I'm your father and master, so why don't you respect Me? You priests despise Me. But you ask, "How have we ever despised You?" 7You've despised Me by offering defiled food on My altar.' And you say, 'the LORD's altar deserves no respect.' 8Isn't it wrong to offer blind animals as sacrifices? And to offer crippled and diseased animals? If you offer gifts like this to your governor, he certainly won't be pleased. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

9"You ask Me to be merciful to you. But why should I when you bring that kind of offering? 10I wish one of your priests would lock the temple doors so these worthless sacrifices could not be offered. I'm not at all pleased with you and I, the LORD of the Heavens, refuse to accept any more of your offerings. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 11My name is honored by other nations all day long. They offer sweet incense and offerings to honor Me. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} My reputation is great among the nations," {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} says the LORD of the Heavens. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 12"But you, Israel, insult Me {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} by bringing worthless sacrifices and saying that it's okay to defile My table. 13You say, 'It's too difficult to serve the LORD,' and you turn up your nose at My commands," says the LORD of the Heavens. "You bring stolen animals and those that are crippled or sick. Should I accept these? 14Cursed is the man who promises to bring a fine ram from his flock, but then offers a sick animal to Me. I'm a great King," says the LORD of the Heavens, "and I'm worshiped by many nations." {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7}

Lord, I will give You the best of everything I have. You can have my money, my belongings, everything. I give my time, talent and testimony. Use everything I offer to You. Amen.

Malachi 2

The LORD Commands the Priests

1"Listen, you priests. This message is for you from Me. 2If you don't listen and determine to honor Me, {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} the LORD of the Heavens, I'll bring a curse on you. I'll curse even the blessings you receive. In fact I've already done this because you haven't taken My warnings seriously. 3I'll punish your descendants {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} and rub your faces in the manure from your animal sacrifices. Then I'll add you to the dung pile. 4Then you'll know that I sent you this warning {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} so My agreement with Levi may continue," {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} says the LORD of the Heavens. 5"I gave Levi life and peace; and he reverenced Me {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} and stood amazed at My reputation. 6The Levites taught the truth about Me. They didn't lie or cheat, and they walked with Me, living upright lives and turning from sin. 7The priests should guard knowledge so My people will learn My laws. The priests are the messengers of Me, the LORD of the Heavens. 8But you priests have turned from My paths, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and you've caused many to fall into sin. You've corrupted the agreement I made with Levi," says the LORD of the Heavens. 9"So I caused everyone to hate you {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} because you disobeyed Me and have been partial to people who've disobeyed Me.

10"We are all children of the same God, and we are all created by the same God. Why then are you faithless to each other by violating the agreement God made with your ancestors? 11Judah, Israel, and Jerusalem have all defiled the temple {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} by marrying women who worship idols. 12I'll cut off any man in Israel who does this {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and yet brings an offering to Me, the LORD of the Heavens. 13"Also you cry and weep at My altar {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} because I refuse to accept your offerings. {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} 14You ask why I'm not pleased with you. It's because I witnessed the vows you and your wife made to each other on your wedding day. But you were not faithful to her, the wife you promised to care for. 15I made the two of you one person in body and spirit. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} And I want godly offspring from your union. So guard yourself, and be faithful to your wife.

16"I, the LORD, the God of Israel, hate divorce. Divorce is being very cruel to your wife. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} So guard yourself and be loyal to your wife. 17You have worn Me out with your words. And yet you ask, 'How have

we worn You out?' {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} You have done so by saying I'm pleased with evil everyone does and by saying that I won't punish injustice." {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24}

Lord, You don't want me to question, "Why?" You want me to obey Your principles and commands. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} Lord, when my old flesh creeps out and I answer, "Why?," forgive my ignorance and sin. Open my blind eyes to Your commands. Give me a good heart to obey You without asking, "Why?"

Malachi 3

Judgment Is Coming

1"I'll send My messengers who'll prepare the way for Me. Quickly the one you are looking for will come to My temple {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} and bring you great joy. Yes, the messenger you are looking for is coming," says the LORD of the Heavens. 2"But when He appears, who can stand up to Him? He'll be like a furnace that purifies silver {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} or like strong soap that whitens clothes. 3He'll purify the Levites like refining gold or silver, watching as the dross is burned away. Then they can again offer sacrifices I'll find acceptable. 4I'll accept these offerings the people of Judah and Jerusalem bring to Me, as I did before. 5I'll put you on trial, and I'll testify against you who practice witchcraft and you adulterers and liars. I'll also testify against people who cheat their hired hands, who take advantage of widows and orphans, and who don't give justice to strangers, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and who don't reverence Me," says the LORD of the Heavens. 6"I the LORD do not change. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} That's why I haven't destroyed you, O descendants of Jacob, 7even though you have not obeyed Me or kept My commands. If you return to Me, I'll return to you," says the LORD of the Heavens. "But you ask, 'How can we return?' {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 8I answered, 'Will a man rob God? No, but yet you have robbed Me.' Then you ask, 'When did we ever rob You?' {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} You robbed Me of the 10 percent and the offerings you owe Me. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 9That's why the whole nation is under My curse. 10Bring the entire 10 percent {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} into the temple storehouse so there'll be enough food there. If you do, I'll open the windows of heaven and pour blessing after blessing on you." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

In this chapter, God tells us to "put Me on the spot." God wants us to obey Him, and when we put God to the test, He will open the windows of heaven. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Lord, I will accept Your challenge, I will put You on the spot. I will give financially to You. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} But Lord, I'm not looking for financial reward. I want heaven's

spiritual blessings to be poured out on my life. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} Lord, it's good to stand under the spout when You start pouring out blessings. Amen.

11"I'll keep locusts from destroying your crops and your vineyards," says the LORD of the Heavens. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 12"And all the nations will call you blessed and will talk of your wonderful land," says the LORD of the Heavens.
13"You've said terrible things about Me," says the LORD. {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 14"But you say, 'What have we said that we shouldn't have said?' You have said it's foolish to serve God. What good does it do to obey His laws and to sorrow and mourn for your sins? {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 15Proud people are happy, and sinners prosper. In fact, people who challenge God to punish them go free of harm. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
16"Those who reverence Me spoke of Me to each other, and so I had their names written in a Book of Remembrance. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 17You are precious to Me like jewels," says the LORD of the Heavens. "I'll protect you {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} just as a man protects his obedient son. 18Then you'll see the difference between those who obey Me and those who don't."

The phrase "windows of heaven" (v. 10) is a revival term. {408 Revival-Prayer, Ps. 85:6} Revival is "God pouring out His presence on His people." It's described as "God's atmospheric presence." It's the presence of God working among His people, like on certain days one can feel moisture in the atmosphere, before it starts raining. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Lord, I'm standing outside, waiting for the rain of Your blessing. Rain on me. Lord, I'm waiting... praying... and yielded. I want to feel Your presence in my life. Rain, Lord... rain. Amen.

Malachi 4

The Day of the LORD Is Coming

1"The day of judgment is coming, burning like a furnace that will burn up the proud and wicked like straw. And that will be consumed like the branches and roots of a tree," says the LORD of the Heavens. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 2"For you who reverence My name, righteousness will be as prevalent as the sun. The restorative wings (rays) of the sun picture the amazing power of righteousness. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} And you'll be free, jumping around like calves let out to pasture. 3Then you'll tread on the wicked like they're ashes under your feet," says the LORD of the Heavens. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4"Be sure to obey the laws I gave for you through My servant Moses on Mount Horeb (Sinai). {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
5"Before the terrible day of judgment comes, I'll send you the prophet Elijah. 6He'll encourage parents and children to be together again. If they don't change, I'll

come and destroy their land with a curse."
{135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}

The last word in the Old Testament is "curse." The law was given in the Old Testament and no one could keep the law, therefore we all are under the curse of failure and punishment. But the New Testament promises grace, Jesus Christ is coming. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth come by Jesus Christ" (John 1:17). Lord, I don't want a curse, but that's what I deserve for not keeping the law. Lord, I want Your grace, I need it to go to heaven. Jesus, I need Your grace for forgiveness. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} Thank You for heaven and eternity. Thank You for fellowship with You. I worship You as my Lord and Savior. Amen.

New Testament

Matthew

Ch 1: An Angel Speaks to Joseph 1342
Ch 2: The Wise Men Visit the Child Jesus..... 1344
Ch 3: John the Baptizer Begins Preaching 1345
Ch 4: The Temptation of Jesus 1346
Ch 5: The Sermon on the Mount 1348
Ch 6: Giving, Praying, Fasting, Trusting 1350
Ch 7: Relationship to Others 1353
Ch 8: Miracles of Jesus 1354
Ch 9: Getting a Friend to Jesus 1356
Ch 10: Choosing the Twelve..... 1359
Ch 11: Jesus and John the Baptizer 1361
Ch 12: Debate about the Sabbath..... 1363
Ch 13: The Sermon by the Sea 1366
Ch 14: The Murder of John the Baptizer 1370
Ch 15: Questions about Ceremonial Cleansing 1372
Ch 16: The Church Is Introduced..... 1373
Ch 17: The Transfiguration of Jesus 1375
Ch 18: Childlike Faith..... 1377
Ch 19: Jesus Teaches about Divorce 1379
Ch 20: On the Way to Jerusalem..... 1381
Ch 21: The Triumphant Entry 1383
Ch 22: The Parable of the Wedding Feast 1386
Ch 23: Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees... 1388

Ch 24: The Mount of Olives Discourse 1390
Ch 25: The Parable of the Five Foolish Virgins 1392
Ch 26: Events on Wednesday..... 1395
Ch 27: Jesus Delivered to Pilate..... 1399
Ch 28: At the Tomb Early Sunday Morning..... 1402

MATTHEW*

Key Word: *King* (Matthew 2:2, NKJV)

Key Verse: "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews? For we have seen His star in the East and have come to worship Him" (Matt. 2:2).

Theme: Matthew wrote to show Jesus as the King of Israel who fulfilled the Old Testament predictions of the coming King of Israel as demonstrated by His lineage (Matt. 1:1-18), His birth in Bethlehem, and worshiped by wise men as a King. Matthew described the forerunner of the King—John the Baptizer—the sermons (speeches) of the King, the ministry of the King and Israel's rejection of her King. In His first coming, Jesus didn't come to sit on a throne in Jerusalem, but to die for the sins of the world. Jesus wanted to sit on the throne of His follower's hearts and rule from the inside out.

When reading Matthew, be wise like the wise men who asked, "Where is He who has been born King of the Jews?" (2:2). When you discover Jesus, follow the example of the wise men and "worship Him" (2:2). Then "seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness" (6:33) and let the influence of Jesus—the King of your heart—rule your life and influence your world. *Lord, come sit on the throne of my heart and rule my life. I want to be Your servant. Amen.*

*The key verses for each Bible book are from the *King James* and *New King James Versions.*

Matthew 1

An Angel Speaks to Joseph

1 This is the record of the genealogy of Jesus Christ who was the descendant of
both David and Abraham: {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}
2 Abraham was the father of Isaac, who was the father of Jacob, who was the father of
Judah and his brothers, 3 who was the father of Perez and Zerah (whose mother was
Tamar). Perez was the father of Hezron, 4 who was the father of Ram, who was the father
of Amminadab, who was the father of Nahshon, who was the father of Salmon, 5 who
was the father of Boaz (whose mother was Rahab). Boaz was the father of Obed (whose
mother was Ruth), and Obed was the father of Jesse, 6 who was the father of King David,

who was the father of Solomon (whose mother was Uriah's wife). [7]Solomon was the father of Rehoboam, who was the father of Abijah, who was the father of Asa, [8]who was the father of Jehoshaphat, who was the father of Joram, who was the father of Uzziah, [9]who was the father of Jotham, who was the father of Ahaz, who was the father of Hezekiah, [10]who was the father of Manasseh, who was the father of Amon, who was the father of Josiah, [11]who was the father of Jeconiah and his brothers, at the time of the Babylon captivity. [12]After the Babylonian captivity Jeconiah was the father of Shealtiel, who was the father of Zerubbabel, [13]who was the father of Abiud, who was the father of Eliakim, who was the father of Azor, [14]who was the father of Zadoc, who was the father of Akim, who was the father of Eliud, [15]who was the father of Eleazar, who was the father of Matthan, who was the father of Jacob, who was the father of Joseph, [16]who was the husband of Mary, who gave birth to Jesus called Christ. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [17]The genealogy of Jesus Christ is traced for fourteen generations from Abraham to David, fourteen generations from David to the captivity of Babylon, and fourteen generations from the deportation to Christ. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

His Birth in Human History

[18]The birth of Jesus Christ took place this way. When Mary was engaged to Joseph, before they came together, she was discovered to be pregnant by the Holy Spirit. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [19]Joseph, her future husband, was a good man and not wanting to see her put to shame, planned to divorce her quietly. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [20]But while he was thinking this over, an angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} and said, "Joseph, son of David, do not be afraid to take Mary as your wife! She has conceived a Son through the Holy Spirit, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [21]and she will give birth to a son, whom you will call Jesus ('the Savior') for it is He who will save His people from their sins."

Lord, the greatest event in history was the coming of Jesus Christ to live among people. The greatest event in my life was when Jesus came to live in my heart. Amen.

[22]All this happened to fulfill what the Lord had said through the prophet, [23]"Behold, a virgin shall conceive and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel, which means 'God with us.'" {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [24]When Joseph woke up he did what the angel had told him. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} He took Mary as his wife [25]but had no physical relations with her until she had given birth to a son. Then he called His name Jesus. {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13}

We did not choose our parents, God did. Just as God sovereignly chose the parents for Jesus, He also has chosen our parents. What should be our prayer attitude toward our

parents: (1) thank God for life, and the sacrifices made for us by our parents; (2) don't complain or make excuses about our childhood difficulties or deficiencies; (3) learn the lessons God wants to teach us from our parents; (4) pray for God to use us in our present situation. Lord, I thank You for my human life with all its strengths and limitations. I praise You for my development to this hour. Be glorified in my body and life. Amen.

Matthew 2

The Wise Men Visit the Child Jesus

[1]After Jesus was born in Bethlehem, wise men—astrologists—came from the East {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [2]looking for the baby that is born King of the Jews. They told King Herod that they saw His star in the East and followed it so they could worship the baby. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [3]King Herod was disturbed at this news because the Roman Senate had declared him King of the Jews. [4]Herod assembled Jewish leaders to find out where the prophets predicted the Deliverer would be born. [5]They quoted the Scripture, [6]"You, Bethlehem in Judah, are not the least important town because the Deliverer will come from You who will rule the people of Israel." {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [7]Herod met privately with the wise men to find out exactly when the star appeared. {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} [8]Herod then sent the wise men to search for the baby, and report back to him so he could also worship Him, he said deceptively. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [9]The wise men started toward Bethlehem and the Star appeared again and led them, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} stopping where the child was. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [10]When they saw the star again, they were very happy. [11]Going into the house, they saw the child with His mother and falling to their knees, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} they gave Him their gifts: gold, frankincense, and myrrh. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [12]The wise men were warned in a dream not to return to Herod, so they went home a different way. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

Lord, I worship You as did the wise men. As they gave You earthly wealth, I also surrender all my earthly goods to Your use but most importantly, I give You my heart. Amen.

Slaughter of Babies in Bethlehem

[13]After the wise men left Mary and the child, the angel of the Lord spoke to Joseph in a dream, {128 Dream-Motivated Prayer, Hab. 2:2-4} "Get the child and His mother and escape to Egypt. King Herod will try to kill Him; {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} stay there until I tell you to come back." [14]Joseph immediately took the child and His mother and left for Egypt. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [15]Then the prophecy of the Lord was fulfilled, "I will call my Son out of Egypt." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Joseph would not have known of danger if the angel had not warned him. Today we face all kinds of danger—known and unknown—from those who would intentionally harm us to accidents; from spiritual dangers to toxic dangers. Lord, protect me when I am ignorant of danger, and when I face threatening situations. Protect me by my guardian angel, just as You protected Joseph and his family. Amen.

16When Herod realized the wise men deceived him, he sent soldiers to Bethlehem to kill every child who was two years old or younger. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} 17Then, the prophecy of Jeremiah was fulfilled, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 18"Screams and mourning were heard in Ramah; Rachel was sobbing for her children and she would not be comforted because they no longer lived." {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}

Jesus' Exile in Egypt

19The Lord sent an angel to Joseph after Herod died, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 20telling him to return to the land of Israel because "Those who tried to kill Jesus are now dead." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 21So Joseph took the child and Mary and headed toward the land of Israel. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 22Then Joseph heard that Archelaus was now king so he was afraid to go to Bethlehem. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} So, the Lord spoke to Joseph in a dream telling him to go back to Galilee and his home in Nazareth. 23Then the prophecy was fulfilled, "He [Jesus] shall be called a Nazarene." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Heavenly Father, just as the wise men searched for Jesus to worship Him, so I search to know Jesus to worship Him according to the worship He deserves. Amen.

Matthew 3

John the Baptizer Begins Preaching

1The Word of God came to John the Baptizer and he went through all Judea 2preaching baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 3John quoted the Book of Isaiah proclaiming, "I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make ready the way for the Lord, make straight paths for Him." {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} 4John had a coat woven of camel hair, and a leather belt around his waist. He ate locusts and honey. 5Many in Jerusalem and Judea, and the area around the Jordan, heard about him 6and went to be baptized by him, confessing their sins.

7When John saw the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to hear him, he said, "You are snakes...who warned you to escape the coming wrath? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 8Show good fruit, repent. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 9Do not think you can escape judgment just because you are Abraham's children. God can make children of Abraham from

these stones in the desert. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [10]Every tree that doesn't grow good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire; {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} the axe is ready to cut down your tree." [11]The crowd cried out, "What must we do?" Everyone anticipated their Deliverer would soon appear, and many thought John was the Messiah. John answered them, "I only baptize with water but the One following me will baptize with fire and with the Holy Spirit. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} I am not worthy to unloose His sandal straps. [12]The One following me will separate real believers (who are represented by good grain) from chaff (representing false believers). He will store the good grain in His barns, but will burn the chaff in eternal fire." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

John the Baptizer preached, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!" (Matt. 3:2). The word "repent" comes from metanoia, which means "to change the mind." True repentance begins inwardly. Legalism is only the outward expression of repentance. Lord, I repent of all sin, both inwardly and outwardly. But my change is not enough; come fill me, Holy Spirit, and transform my inward desires. Amen.

John Baptizes Jesus

[13]Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John. [14]But John tried to prevent Him. "You need to baptize me," the Baptizer said. "Why do You come to me?" {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [15]But Jesus replied, "It is the right thing to do. This will meet all the law's demands—let it be done now." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [16]Then John agreed to baptize Him. Jesus came up out of the water, and suddenly the heavens opened and He saw the Spirit of God coming down like a dove and resting on Him. [17]A voice spoke out of heaven saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

The early church said to understand the Trinity, go to the Jordan River. Watch Jesus the Son of God being baptized, see God the Holy Spirit come on Him as a dove, and listen to the voice of God the Father saying, "You are My beloved Son; in You I am well pleased" (Luke 3:22). {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} **Father,** *I am well pleased with Jesus as You are. Holy Spirit, come on me as You came on Jesus, and help me glorify Jesus in all I do. Amen.*

Matthew 4

The Temptation of Jesus

[1]Then Jesus was led by the Spirit into the desert, to be tempted by the devil. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} [2]After fasting for forty days and nights He was hungry. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [3]"If you are the Son of God," said the tempter, "tell these stones to turn into bread." {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer,

Rom. 1:16} [4]Jesus answered, "The Scripture says, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes out of the mouth of God.'" {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}

[5]Then the devil took Him to the holy city, and set Him on the highest pinnacle of the temple. [6]"If You are the Son of God," he said, "jump down. For the Scripture says, 'He shall give His angels charge over you and on their hands they shall lift you up, lest you smash your foot against a stone.'" {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} [7]Jesus answered, "And the Scripture also says, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.'" {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12}

[8]Again the devil took Him to a high mountain, and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world and their glory. [9]"I will give you these kingdoms," he said to Jesus, "if You will fall down and worship me." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [10]"Get out of here, satan!" replied Jesus. "The Scripture says, 'You shall worship the Lord your God, and Him only shall you serve.'" {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [11]Then the devil left Him alone, and angels came to Him to strengthen Him. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[12]Now when Jesus heard that John had been arrested, He went back to Galilee. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [13]He left Nazareth and came to live in Capernaum, a lakeside town in the Zebulun territory. [14]In this way Isaiah's prophecy came true: [15]"Light shall come to the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, beyond Jordan, beside the lake of Galilee of the Gentiles; [16]the people who sit in darkness will see a great light, and to them who sit in the shadow of death, light will spring up." {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [17]From that time Jesus began preaching saying, "Repent, change your hearts and minds, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

Jesus Calls Fishermen

[18]As Jesus was walking by the Sea of Galilee he saw two brothers, Simon, who is called Peter, and Andrew, casting their net into the water. They were fishermen. {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} [19]So Jesus said to them, "Follow Me and I will make you fishers of men!" {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1} [20]Immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [21]Then Jesus went farther and saw two more fishermen, also brothers, James and John, in the boat with their father Zebedee mending their nets, and He called them. [22]Immediately they left the boat, and their father, and followed Jesus. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, when You call me, I will drop what I'm doing and follow You just as the disciples left their nets. I want to be a fisher of men. Amen.

[23]Jesus now traveled through all of Galilee, teaching in their synagogues and preaching the good news of the kingdom,

and healing every disease and disability among the people. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [24]His reputation spread throughout the area and people brought to Jesus those who were sick, suffering from all kinds of disease, including the demon-possessed and the paralyzed. He healed them all, {218 Help the Oppressed by Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9} [25]and was followed by large crowds from Galilee, Decapolis, Jerusalem, Judea, and from beyond the Jordan River. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

Lord, I will learn the Scriptures so I can use them to protect me when temptations come, just as Jesus used the Scriptures to turn back temptations. Help me understand the Scriptures, and give me wisdom in how to apply them when I'm tempted. Amen.

Matthew 5

The Sermon on the Mount

This sermon is turned into a prayer so you may pray the Scripture.

[1]When Jesus saw the multitudes following Him, He went to the top of a hill to teach His disciples and the multitudes. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [2]Lord, thank You for blessing me: [3]When I am poor in spirit and totally dependent on You, the kingdom of heaven is mine. {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [4]When I mourn—broken over sin in my life—You will give me consolation. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} [5]When I am meek—willing to set aside my rights—You will give me possession of the earth. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [6]When I hunger and thirst after righteousness—having a desire for outward holiness—I will be satisfied by Your presence. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [7]When I am merciful—looking on others—mercy will be shown to me. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [8]When I am pure—desiring inward holiness—then I shall see You. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [9]When I am a peacemaker—building relationship in others—I will be called a child of God. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [10]When I am persecuted for righteousness' sake—suffering for You—mine will be the kingdom of heaven. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [11]When I am persecuted falsely—because of my loyalty to the person of Christ—[12]I will accept it as a rich reward because this is what the enemies of God did to the prophets and to Jesus Christ. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

The word "happy" in this Bible is translated "blessed" as in most versions of the Bible. It comes from the prayer of greeting, "God bless you." Happiness is a result of God's blessing in our lives. So when God blesses our life, we end up being happy. Lord, I will seek You with all of my heart and make You first in my life, then I'll experience true happiness. Amen.

[13]Lord, I want to be like the salt of the earth so I can make people thirsty for Jesus. If I lose my ability to influence people, I might as well be thrown away like salt that has lost its saltiness. {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7}

Lord, make me salt that creates a thirst for You in the unsaved. Amen.

[14]I want to be a light to the world so people will know how to find their way to Jesus. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [15]People don't put a candle under a bucket; they put it in a candle-holder so it can light a whole room. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [16]Let my light shine to all people so they can see Your works through me and glorify the Father in heaven.

[17]Lord, I know Jesus didn't come to do away with the teachings of the Old Testament but to fulfill the prophecies about Him. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} [18]I know not one dot and comma can be changed in the Old Testament Scriptures; everything it promises will come to pass just the way it was predicted. [19]Any one who breaks one commandment of the law, or teaches people to break them, will be last in the kingdom. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} When I keep or teach others to keep the commands, I will be great in the kingdom. {49 Blind-Obedience Prayer, Ps. 42:9}

[20]I accept Your imputed righteousness to me which is greater than the self-righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [21]I know You said whoever kills will be in danger of eternal judgment. [22]May I never become so angry with anyone that I condemn them to hell {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} because You said I would be in danger of going to hell myself. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [23]As I begin to pray and remember someone who is mad at me, [24]I will stop praying and go reconcile myself with that offended person, and then I will pray to You. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [25]I will come to terms with those who sue me before I meet them in court, lest the judge agrees with my opponent and they put me in jail [26]or make me pay the full cost. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

[27]Lord, I know You said for us not to commit adultery; {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [28]I won't even have impure intentions, lest I commit adultery in my heart. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [29]If anything entices me to sin, I will rid it from my life. It's best for me to get rid of a stumbling block than to lose my testimony or life. If part of my body is a snare to me, I will ignore it, as though it's not there. [30]It's best to lose the use of part of my body than to destroy my whole body and perhaps even my soul. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, sin begins in the heart; transform my heart to seek righteousness. Amen.

[31]Jesus quoted the Old Testament that a notice of divorce must be given before putting away a spouse. [32]Then Jesus said, "If

you put away a wife for any reason, other than unfaithfulness, both you and she have become adulterers." {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}
[33]Jesus again quoted the Old Testament. "You shall not swear falsely, but shall do what you swear as a commitment to the Lord." [34]Then Jesus added, "But I say to you, do not swear at all; neither by heaven, or God's throne, [35]nor by the earth for it is God's footstool, nor by Jerusalem because it is God's city. [36]Don't swear by anything because you can't make one hair black or white." {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [37]Jesus commanded us to tell people what we will do, and we should do what we say; our word of promise should be enough. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22}

Lord, I pledge to do Your will; give me strength to do it and tenacity to reject any temptation to be otherwise. Amen.

[38]Jesus quoted the ancients, "An eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth," [39]but that principle is not our standard. Jesus also said don't take revenge; if someone hits you on the right cheek, offer them the left cheek. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [40]If a man asks to take away your coat, give him your overcoat also. [41]If anyone orders you to go one mile, go two miles with him. [42]If anyone wants to borrow something, do not turn that person down. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
[43]Lord, You said to love my enemies. [44]I will do good to those who hate me, {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} bless those who hate me, and pray for those who despitefully use me. [45]I will treat them as I want to be treated so that I will be accepted of my heavenly Father, because He made the sun rise on evil people and good people, and sends rain on the evil and the good. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [46]Jesus said, "If you love only those who love you, there is no spiritual reward in that; even sinners love those who love them." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [47]I will love my enemies and do good things to those who hate me, [48]because You said, "I would receive a rich reward, and should show everyone that I am a child of the Most High." {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Lord, it's hard to love some people who seem so evil; give me Your eyes to see them as You see them, and Your love to love them as You love them. Amen.

Matthew 6

Giving, Praying, Fasting, Trusting

[1]Lord, I will not practice my piety before people, to be "holy" in their eyes, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} because You will not reward it. [2]I won't show off when I give money because that would be hypocritical; recognition is the only reward a hypocrite gets. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [3]When I give my money secretly, I won't let my left hand know what my right hand is doing. [4]Lord,

You know all intentions, and see all gifts, and will reward me if I give humbly and honestly. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24}
5Lord, I will not be like the hypocrites when I pray, because they love to pray before people to get attention and that's all the reward they'll get. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 6I will go to my prayer closet where no one can see or hear me, then I'll pray to You, my Father, in secret. Then You'll see my sincerity in private and reward me openly. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 7I'll not rattle off long prayers like the unsaved who think they'll be heard because they pray a long time. 8I realize You know everything in my heart and my needs before I pray. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 9Lord, when I pray, I'll follow this pattern: {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} "My Father in heaven, may Your name be holy, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} in my life on earth as Your name is holy in heaven. 10May Your kingdom come in my life on earth {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} as Your kingdom rules in heaven. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} May Your will be done in my life on earth as Your will is done in heaven. 11Give me daily bread for this day. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 12And forgive the consequences of my sin, as I forgive the sins of those who hurt me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 13Do not let me be tempted to do evil {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} and protect me from the evil one, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} for You have the ability to answer this prayer. Let Your kingdom rule my life, and may You get credit when these prayers are answered."

Lord, I will pray the Lord's Prayer each day because it embraces every petition I must make to You, and it leaves out nothing that is imperative to my prayer relationship with You. {288 Lord's-Prayer, Matt. 6:9-13} Amen.

14Lord, if I forgive the failings of others, You will forgive my faults. 15But if I refuse to forgive others You will not forgive me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
16Lord, I will not fast with an outward "religious" face {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} for that is just to get attention from others; {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} the "attention" they get is their reward. 17I will dress my normal way 18when I fast so no one will know I'm fasting. My fast will be a secret between You and me and You will reward me with the answers I seek. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Fasting is a spiritual discipline that strengthens our inner person to pray more effectively, just as physical discipline strengthens our bodies. Jesus said, "When you fast...," suggesting it is a non-required discipline. Remember, God does not answer our prayers based on what food enters the body, but what comes out of our hearts. We fast to "hunger and thirst after righteousness" (Matt. 5:6).

Lord, I withhold food so I can focus on Jesus the Bread of Life (John 6:32) and the water of satisfaction (John 7:38-39). I fast to know You more intimately, and to get answers to prayer. Amen.

[19]Lord, I'll not pile up wealth on earth where inflation or corruption will destroy it. [20]I'll deposit my wealth in Your heavenly bank, where nothing can destroy it. [21]Therefore I will put my treasure where I make a heart commitment. [22]Lord, may I see things clearly, give me light and understanding in my heart because [23]when my eye is clouded with lust and evil thoughts, my heart will be blinded by darkness; I'll not understand or seek spiritual things. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [24]I'll not serve two masters—God and money—because I'll naturally love one and reject the other. So Lord, what must I do? {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} [25]I won't worry about clothes, entertainment, or food. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} My life is far more important than what I eat or wear. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [26]The birds will be my example; they don't worry about sowing, reaping, or eating food. Lord, I'm more important to You than birds. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [27]I know worry will not give me anything I need. [28]I'll let the lilies of the field be my example for clothing; they don't worry about their appearance.
[29]Yet Solomon in all his glory was not as beautiful as the lilies. [30]So Lord, since You wonderfully care for the flowers that are here today, and gone tomorrow, I know You can take care of me. Lord, forgive me when I have so little faith, about the necessities of life. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [31]Lord, I'll not worry about having enough food and clothing because You know I need them; [32]these are the things unsaved people worry about. [33]I'll seek first Your kingdom and righteousness, then all these things will be added to me. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, come sit on the throne of my heart to rule all I say and do. I want the abundant life that comes when You control a person. Amen.

[34]I'll not be anxious about tomorrow since You'll take care of tomorrow's needs; I'll live one day at a time. {380 Priority-Faith Praying, Matt. 6:33}

Since prayer is being related to God, we are asking God (1) to help us establish a good relationship with Him; (2) to keep the relationship healthy; (3) to deepen the relationship; (4) to keep away distractions and temptations that would destroy our relationship with Him. Lord, I confess my need for You, and if I can't know You; nothing in life is meaningful. Help me stay close to You because You know my weaknesses. Deepen my fellowship with You so I can be used by You. Amen.

Matthew 7

Relationship to Others

[1]Lord, I'll not criticize others, so they won't criticize me, {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} [2]because the way I treat others is the way they'll treat me. What I give to others is what they'll give me, so Lord, make me a gracious giver. [3]Lord, I'll not criticize the small trash in another's eye, {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} when my eye is full of garbage. [4]I can't say, "Let me clean out your eye" when my eye is full of dirt and filth. [5]I must first cleanse my eyes before I can help anyone else see more clearly. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [6]Lord, I will not give beautiful pearls to pigs, they will stomp them into the mud and then they will turn to attack me, so I'll not give "holy things" to evil people. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

[7]Lord, I will ask in prayer for the things You can do, for You answer those who ask. I will seek for the things I need, {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} [8]for You supply those who seek. When a door is closed for the things I need, I will constantly knock, for You will open and allow me to find. {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} [9]I would never give anyone a stone when he needs bread to eat. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [10]I would never give anyone a snake when he asks for a fish to eat. [11]Since hardhearted people give good things to their children, then I know that You the heavenly Father will give good gifts to Your children when they ask. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

There are reasons why we should pray continually about a request; (1) to demonstrate our faith and sincerity to God; (2) to search our hearts for any sin that would hinder our request; (3) for circumstances to change or evolve where our request could be filled; (4) to become more intimate with God so our request could be heard and answered; and (5) for God to change our desires to a request that is within His will. Lord, I will keep praying until the answer comes. I believe You will answer this request, so I will continue praying until You answer. Give me faith to trust You for bigger and better things. Amen.

[12]Lord, I will do good things for other people, just as I want them to do good things for me. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [13]Lord, I will enter Your presence by the narrow door since the road to hell is wide and inviting, and most of the crowd takes this road. [14]But the door to Your presence is small and the path to eternal life is narrow. So only a few find it. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

[15]Lord, I will watch out for false preachers disguised as sheep, because they are ravenous wolves who will eat up young Christians. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [16]I can tell good people by their fruit just as I can tell the difference between good fruit and weeds, so false preachers are known by their evil deeds. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [17]Good trees grow good fruit, and evil trees grow evil fruit. [18]A good tree can't grow bad fruit, and an evil tree can't grow

good fruit. [19]A tree that produces bad fruit is cut down and thrown in the fire. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [20]So everyone is known by his fruit.

[21]Lord, those who cry publicly, "Lord, Lord," will not enter the kingdom of heaven. {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} But those who do Your will will be able to enter Your presence. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [22]Others will cry out, "Lord, Lord, I preached in Your name and cast out demons and did miracles." [23]Then You'll say to them, "I never knew you. Get out of My sight." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

[24]Lord, those who listen to this sermon and obey Your words, will be like a sensible man who builds his house on a rock foundation. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [25]The rains came, floods swirled, and the wind blew on this house but it didn't fall, because it was founded on a rock. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} [26]But those who hear this sermon and reject Your words, are like a stupid man who built his house on sand. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [27]The rains came, floods rose, and gale winds blew, and it collapsed with a mighty crash. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[28]When Jesus finished this sermon, the people were amazed at its content {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [29]because Jesus taught them with authority not like the scribes and other religious preachers.

People from all religions pray, just as do those in Christian cults. Their prayers will not be heard if they don't come to the Father through Jesus Christ. No amount of sincerity, persistence, or any human persuasion will be the basis for their prayers. The only prayer God will answer is when they come to the Father through Jesus Christ when they pray, "God be merciful to me a sinner" (Luke 18:13). Lord, thank You for receiving all who come to You through Jesus Christ. I have accepted Jesus Christ as my personal Savior, so I come confidently to You through Jesus my Intercessor (1 Tim. 2:5). Amen.

Matthew 8

Miracles of Jesus

[1]Large crowds followed Jesus when He came down from the hillside. [2]A leper came and knelt in front of Jesus. "Sir," he said, "if You will, You can make me clean." {80 Conditional-Praying, Matt. 8:2} [3]Jesus stretched out His hand and placed it on the leper saying, "Of course I will. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} Be clean!" And immediately he was healed of the leprosy. [4]"Say nothing to anyone," {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} Jesus told him. "Go show yourself to the priest and make the offering that Moses prescribed."

The leper asked for healing, "If You are willing," (Matt. 8:2). Because we do not know the perfect will of God, we sometimes must pray conditionally, that is, "If You will." Why? (1) Because we are not sure our prayer fits the scriptural requirement for prayer; (2) because we are not sure about

our fellowship with God; (3) because of sin in our life; (4) because our lack of faith; (5) because we are not abiding in Christ (John 15:6, 7); (6) because the object of our prayer may not be God's will, or in this case, may not fit into God's priority. Lord, teach me when to pray boldly in faith, and when to pray conditionally. Give me wisdom when I'm not sure what to do; give me faith when mine is weak, give me courage to pray boldly when I should. "Lord, I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Amen.

5Then as Jesus was coming into Capernaum, a centurion approached Him. 6"Sir," he begged, "my servant is in bed at home paralyzed and in terrible pain." {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 7"I will come heal him," Jesus said. 8The centurion replied, "I'm not important enough for You to come into my house. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} Only give the order and my servant will be healed. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} 9I'm under authority and I have soldiers under me. I can say to one man, 'Go' and I know he'll go, or I can say, 'Come' to another and I know he'll come—or I can say to my slave 'Do this' and he'll do it." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 10When Jesus heard this, He was astonished. He said to those who were following Him, "I have never seen faith like this even in Israel! {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} 11I tell you that many people will come from the east and west and sit with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 12while those who should have belonged to the kingdom will be banished to the darkness outside, where there will be tears and gnashing of teeth." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13Then He said to the centurion, "Go home. It will happen as you have believed it would." And his servant was healed at that moment. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23}

Lord, give me faith to believe the things You want to do for me, and give me faith to ask for them in prayer. Amen.

14Then, on coming into Peter's house, Jesus saw that Peter's mother-in-law had been put to bed with a high fever. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 15He touched her hand and the fever left her. And then she got up and began to serve them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 16When evening came, they brought to Jesus many who were demon-possessed, which he expelled with a word. Jesus healed all who were ill. 17Thus was fulfilled Isaiah's prophecy, "He took our infirmities and bare our diseases." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, give me faith to believe You can heal, and answer when I call to You for healing. Help me accept the fact You do not heal everyone, and You do not always heal every affliction. (Trophimus was sick, 2 Tim. 4:20), and Paul wasn't healed (2 Cor. 12:7-10). Amen.

Giving Up Everything

18When Jesus saw the large crowd, He commanded His disciples to cross over to the other side of the lake. 19But one of the scribes came to Jesus and said, "Master, I will follow You wherever you go." {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} 20Jesus said to him, "Foxes have holes, birds in the sky have nests, but the Son of Man has nowhere to lay His head." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 21Another of His disciples said, "Lord, let me first go and bury my father." {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4} 22But Jesus said to him, "Follow Me, and leave the dead to bury their own dead." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}

Jesus Calms the Storm

23Jesus went aboard the boat, and His disciples followed Him. 24Then a terrific storm sprang up and the boat was about to sink with the waves. 25Jesus was sleeping soundly and the disciples awakened Him. "Lord, save us!" they cried. "We are about to drown!" 26"Why are you so frightened, O you with little faith?" He replied. Then He got up and rebuked the wind and the waters and there was a great calm. 27The men marveled and kept saying, "What sort of man is this—even the winds and the waves obey Him!"

Lord, when storms enter my life, I will cry out to You for courage and help. Teach me to trust You. Save me in the storms of this life. Amen.

Jesus Heals a Violent Demon-Stricken Man

28When He arrived on the other side at Gadara, He was met by two demon-possessed men who came out from among the tombs. They were so violent that no one came in that area. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 29"What have You got to do with us, O Son of God?" they screamed. "Have You come to torture us before our time?" 30There was a large herd of pigs feeding nearby. 31So the demons begged Him, "If You cast us out, send us into the herd of pigs!" 32"Go!" {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Jesus said. And the demons came out and went into the pigs. Suddenly the whole herd stampeded down the steep cliff into the lake and drowned. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 33The herdsmen ran to the town and told the whole story of what happened to the two men who had been demon-possessed. 34Then the whole town came out to meet Jesus, and commanded Him to leave their territory.

Lord, I will follow wherever You lead; give me a willing spirit, courage to endure, and strength to do it. Amen.

Matthew 9

Getting a Friend to Jesus

1So Jesus got back into the boat and went back across the lake, and came to His own town. 2Some people brought Him a paralytic lying on his bed. {435

Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} When Jesus saw the faith of those who brought him, He said to the paralytic, {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} "Be of good cheer, My son! Your sins are forgiven." [3]Immediately some of the scribes thought to themselves, "This man is blaspheming." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [4]But Jesus knew what they were thinking, and said to them, "Why do you have evil thoughts in your minds? [5]Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' or 'Get up and walk'? [6]But so you will know that the Son of Man has authority to forgive sins"—Jesus spoke to the paralytic, "Get up, pick up your bed and go home." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [7]And the man got up and went home. [8]When the crowds saw it, they were afraid and praised God for such power. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord Jesus, You know my thoughts, just as You knew the religious leaders' thoughts when You were on this earth. Forgive me for any sin or doubt that hides in my heart. Teach me to think Your thoughts. Amen.

The Call to Matthew

[9]Jesus left there and as He passed on, He saw a man called Matthew sitting at his table at the tax-collector's place. "Follow Me!" He said to him and Matthew got up and followed Jesus. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26}

[10]Later as Jesus was in a house sitting at the dinner table, many tax collectors and other disreputable people came and sat down with Him and His disciples. [11]The Pharisees saw this and said to the disciples, "Why does your master eat His meals with tax collectors and sinners?" [12]But Jesus heard them and replied, "It is not the well who need a doctor, but those who are sick. [13]Go and learn what the Scripture means when it says, 'I desire mercy and not sacrifice.' I did not come to invite the 'righteous' to salvation but 'sinners.'" {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30}

[14]Then John's disciples approached Him with a question, "Why do we and the Pharisees fast often but Your disciples do not?" {265 John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8}

Lord, teach me when to fast and how to fast. May I fast to know You more intimately. Amen.

[15]"Can the wedding guests mourn while they have the bridegroom?" replied Jesus. "The day will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them—they will certainly fast then! {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [16]No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on to an old coat, for the patch will pull away from the coat and the hole will be worse than ever. [17]Nor do people put fresh wine into old wineskins—otherwise the skins burst, the wine is spilt, and the skins are ruined. But they put fresh wine into new skins and both are preserved." {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}

The Woman and the 12-Year-Old Girl

18While He was saying these things to them, an official came up to Jesus and knelt before Him saying, "My daughter has just died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Please come and lay Your hand on her and she will live." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 19Jesus arose and followed him with His disciples. 20And on the way a woman who had had a hemorrhage for twelve years came at Him from behind and touched the hem of His cloak. 21"If I can only touch His cloak," she kept saying to herself, "I shall be healed." {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 22But Jesus turned around and saw her. "Be of good cheer, my daughter," He said, "your faith—not your touch—has healed you." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} And the woman was completely cured from that moment. 23Then when Jesus came into the official's house and saw the flute players and mourners, 24He said, "Depart, the little girl is not dead, but asleep." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} They laughed at Him with scorn. 25But when the crowd had been put out, He took her by the hand, and the girl got up. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 26And this was reported to the whole district. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord Jesus, You were interrupted as You were going to Jairus' house, when You stopped to heal a woman with an issue of blood. Both the woman and Jairus' daughter were important, so teach me the importance of people and give me compassion so I'll know when to let people interrupt me. Amen.

27As Jesus passed on His way, two blind men followed Him, crying out, "Have mercy on us, Son of David!" {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 28And when Jesus had gone inside the house the two came to Him. He asked, "Do you believe I can heal you?" {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} "Yes, Lord," they replied. 29Then He touched their eyes, saying, "So shall it be." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 30Then their eyes were opened, but Jesus sternly warned them, "Don't tell anyone." 31Yet they went and spread it throughout the whole district. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, give me faith to believe You for marvelous things. Amen.

32Later, when Jesus and His disciples were coming out of the town, they brought to Him a dumb man who was demon-possessed. 33As soon as the demon had been cast out the dumb man began to talk. The crowds were amazed saying, "Never has this ever happened in Israel." {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 34But the Pharisees' comment was, "He cast out demons by the power of demons." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

The Twelve Sent Two by Two

35Jesus traveled through the towns and villages, teaching in their synagogues, proclaiming the gospel of the kingdom {145

Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} and healing all kinds of illness and disability. 36As He saw the crowds coming to Him, He was deeply moved with compassion for them, for they were helpless and lost and like a flock of sheep without a shepherd. 37"The harvest is great," Jesus remarked to His disciples, "but the reapers are few. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 38Pray therefore to the Lord of the harvest {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} to send laborers to harvest the fields." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, give me compassion for hopeless people who need help just as Jesus had compassion on them. Amen.

Matthew 10

Choosing the Twelve

1Jesus called His twelve disciples to Him, and gave them authority over the demons, so they could cast them out, and so they could cure any disease or sickness. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 2Here are the names of the twelve apostles: first, Simon, who was named Peter, and his brother Andrew, James the son of Zebedee and his brother John, 3Philip, and Bartholomew (Nathaniel), Thomas, and Matthew the tax collector, James the son of Alpheus, and Thaddeus (Judas), 4Simon the zealot, and Judas Iscariot, who afterward betrayed Him.

5Jesus sent these twelve out, after giving them the following challenge. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} "Do not go to the Gentiles, or to any Samaritan town, 6but rather go to the lost sheep of Israel. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} 7And as you go continue to preach, 'The kingdom of heaven is near.' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 8Keep on healing the sick, raising the dead, cleansing lepers, and casting out demons. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} You received so you must give and take no pay." {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12}

Lord, give me an open heart to see needy people, and give me a willing heart to help them. Then open my hands to help them. Amen.

9"Do not accept gold or silver or even copper money and do not take a purse for your journey,10nor two shirts, nor shoes, nor a staff, for the workman is worthy of his pay. {386 Prosper Bless-Prayer, Deut. 28:1-4} 11Into whatever town or village you go, find some deserving person, and stay at his house until you leave the place. 12As you go into his house, bless it, 13and if the house should prove deserving, pray for peace on it. 14And whoever will not welcome you, or listen to your words, on leaving that place shake off the dust from your feet. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 15I tell you, the punishment in the day of judgment will be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah than for that town. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 16I am sending you out as sheep threatened by wolves. So you must be wise like

serpents and harmless like doves. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [17]Watch out, some men will turn you over to the courts and they will beat you in the synagogues, [18]and you will be brought before governors and kings for My sake. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [19]When they bring you before the courts, you must not worry what you should say, for it will be given you at that hour what you should say. [20]Because it is not you who is speaking, but the Spirit of your Father who is speaking through you. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [21]One brother will turn another to be killed, and a father his child, and children will take a stand against their parents, and will have them put to death. [22]And you will be hated by all men because you bear My Name; but whoever endures to the end will be saved. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [23]But whenever they persecute you in one town, flee to another. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} For I say you will not go to all the towns of Israel before the Son of Man returns." {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

Lord, I know there will be persecution because You predicted it while on this earth. Prepare me mentally for persecution, and use me in suffering to bring glory to You. Amen.

[24]"No pupil is better than his teacher, and no slave is better than his master. [25]The pupil should be satisfied to become like his teacher, and the slave should be satisfied to become like his master. If men have called the head of the house Beelzebub, how much worse names will they give to the members of the family! [26]So you must never be afraid of them; for there is nothing covered that will not be uncovered and there is not a secret that will not be revealed. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [27]What I speak to you in the dark, proclaim in the light, and what you hear whispered in your ears, shout from the housetops. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [28]You must not be afraid of those who kill the body, {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} but can't kill the soul. But rather fear God who can destroy both soul and body in hell. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [29]Do not sparrows sell for a penny apiece? And yet not one of them will fall to the ground without your heavenly Father knowing it. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [30]Even the hairs on your head are numbered by God. [31]So do not fear; you are worth much more than many sparrows. [32]Therefore everyone who will testify of Me before men {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} I will testify of them before My Father in heaven, [33]but anyone who denies Me before men I will deny him before My Father in heaven."

Lord, I will confess You at all times in all places. I will not be ashamed of You. Amen.

[34]"Many think I have come to bring peace into the earth. But no, I have come to bring a sword. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [35]For I have come to put a man

against his father, and a daughter against her mother, and a daughter-in-law against her mother-in-law. [36]A man's enemies may be members of his own family. [37]Anyone who loves father or mother more than he loves Me is not worthy of Me, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [38]and anyone worthy of Me must take up his cross and follow Me. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.} [39]Anybody who gains only human life will lose heavenly life, and anybody who loses his human life for My sake will gain heavenly life. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

Lord, I love You more than any earthly relative. When I found You, I found life—eternal life—that is satisfying life. Amen.

[40]Whoever welcomes you as My disciple, also welcomes Me, and whoever welcomes Me also welcomes the Father who sent Me. [41]Whoever receives a prophet will receive only the reward of a prophet, and whoever receives an upright man will only receive the reward of an upright man. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [42]And I truly say to you, no one who gives a cup of cold water to the least of My disciples will fail to get his reward." {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23}

Matthew 11

Jesus and John the Baptizer

[1]When Jesus had finished His sermon to His disciples, He left to teach and preach in their towns. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

The Doubts of John the Baptizer

[2]Now John was in prison when he heard what Jesus was doing. He sent this message by His disciples: [3]"Are you the One who was to come, or should we keep on looking for a different Messiah?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [4]Then Jesus answered, "Go tell John what you have heard and seen: [5]the blind are seeing and the crippled are walking, the lepers are being healed and the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} and the poor are having the good news preached to them. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [6]And happy is the man who does not lose faith in Me."

Lord, increase my faith; I want unquestioning allegiance. Amen.

[7]As John's disciples were leaving, Jesus began speaking to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} A reed that is tossed about by the wind? [8]If not, what did you go out to see? A man dressed in fine clothes? No, those who dress that way are found in the courts of kings. [9]What did you really go to see? To see a prophet? {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [10]This is the One of whom the Scripture says, 'Behold! I am sending My messenger before you; He will prepare the road ahead of the Messiah.' [11]I solemnly say to you, no one born of

women is greater than John the Baptizer, {200 Greater-Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:6} and those who make themselves least important in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. [12]And from the days of John the Baptizer until now the kingdom of heaven has been attacked by violence, and those who capture it are seizing a precious prize. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [13]For until the days of John all the prophets and the law prophesied its coming [14]and if you will listen, John himself is the Elijah who was to come. [15]Let him who has ears use them to listen!" {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, You said the one who was more humble than John the Baptizer was greater than him. Don't compare me to any other person; just use me. My prayer is that of John the Baptizer, "He must increase, but I must decrease" (John 3:30). Amen.

[16]"But how can I show what the leaders of this age are like? They are like little children sitting in the marketplaces playing their games and singing their songs, {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [17]'We played the wedding march for you, but you did not dance; we sang the funeral dirge, but you did not cry.' [18]For John came neither feasting nor drinking, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and yet they said, 'He has a demon.' [19]The Son of Man came enjoying eating with others, and they say, 'He is a glutton and a wine-drinker, a friend of tax collectors and notorious sinners!' So what's the conclusion? A wise man is vindicated by his results!" {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

[20]Then Jesus began to condemn the cities in which His many miracles had been done because they did not repent. [21]"Judgment on you, Chorazin! Judgment on you, Bethsaida! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented in burlap clothing and ashes long ago. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [22]Moreover, I tell you, on the day of judgment the punishment will be more bearable for Tyre and Sidon than for you! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [23]And you, Capernaum, will you be exalted to heaven? No, you will be thrown to the regions of the dead! For if the miracles done in you had been done in Sodom, that city would have lived until today. [24]But I tell you, on the day of judgment the punishment will be easier for the land of Sodom than for you!" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, please forgive and restore our nation. You have poured out blessings and we have forgotten Your provision. May we return to You and be spared the fate of Sodom and Capernaum. Amen.

[25]At that time Jesus prayed, "O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, thank You for concealing these matters from wise and intelligent men, and for showing them to little children. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [26]Yes, Father, I thank You that You do Your will. {367

Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 27All the things I do have been entrusted to Me by My Father. No one knows the Son but the Father; and no one but the Son knows the Father. And the Son makes Him known to whom He wills." {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Lord Jesus, I want to know You; I will spend my life learning about You. Amen.

28"Come to Me, all who are tired and carry heavy burdens, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} and I will give you rest. 29Take My yoke, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} 30My yoke is easy, and My load is light." {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

We all have heavy loads; they are part of life. Job said, "Yet man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). The good thing is that Jesus knows about our heavy loads and will help us bear them if we bring them to Him by prayer. Lord, I have this problem right now. It is big and it really bothers me. Help me bear this heavy load, and help me solve it, and help me get through it. Amen.

Matthew 12

Debate about the Sabbath

1As Jesus walked through the wheat fields one Sabbath, His disciples were hungry, {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} so they pulled the heads of wheat and ate them. 2When the Pharisees saw it, they said to Jesus, "Look! Your disciples are doing what the law forbids on the Sabbath!" {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 3But Jesus said to them, "Did you ever read what David did when he and his soldiers became hungry? {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} 4How he went into the house of God and ate the sacred loaves, which was against the law to eat? It was wrong for anyone except the priests. 5Or did you ever read in the law that the priests in the temple break the Sabbath every Sabbath day, yet they are not guilty? {209 Guilty-Blocking Prayer, 1 John 3:21} 6But something is greater than the temple here! {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 7If you only understood the Scriptures that say, 'It is mercy and not sacrifice that I want,' {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} you would not have condemned My disciples who are not guilty. 8For the Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Lord, I will celebrate Your day—the Lord's day—in the proper way. I will worship You, the Lord of the Sabbath. Amen.

The Shriveled Hand Healed

9Leaving there Jesus went into their synagogue. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 10Now there happened to be a man there with a shriveled hand. And to find something against Jesus, they asked, "Is it legal to cure people on the Sabbath?" {214

Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 11But Jesus said to them, "If any of you has only one sheep and it falls into a ditch on the Sabbath, will you not pull it out? {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 12And how much more is a man worth than a sheep! So it is right to do good on the Sabbath." {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} 13Then Jesus said to the man, "Reach out your hand," and he held it out {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and it was cured. It became like his other hand. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} 14But the Pharisees left and planned to put Jesus to death. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

Lord, I am needy; I stretch out my hand to You. Amen.

Multitudes Healed

15Because Jesus knew about their plots, He left that area. Many people followed Him, and He cured them all, 16and charged them not to call attention to Him. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 17In this way Jesus fulfilled the saying spoken by the prophet Isaiah, 18"Behold, my Servant whom I have chosen, my Beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased. I will put my Spirit on Him, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and He will declare a judgment to the pagan. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 19He will not strive nor challenge anyone; His voice will not be announced in the streets; 20a bruised reed He will not break, a tiny flame He will not put out until He turns His judgment into victory. 21And the pagan will hope in His name." {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb. 1:4, 8:6}

The Long Day

22A man under the power of demons who was blind and dumb was brought to Jesus. He cured him so that he could talk and see. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 23The crowd was dumbfounded, and began to say, "This is the Son of David." {360 Power-Seeking Prayer, Matt. 9:8} 24When the Pharisees heard it, they said, "This man is casting out demons by the power of Beelzebub, the prince of the demons." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 25But Jesus knew their thoughts so He said to them, "Any kingdom that is divided against itself will fall and no town or family that is divided against itself will last. 26Now if satan is driving out satan, he is divided against himself. How then can his kingdom last? {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 27And if I am driving out demons by the help of Beelzebub, by what authority are your sons casting them out? {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 28But if I by the Spirit of God cast out demons, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} then the kingdom of God has come to you. 29How can anyone get into a strong man's house and carry off his goods {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} unless he first binds the strong man? After that he can carry off everything out of his house. 30Whoever is not with Me is against Me, and whoever does not gather with Me scatters." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}

The Unpardonable Sin

31"So I tell you, every sin and all blasphemy will be forgiven men, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} but blasphemy against the Spirit cannot be forgiven. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 32And whoever speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, but whoever speaks blasphemy against the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven, either in this world or in the world to come." {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16}

The sin that could not be pardoned didn't come just from words, it came from a heart that hated God and rebelled against Him. To blaspheme is to smite with words, to denote injurious speaking against God's nature, attributes, or works (miracles). Lord, keep my heart. I love You and worship You. I will never say anything to anger or turn You against me. Guard my lips. Amen.

33"You must choose a good tree and get good fruit or choose an evil tree and get evil fruit, because a tree is judged by its fruit. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} 34You brood of snakes! How can you, evil as you are, say anything that is good? For out of the mouth the heart speaks. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 35A good man out of his good heart speaks good things. The evil man out of his evil heart speaks evil things. 36So I tell you, for every careless word that men speak, {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} they will have to give account on the day of judgment. 37By your words you will be free, and by your words you will be judged." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

38Then some of the scribes and Pharisees asked Him, "Teacher, we would like to see You do a spectacular miracle." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

It is an insincere prayer when people ask God for a demonstration of His power, and when they do so without a desire to know Him, to understand His plan for them, or to obey Him. This could be called a hypocritical prayer, or a deceitful prayer. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} So Jesus told those who hypocritically asked for a miracle to look in the Scriptures to see God's demonstration of power. Lord, I will not ask for You to show me a miracle, for I can experience no greater miracle than the miraculous transformation of my heart when You saved me. Amen.

39But Jesus answered, "Only a wicked and treacherous age will ask for a spectacular sign, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} but no sign will be given to them but the sign of the prophet Jonah. {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} 40For as Jonah was in the great fish's stomach for three days and nights, the Son of Man will be three days and nights in the heart of the earth. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 41The men of Nineveh will condemn the leaders of this age at the judgment. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} The men of Nineveh turned and believed the message preached by Jonah. There is One

greater than Jonah here. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 42The queen of the south will condemn the leaders of this age at the judgment {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} because she came from the farthest limits of the earth to listen to Solomon's wisdom. There is One greater than Solomon here! {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 43Whenever the evil spirit goes out of a man, it wanders about in deserts in search of rest, but cannot find it. 44Then it says, 'I will go back to my house which I left,' where it finds the house unoccupied, swept, and ready for use. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 45Then the evil spirit goes and gets seven other spirits more evil than itself, and they go in and make their home. So the end of that man is worse than the beginning. This is what will happen to the wicked leaders of this age." {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20}

46While Jesus was still speaking to the crowds, His mother and His brothers came to stand outside the house to speak to Him. {434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11} 47Someone said to Jesus, "Your mother and brothers are waiting outside to talk with You." 48But Jesus answered, "Who is My mother, and who are My brothers?" 49And with a gesture toward His disciples Jesus said, "Here are My mother and My brothers. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 50For whoever does the will of My heavenly Father is My mother and brother and sister." {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

Matthew 13

The Sermon by the Sea

1Jesus left Peter's house to teach the 2multitude from a boat beside the shore of the Sea of Galilee. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} 3"Look," Jesus said, pointing to a farmer sowing seed in his field, which was nearby. Jesus said, 4"Some seed fell on the path next to the field; birds quickly came to eat up the seeds." Jesus noted next, 5"Other seed fell among the rocks and because there was little dirt, the grain sprang up fast, 6but withered when the hot sun beat upon it, because the roots had little nourishment." Jesus continued, 7"Other seed fell among thorns and the thorns choked their growth." Jesus told, 8"Still other seed fell on rich soil and produced a crop, some places a hundredfold, some other places sixty, and some places thirty." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} Finally Jesus said, 9"If you have ears to hear, then you will understand the spiritual application of this parable." {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

We must do all we can humanly to serve God, then we must pray for God to work in hearts to get His work done. Lord, help me do Your work, in Your way, with the right tools, at the right time, and for the right motivation. Give me wisdom to do it right and human strength to get the job done. Amen.

10The disciples asked, "Why do You use stories to teach?" Jesus replied, 11"Because

you have the privilege of understanding the secrets of the kingdom, but the unbelievers don't understand spiritual truth." {221 Hidden Answers-Prayer, Rom. 11:33-36} Jesus continued, 12"When a person does something for Me, he will be given more till he has plenty. If a person does nothing for Me, what he has will be taken away. 13This is why I am speaking to them in stories, because they look but do not see, they listen but do not really hear or understand." {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 14Jesus quoted Isaiah to describe those who rejected Him. "They listen with their ears, but they don't understand what God says. 15They see with their eyes, but don't perceive because their heart is hardened to God. So they hear the good news, but don't understand how God wants them to respond, so they won't believe and become converted." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, give me eyes to see Your truth. Take away my blindness, give me a heart to obey Your commands and take away any doubt. Amen.

16"But blessed are your eyes, for they are beginning to see, and your ears, for they are beginning to hear. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 17For I solemnly say to you, many prophets and upright men yearned to see what you are seeing, and did not see it, and to hear what you are hearing, and did not hear it." {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} 18Jesus then explained the story for the disciples because they had believing hearts to understand what the story meant. 19"When a person hears the message of the kingdom and does not respond, the devil comes to snatch away the message, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} as the birds take the seed from the path. When a person receives the message but doesn't understand, he gives up when trouble or persecution comes. He is like the grain sown in the rocks. 20And what was sown on the thin rocky soil illustrates the man who hears the message and, bubbling over with joy, at once accepts it. 21But because the seed takes no real root in him, he lasts only a little while, and just as soon as suffering and persecution come for the truth's sake, he at once yields and falls. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 22When a person hears the message but gives up because of worldly things or pursuit of money, it is like the seed sown among the thorns. This illustrates the man who hears the message, and the worries of the times and the pleasures of being rich choke the truth out, {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} and he yields no fruit. 23But when someone hears and believes the message, he brings forth fruit: {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} thirty, sixty, or a hundredfold, he is like seed sown on rich soil." {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8}

Lord, may my heart be good soil to receive and believe; take away the thorns of sin, and the stubbornness of unbelief. Amen.

[24]Jesus then told another parable of a farmer who planted seed in his field. [25]"While he slept the enemy sowed weeds among the good seed. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [26]And when the wheat plants grew up and yielded their ripened grain, the weeds appeared too. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [27]The workers told the owner, 'You planted good wheat, so where did these weeds come from?' [28]The farmer said, 'An enemy has done this!' The workers asked, 'Do you want us to pull up all the weeds right now?' {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [29]'No,' the farmer said, 'if you pull up the weeds, you'll also pull up the good grain. [30]Let them both grow till harvest, then burn the weeds but put the grain in the barn.'" {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2}

Lord, I know the enemy tries to destroy everything that is godly. Give me wisdom to know the difference between seeds and weeds. Protect me in this world as I work for You. Amen.

[31]Jesus then told another parable that His kingdom was like a tiny mustard seed sown in a field. [32]While it is the smallest of seeds, it grows into the largest of trees, and many birds rest in its branches. {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, I know Your message seems weak to the unsaved, but it is the power of God to salvation that will attract many to You. Amen.

[33]Jesus then said His kingdom is like yeast. When put in flour, the bread swells up much larger. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

Lord, help me to work for You out of sight from the crowds. I believe the statement, "It's amazing what one can do for God if he doesn't care who gets the credit." Amen.

[34]When Jesus continued to speak to the crowd in parables, the disciples asked why He used parables. {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2} [35]Jesus told them He was fulfilling the prophecy of Israel, "I will open My mouth with parables to explain God's eternal mysteries." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

[36]Then He left the crowds and went into the house. And His disciples came up to Him and said, "Explain to us the story of the wild wheat in the field." {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} [37]And He answered, "The sower of the good seed is the Son of Man; [38]the field is the world; the good seeds are the members of the kingdom; the wild seeds are the followers of the evil one. [39]The enemy who sowed them is the devil, the harvest is the close of the age and the reapers are angels. [40]Just as the wild seeds are gathered and burned up, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} so it will be at the close of the age. [41]The Son of Man will send out His angels, and they will gather from out of His kingdom all those who cause evil and are disobedient. [42]He will throw them into the furnace of fire, where they will weep and grind their

teeth. [43]Then the righteous will shine like the sun in the kingdom of their Father. {94 Crown of Righteousness-Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:8} Let him who has ears listen and do!'" {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39}

Lord, I believe You will judge all sin, so I will live godly. Amen.

[44]Again Jesus told that His kingdom was like a treasure that was buried in a field. Someone found the treasure, then went to sell everything to get money to buy the field. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}
[45]Again, Jesus told the story of someone searching for pearls to buy. [46]When he found the greatest pearl ever, he sold everything to buy it. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Lord, You are the pearl of infinite price; I will give up everything to have You. Amen.

[47]Jesus told the final story of a big net that was thrown into the sea. [48]"When it was full, the fisherman pulled it to shore. They put the good fish in a barrel but threw away the bad ones. [49]So it will be at the close of the age. The angels will go out to separate the wicked from the upright, [50]and will throw them into the furnace of torturing punishment. There they will wail and grind their teeth." {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}

Lord, I know at the end of the age You will separate the righteous from the evil ones who will be thrown into the flames of hell. Those who are righteous will go to heaven because Jesus died for them. Amen.

[51]"Do you understand all these parables?" They answered Him, "Yes." [52]He said to them, "Everyone who knows the law and has become a disciple in the kingdom of heaven is like a house owner who can bring out of his storeroom new things as well as old." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [53]When Jesus had finished these stories, He left there.
[54]He went to His own country and kept teaching in their synagogue in such a way that they were amazed, {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} and said, "Where did this Man get His wisdom? [55]Is He not the carpenter's son? Is not His mother's name Mary? Are not His brothers James, Joseph, Simon, and Judas? [56]And are not His sisters living here with us? Where then did He get all this knowledge?" [57]And so they were offended because of Him. But Jesus said to them, "No prophet is ever honored in his own town and in his own home." {434 Sibling-Intercession Prayer, Gen. 27:11} [58]And so He did not perform many miracles there, because of their lack of faith. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Lord, I am not offended because of You. I accept You as my own Savior, and I will tell everyone, even those in my hometown, even if they won't believe me. Amen.

Matthew 14

The Murder of John the Baptizer

Lord, John the Baptizer was the greatest man to ever live; may I be as humble as he, and fill me with the Spirit as You did Him. Amen.

[1]Then Herod the Tetrarch said about the fame of Jesus, [2]"This is John the Baptizer risen from the dead." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [3]For Herod had arrested John and chained him in prison to please Herodius, the wife of Philip, his brother. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [4]John had preached that it was against Scripture for Herod to marry his brother's wife. [5]Herod wanted to execute John but was afraid because the people regarded John as a prophet. His wife, Herodias, also wanted to kill John because he had embarrassed her, but she couldn't arrange for it to happen. [6]During Herod's birthday, the daughter of Herodias danced before the guests at the party. [7]Herod was so delighted with her that he made an oath to give her anything she asked. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [8]Her mother Herodias told her to ask for the head of John the Baptizer on a platter. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [9]The king was sorry that he made the oath and was embarrassed because his guests expected him to do what he promised. [10]Herod sent immediately and beheaded John in prison; [11]the head was brought in on a platter and given to the girl who gave it to her mother. [12]John's disciples came and took the body and buried it, {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} and then they told Jesus.

Lord, whether I live or die, may I glorify You in all I do. As You give me life, may I use my time for Your purpose. And when I die—whether naturally or as a martyr—may You be glorified in my homecoming. Amen.

Feeding the Five Thousand

[13]When Jesus heard about the death of John the Baptizer, He left there in a boat for a quiet place to be alone. And when the crowds heard where Jesus went, they followed Him on foot. [14]When He got out of the boat and saw a great crowd, His heart was moved with compassion for them, so Jesus healed the sick. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [15]But when it was evening, Jesus' disciples said, "This is a barren place, and it is getting dark, so send the people to buy themselves food in the villages." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [16]But Jesus said to them, "You give them something to eat." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [17]They answered, "We have only five loaves and two fish." [18]Jesus said, "Bring them to Me." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [19]After summoning the people to sit down on the grass, He received the five loaves and two fish. He looked up to heaven and thanked God and then Jesus broke the loaves into small pieces {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} and gave them to the disciples, and they distributed them to the people. [20]Everyone ate and had enough. Then the

disciples took up the fragments that were left, and filled twelve baskets. [21]The crowd was about five thousand men, besides women and children. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Lord Jesus, You are the Creator and the Bread of Life. Thank You for providing physical food for me when I'm hungry. Thank You for filling me spiritually with the bread of life when I'm weak. Thank You for feeding 5,000 to show Yourself compassionate for the needy. Amen.

[22]Immediately the disciples got into a boat to cross over to the other side ahead of Jesus. [23]After He dismissed the crowds, He climbed up a hill that evening to pray alone. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11}

Jesus Walks on the Water

[24]The disciples in the boat were a long way from shore, struggling against the waves, for the wind was blowing in their faces. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} [25]In the fourth watch Jesus went to them, walking on the water. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} [26]And when the disciples saw Him walking on the water, they were terrified. Screaming with fear, they cried, "It's a ghost!" {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [27]Immediately Jesus spoke to them, "Be of good cheer. It is I, stop being afraid."

Lord, I know You have sent me into some storms in the past, as You sent the disciples into the storm. Help me learn Your purpose for storms in my life. Amen.

[28]Peter yelled, "Lord, if it's You, invite me to walk on the water to You." [29]Jesus said, "Come!" so Peter stepped out of the boat and walked on the water, and walked toward Jesus. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} [30]But when he felt the force of the wind, and saw the waves, he was frightened, and began to sink. Immediately Peter cried out, "Lord, save me!" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [31]Jesus reached out His hand and grabbed Peter, and said, "You have little faith! Why did you doubt?" [32]And when they got into the boat, the wind suddenly died down. [33]The men in the boat worshiped Jesus and said, "Truly You are God's Son." {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

Lord, You allow storms in my life that test my faith. Help me be faithful to You in every storm that comes. You did the impossible: You walked on water and You came to me in my storm. May I be like the disciples who worshiped You after You delivered them from their storm. Amen.

[34]They crossed over and came to Gennesaret. [35]And the men of that place recognized Jesus and told everyone about Him. They brought to Him the sick, [36]and begged Jesus to let them touch the hem of His coat, and the sick who touched it were healed. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

Matthew 15

Questions about Ceremonial Cleansing

[1]Jewish leaders came from Jerusalem to Capernaum [2]to find fault with Jesus' religious practices. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} They were angry because Jesus' disciples ate bread with defiled hands; they didn't wash their hands ceremonially before eating. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [3]Jesus told the Jewish leaders, "You violate the Word of God and hold to your traditions. [4]God commanded you to honor your father and mother, but the one who curses father and mother shall be put to death. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [5]But you say, 'My mother and father have profited because they gave birth to me.' {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [6]This statement does not honor your parents, but actually denies the Scriptures." [7]Jesus quoted Isaiah, [8]"'These people honor Me in outward ways, but their heart is far from Me. [9]They vainly worship Me, teaching their doctrine as the Word of God." {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3}

Lord, help me be careful to always honor my mother and father. Amen.

[10]Jesus called the multitude to Himself, and said, "Listen and understand: [11]it's not the things that go in your mouth that defile you, it's what comes out of the mouth." [12]The disciples told Jesus He was offending the Pharisees by what He was saying. [13]Jesus replied, "Every plant put there by God will be uprooted. [14]Let them alone; they are blind leading the blind. When the blind leads the blind, they both fall into a ditch." [15]Peter said, "Lord, explain this parable to us." [16]Jesus said, "Are you still without understanding?" [17]What goes into the mouth, enters the stomach, and finally is discharged from the body, [18]but things that come out of the heart, defile a person, [19]for out of the heart come evil thoughts, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} murders, adulteries, sexual perversions, thefts, lying, pride, and anger. [20]The things that come out of the heart defile a person, not eating with unwashed hands." {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3}

Lord, cleanse my heart from every thought of evil. Keep my thoughts centered on You. Come sit on the throne of my heart and control all I think and do. Forgive the sinful desires of my heart and keep me from all outward transgressions. Amen.

Jesus Visits Lebanon

[21]When Jesus left Galilee and went to Tyre and Sidon, [22]a Greek woman from Canaan came and cried out to Jesus, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Son of David. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} My daughter is possessed with a demon," {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} and she begged Jesus to cast the demon out. [23]But Jesus didn't answer her. The disciples urged Jesus to send her away, "She pesters us with

her pleading." [24]Jesus answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of Israel." [25]Then she worshiped Jesus, and said, "Lord, help me." [26]Jesus said, "It is not good to take bread from the children, and throw it to the little dogs under the table." Jesus didn't respond in a positive way but referred to her as a dog, the Jewish word for Gentile. But the woman showed faith by replying, [27]"Yes, Lord, but the dogs under the table get to eat the crumbs from the Master." {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} [28]Jesus answered, "Woman, since you have great faith, {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} you will get what you asked," and the daughter was immediately healed.

Lord, give me bold faith like the Canaanite woman who prayed persistently. I will look only to You for my spiritual needs. Amen.

[29]Then Jesus left and returned to the shore of the Sea of Galilee. Then He went up a hill to sit. [30]Great crowds came to Him bringing their lame, crippled, blind, deaf, and many others with diseases. They laid them at Jesus' feet, and He cured them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [31]The crowd was astonished so they praised the God of Israel. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

[32]Then Jesus called His disciples and said, "My heart has compassion for the crowd because they have been here and they have nothing left to eat. I fear they might faint on their way home." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [33]The disciples answered, "This is an isolated place. Where can we find food enough to feed such a crowd?" [34]Jesus asked, "How many loaves of bread are available?" They answered, "Seven, and a few small fish." [35]Then Jesus instructed the crowd to sit down. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [36]He gave thanks {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} and kept giving the pieces to the disciples and they kept giving food to the people. [37]And everyone ate and they were filled. The disciples took up the pieces of food left over and filled seven baskets. [38]There were about four thousand men, besides women and children. [39]Then Jesus sent the crowds away, entered a boat, and went to Magadan. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Matthew 16

The Church Is Introduced

[1]Some Pharisees and Sadducees tried to test Jesus by asking to see a spectacular miracle from heaven. [2]Jesus answered them, "When you see a red sky at night, you know it will be a delightful evening. [3]When you see a red sky in the morning, you must take warning because the weather is threatening. Hypocrites! You now know how to discern the signs of the sky, but you can't discern the signs of the times. [4]Only a wicked and evil generation seeks a spectacular miracle, so no sign will be given to them but the sign of Jonah." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} Then Jesus left, and went away.

Lord, help me understand the signs of change in this world. I know You are coming back to receive the church. I know You are coming soon and I will be ready. Amen.

5Then Jesus and the disciples crossed the sea, but the disciples forgot to take any bread. 6So Jesus said to them, "Watch yourselves, and guard yourselves against the contaminating yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees!" 7Then the disciples discussed what Jesus said among themselves, saying, "Was it because we did not take any bread?" 8Jesus knew what they said, "Why are you talking among yourselves that you have no bread? You still have little faith {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 9and you still don't understand. Remember the five loaves that fed five thousand and how many basketfuls you took up? {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 10Remember the seven loaves for four thousand people and how many baskets you took up? 11Why do you not understand that I was not speaking about physical bread when I said to guard yourselves against the contaminating yeast of the Pharisees and the Sadducees?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 12Then they understood that Jesus meant guard your inner yeast, the teaching of the Pharisees and the Sadducees, {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} not outer yeast. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Lord, so often I forget what You've done for me, just as the disciples forgot what Jesus had provided for them. Give me a "remembering spirit" so I will always be grateful for what You've done for me in the past. My mind is not perfect, so don't let me forget and become ungrateful. I praise You for past provisions; this proves that You will supply in the future. Amen.

Jesus Visits Caesarea Philippi

13Next Jesus went to the village of Caesarea Philippi, and as they were walking, Jesus asked, "Who do the people say that I am?" 14The disciples answered, "Some say You are John the Baptizer, others say You are Elijah, or Jeremiah or one of the prophets." 15Jesus then asked, "But who do you say that I am?" {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 16Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God." 17Jesus answered, "Simon Peter, son of Jonah, you are blessed, because you didn't think this up, My Father in heaven gave you this revelation.

18"Peter, you have faith like a rock, and I will build My church on the solid rock statement of My deity that you just spoke about. The gates of hell cannot stop My followers when they go preaching about who I Am." 19Jesus then replied, "I will give you the keys to the kingdom of heaven. Whatever you bind on earth will not enter heaven, whatever you loose on earth, will enter heaven." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 20Jesus then instructed them

not to tell anyone He was the Messiah, the anointed of God.

In the first prediction of the church, Jesus said, "I will build My church" (Matt. 16:18). We should thank the Lord for the church because Jesus promised death will not overpower us. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} Lord, I thank You for the church which is Your body; it is made up of Your followers. I love my church, my spiritual family. Bless my church, help it grow, keep it from evil, and use it mightily. Amen.

21 Then Jesus told His disciples that He must
go to Jerusalem to suffer many things from
the chief priest and the scribes. He would
be killed by them, but He would rise from
the dead on the third day. {260 Jesus' Suf-
fering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10,
18} 22 Peter rebuked Jesus saying, "This will
never happen to You." {504 Unbelief-Hin-
drance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 23 Jesus turned
and said to Peter, "Get behind Me. {220
Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}
You are a stumbling block like satan. You
are not concerned with the things of God,
but with the things of men." {504 Unbe-
lief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
24 Then Jesus said, "If anyone will follow
Me, let him take up his cross daily and fol-
low Me. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark
8:34} 25 For whoever tries to save his life
on this earth, will lose it. But whoever
loses his life for My sake, will find it. 26 For
what benefit will it gain a man, if he gains
the whole world and loses his soul? What
price will a man pay to buy back his soul?
27 "For the Son of Man is going to return
to earth in His Father's splendor, with His
angels, and then He will reward everyone
in accord with what that person has done.
{524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer,
1 Thess. 1:10} 28 Some of those standing
here will live {18 Anticipating His Return,
Rev. 16:17} to see the Son of Man coming
with His kingdom."

Lord, I don't want to save my life, then lose it; I will give my life for You and find Your purpose for my life. What shall it profit me if I gain the whole world but lose my own soul? I will not sell my soul to satan. Amen.

Matthew 17

Lord, help me see Your glory and worship You as the disciples did. Amen.

The Transfiguration of Jesus

1 Six days after Jesus spoke at Caesarea
Philippi He took with Him Peter, James,
and John and climbed up into the heights
of Mount Hermon. {443 Solitude and
Prayer, Luke 5:16} 2 Jesus was transfigured
before them. His face glistened as the sun,
and His clothes were sparkling white. {490
Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} 3 Then
Moses and Elijah appeared and talked
with Jesus about His coming death. 4 Peter
said to Jesus, "Master, it is good for us to be
here. Let's make three tents: one for You,
one for Moses, and one for Elijah." {390
Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 5 While

Peter was speaking, a bright cloud covered them and the three disciples were afraid. Then a voice spoke from the cloud, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. Listen to Him and obey Him." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [6]The disciples fell to the ground in fear, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [7]and then Jesus touched them saying, "Don't be afraid." {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} [8]When they looked up they saw only Jesus.

Lord, these disciples saw You transformed on the mount, and that's the way You will be in heaven. They fell to the ground; that's the way I will worship You today and in the future. I'm flat on my face in submission to You. Amen.

[9]As they were going down the mountain Jesus said to them, "Don't tell anyone about this until I am raised from the dead." [10]The disciples asked Jesus, "Why do the scribes say Elijah must come before the Messiah comes?" [11]Jesus answered, "It is true that Elijah must come to get everything ready. [12]But I'm telling you that Elijah has already come but the scribes didn't know it and unsaved people will do to John the Baptizer as they want. In the same way I, the Son of Man, will suffer at their hands." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [13]The disciples understood that Jesus meant John the Baptizer was Elijah.

The Disciples Can't Heal

[14]When Jesus and the disciples reached the crowd, a man came to Jesus kneeling before Him, begging, [15]"Lord, have pity on my son, {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} for he has epilepsy and suffers terribly. He often falls into the fire or into the water. [16]I brought him to Your disciples, but they could not heal him." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [17]And Jesus answered, "O you faithless and unbelieving generation. How much longer must I put up with you? Bring the boy to Me!" [18]And Jesus rebuked the demon, and it came out of him. Immediately the boy was cured. [19]Later the disciples came privately to Jesus to ask, "Why could we not cast out the demon?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord, that's my question, "Why can't I do more for You?" The answer is still "unbelief." Lord, give me faith. Amen.

[20]Jesus answered, "Because your faith is small. For verily I say, if you have faith the size of a mustard seed, you can say to this mountain, 'Move from here to there,' and it will move. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} Nothing is impossible for you who believe. [21]However, this can be done only with prayer and continued fasting." {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

[22]While they traveled through Galilee, Jesus said, "The Son of Man is going to be turned over into the hands of those who will kill Him, [23]but on the third day He

will be raised again." That news crushed them. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Paying the Temple Tax

24When they reached Capernaum, the collectors of the temple tax came to Peter and asked, "Why does your Teacher not pay the temple tax?" 25When Jesus entered the house, He anticipated Simon's questions so He said, "What is your opinion, Simon? From whom do civil rulers collect taxes? From their own family or from others?" 26Peter answered, "From others." Jesus said to him, "So their own sons are exempt. 27But so that we may not offend them, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} go down to the sea and throw in a hook. Pull in the first fish that bites, open its mouth and you will find in it a shekel. Take that money and pay the tax for both of us." {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20}

Lord, since Jesus was conscientious about paying the smallest tax, I will follow His example. Provide for me to do it, just as You provided for Jesus. Amen.

Matthew 18

Childlike Faith

1The disciples approached Jesus and asked, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" 2Jesus called a little child to stand with them, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 3and He said, "Truly I say to you, unless you repent and become like little children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 4Whoever becomes meek as this little child will be the greatest in the kingdom of heaven, 5and whoever receives a little child like this for My sake receives Me." {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1}

Lord, when I think I am important, remind me that I am only a child. Amen.

Mistaken Zeal of John the Apostle

6"Whoever influences one of these little ones who believe in Me to sin, will have a great stone hung around his neck and cast into the bottom of the sea. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 7A person will be condemned who does this wrong! {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Evil comes to all, but the man who does this will be condemned. 8If your hand or foot makes you do wrong, cut it off or get rid of anything that condemns you. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} It is better to go through life crippled than to be thrown into everlasting torture with both hands or feet. 9And if your eye makes you do wrong, pluck it out and get rid of anything that causes you to do wrong. It is better for you to go through life with a single eye than to be thrown into hell with both eyes. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 10Be careful you don't look with anger on a little child, {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} because their guardian angels in heaven have continued access to My

Father in heaven." {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7}
11"If a man has a hundred sheep and one is lost, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 12he will leave his ninety-nine to go search for the lost one. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 13When he finds it, he rejoices over it more than he does over ninety-nine that did not get lost. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} 14In the same way it is not the will of My Father in heaven that a single one of these little ones be lost." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, teach me the importance of one person, just as the Shepherd searched for the one lost sheep. Amen.

15"If your brother does something wrong, go to him privately and show where he is wrong. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} If he listens, you have won back your brother. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 16If he will not listen, take one or two others, so that you have witnesses confirmed by their testimony. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} 17If he refuses to listen to them, report the matter to the church. And if he refuses to listen to the church, treat him as a pagan and as an abomination. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18Verily I say to you, whatever you bind on earth is bound in heaven, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} and whatever you release on earth is released in heaven. 19Verily I tell you, if only two of you on earth agree on what they ask, {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} you will receive it from My heavenly Father." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

Jesus intended that believers gather in His name (Matt. 18:19-20) and that He would be present to hear their request, especially when they corporately agreed for the request. When the early church obeyed and prayed corporately, "the place where they were assembled together was shaken" (Acts 4:31). Lord, I will meet with other believers in Your church to agree and pray together. Amen.

20"For where two or three meet as My disciples, {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} I am present with them."
21Then Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, how often may my brother sin against me and I have to forgive him? As often as seven?" {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 22Jesus answered, "Not as many as seven, I tell you, but as many as seventy times seven! {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 23The kingdom of heaven may be compared to a king who decided to settle up the accounts of his servants. 24First, a servant was brought to the king who owed his master millions of dollars. 25And because he could not pay, his master ordered him to be sold, with his wife and children and all his belongings until payment was made. 26The servant fell at his master's feet and begged, 'Give me time, and I will pay you everything.' {108

Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [27]The master's heart was moved with sympathy, and he let him go free, and canceled his debt. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [28]The servant went to one of his fellow servants who owed him ten dollars, and choked him by the throat, demanding, 'Pay me now the ten dollars.' [29]The fellow servant fell down and pleaded, 'Give me time, and I will pay you.' {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [30]But he refused and threw him in jail until he should pay the debt. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [31]When the other slaves saw what had happened, they went to report what happened to their master. [32]Then the master called to the first servant, and said, 'I canceled your huge debt because you pleaded with me. [33]Should you not have shown mercy to your fellow-slave, as I did for you?' {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

[34]"The master was angry and turned him over to the torturers until he paid the whole debt. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [35]This is how My heavenly Father will deal with you, if you do not freely forgive your brother." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

Lord, it's impossible in my old nature to forgive someone as much as You suggest. So Lord, take over my desires—transform me—so I can have a forgiving spirit as Jesus forgave those who crucified Him. Amen.

Matthew 19

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

[1]When Jesus had finished this sermon, He left Galilee and came into the district of Judea that is on the other side of the Jordan. [2]Great crowds followed Him, and He healed them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [3]Some Pharisees came to test Jesus with this question, "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife on any grounds?" [4]Jesus answered, "Have you not read that the Creator at the beginning made them male and female, {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [5]and said, 'For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and become one with his wife, and the two of them shall be one?' [6]So they are no longer two, but one. So, what God has joined together man must not separate." {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [7]They asked Him, "Then why did Moses command that a written divorce be allowed for a man to divorce his wife?" [8]Jesus answered them, "It was because of your hard heart {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} that Moses allowed you to divorce your wives, but it was not allowed from the beginning. [9]Now I tell you, whoever divorces his wife for any reason other than her unfaithfulness, and marries another woman, is guilty of adultery." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [10]The disciples said to Him, "If that is the way a man should treat his wife, then why get married?" {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [11]Jesus said to them, "Not every man can live single, it is only for those who have this

capacity. [12]For some are born eunuchs, and some have been made eunuchs by men, and some have made themselves eunuchs for the sake of the kingdom of heaven. Let anyone do this who can." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [13]Later some little children were brought to Jesus for Him to lay His hands on them and pray for them. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} But His disciples rebuked them. [14]Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me and stop turning them away, for such is the kingdom of heaven." [15]And He laid His hands on them to bless them. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1}

Lord, teach me the importance of children. May I love them and bless them as Jesus did. May I see the great potential in every child. May I help children find Your wonderful plan for their life. Amen.

The Rich Young Ruler

[16]A man asked Jesus, "What good deed can I do to gain eternal life?" {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [17]And Jesus answered, "Why are you asking Me about what is good? Only the heavenly Father is perfectly good. But if you want eternal life, you must continually keep the commands." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [18]He asked Jesus, "What commands?" Jesus answered, "You must not kill, you must not commit adultery, you must not steal, you must not lie, [19]you must honor your father and mother, and you must love your neighbor as you love yourself." [20]The young man said to Jesus, "I have kept all these; what more do I need to do?" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [21]Jesus said, "If you are going to be perfect, go and sell what you own and give the money to the poor, and you will have riches in heaven. Then come and follow Me." {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} [22]And when the young man heard this qualification he turned away in sorrow for he owned a lot of property. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

Lord, I surrender the control of all my belongings to You. Help me use all my belongings for Your glory. May belongings never possess me, but may I use all my "things" for Your purpose for my life. Amen.

[23]Jesus then told His disciples, "Verily I say to you, it is hard for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [24]And it is easier for a camel to enter through a needle's eye than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of heaven." [25]When the disciples heard this, they were astonished, and asked, "Who can be saved then?" [26]But Jesus told them, "This is impossible with men, but everything is possible with God." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
[27]Then Peter answered Him, "We have left everything to follow You. What are we going to get?" {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [28]Jesus said to them, "Verily I say to you, in the new world when the Son of Man shall take His seat on His throne, you who have followed Me, will sit on twelve

thrones and rule the twelve tribes of Israel. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 29And everyone who has left home, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children, or land, for My sake, will be rewarded a hundred times in addition to eternal life. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 30But many who are first now will be last, and many who are last will then be first."

Lord, I surrender my desire to be important to You. Use any influence I have for Your glory. Amen.

Matthew 20

On the Way to Jerusalem

1"Now the kingdom of heaven is like a land owner who went out early in the morning to hire laborers for his vineyard. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 2He contracted with them for a day's wages, then sent them off to work. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 3He went out again about nine o'clock and found workers standing idle. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23} 4So he contracted with them, 'You also go work in my vineyard, and I will pay you what is right.' And they went to work. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 5Again he went out about twelve o'clock and three o'clock, and made the same contract. 6About five went out again and found still others were idle. He said to them, 'Why have you been standing here all day idle?' 7They answered, 'Because no one has hired us.' He said, 'Go work in my vineyard.' 8At the end of the day, the owner of the vineyard said to his manager, 'Call the workers and pay them their wages, beginning with the last and ending with the first.' {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 9Those who had been hired at five o'clock, each received a full day's wages. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23} 10And those who were hired first thought that they would receive more; but they too received each a full day's wages. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 11And they began to complain, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} and say, 12'These you hired last worked only one hour, and yet you have paid them the same thing you paid us. We have done the heavy work in the scorching heat of the day.' {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} 13But the land owner answered, 'Friend, I am not doing you wrong. Did you not contract with me for a day's wages? {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 14Take what you earned and go. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} 15I choose to pay the last man hired as much as I pay you. Do I not have the right to do what I please with my own money? Must you be covetous because I am generous?' 16Those who are last will now be first, and those who are first will be last."

Lord, teach me to keep my eyes on You as I work; teach me to please You with all I do. Help me to quit comparing myself to how hard or how long others work. Give me joy in working for You. Amen.

The Selfish Ambition of James and John

17 As Jesus was going up to Jerusalem, He took the twelve disciples aside, and said to them while still on the road, 18 "Listen! We are going up to Jerusalem, and the Son of Man will be betrayed to the high priests and the scribes. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 19 They will condemn Him to death, and turn Him over to the Gentiles to be mocked, and beaten, and then crucified; but on the third day He will rise again." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}
20 Then the mother of James and John came to Jesus with her sons, kneeling and asking for a favor. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} 21 Jesus asked her, "What do you want?" She answered, "Promise that my two sons may sit one at Your right and one at Your left in Your kingdom." {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 22 Jesus answered, "You do not realize what you are asking. Can they drink the cup of suffering that I am about to drink?" They answered, "Yes, we can." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Lord, I want to be close to You, but I don't like suffering. Teach me how to glorify You in suffering. Amen.

23 Jesus said to them, "You will drink the cup of suffering that I am to drink, but to sit at My right and left are not Mine to give. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} That honor will be given to those chosen by My Father." 24 When the other ten disciples heard of this, they were angry at the two brothers. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 25 But Jesus called them and said, "You know that pagan rulers lord it over their subjects. Their great men rule as tyrants. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 26 But it will not be so among you. 27 Whoever wants to be great among you must be a servant, {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} and whoever wants to be first must be a slave. 28 In the same way, the Son of Man has come, not to be served but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

29 As they left Jericho, a large crowd followed Him. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} 30 There were two blind men sitting by the roadside who heard that Jesus was passing by. They cried out, "Have mercy on us, Lord, Son of David!" {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30} 31 The crowd shouted at them to be quiet, but the two blind men begged even louder; "Have mercy on us, O Lord, Son of David." 32 Jesus stopped and called for them, asking, "What do you want Me to do for you?" {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} 33 They answered, "Lord, open our eyes!" {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} 34 Then Jesus' heart was moved with compassion, and He touched their blinded eyes. Immediately they could see, and they followed Him. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

Lord, I am spiritually blind; touch the eyes of my heart so I can see You and Your plan for my life. Help me see spiritual things so I can serve You better. Amen.

Matthew 21

The Triumphant Entry

Lord, I gladly receive the presence of Jesus into my life just as the crowds received Jesus on Palm Sunday. Amen.

[1]The next day—Sunday—news that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem swept through the crowds of Passover pilgrims. As Jesus came to Bethphage, He sent two disciples into the village, {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [2]telling them they would find a donkey with her young colt tied there. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [3]"If anyone asks why you are taking the donkey, tell them the Master needs it to ride into Jerusalem." [4]This act fulfilled Scripture, [5]"Tell the people of Zion, your King is coming to you, humbly riding on a donkey, even on a young colt." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [6]The disciples did as instructed {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [7]and found the donkey as Jesus said. They put their coats on the donkey and Jesus rode on a colt that had never been ridden by anyone. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, You know the future because You live there. I yield my future to You; tell me how to serve You best, just as Jesus told the disciples about the donkey. Amen.

[8]Great crowds spread their coats on the road; others waved their palm branches as they went to meet Him. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [9]The crowds who marched in front of Jesus shouted, "HOSANNA to the Son of David, blessing on Him who comes in the Lord's name, HOSANNA in the highest heaven." {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Lord, I am excited about Jesus as I worship Him saying, "HOSANNA," just as the crowd did on Palm Sunday. Amen.

[10]When Jesus entered the city, people everywhere were asking, "Who is this?" {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [11]The multitude answered, "This is Jesus, the prophet from Nazareth."

Cursing the Barren Fig Tree and Cleansing the Temple

[12]Jesus went into the temple to cleanse it. He drove out all the buyers and sellers, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and turned over the money-changers' tables. He upset the seats of those selling doves, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [13]and said to them, "The Scripture says, 'My house will be called a house of prayer, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6}

but you have made it a den of thieves.'" {51 Blocked-Prayer, 1 Peter 3:7}

Lord, I will cleanse my bodily temple so it will be clean; You want to live in holiness. I will make my earthly temple a "house of prayer." Amen.

14Then blind and crippled people came to Him in the temple, and He cured them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 15But the high priest and scribes saw His miracles. Children began shouting in the temple, "Welcome to the Son of David." 16The high priest and scribes were indignant and asked Him, "Do you hear what they are saying?" {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} Jesus answered them, "Yes. Have you never read, 'Out the mouths of little children and babies come perfect praise'?" {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} 17And He left and went out of the city to Bethany where He spent the night. {73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2}

The Withered Fig Tree

18Early next morning Jesus returned to the city, and was hungry. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} 19He saw a fig tree by the roadside, but found nothing on it but leaves, and Jesus said, "May you never bear fruit again." The fig tree withered. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 20When the disciples saw it, they were amazed, and asked, "How did the fig tree wither up so soon?" {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, I want You to find fruit in my life, not just leaves. I will abide in You (John 15:1-7) so I can produce fruit. Amen.

21Jesus answered them, "If you have faith and do not doubt, you can do this miracle, and if you can say to this mountain, {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} 'Be moved and throw yourself into the sea,' it will be done. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} 22If you have faith, whatever you ask for in prayer, you will receive."

Faith is the opposite of doubt. Doubt is dialogia (dia "through," "logia" words). We often use words to explain away why God can't do certain things, or why other things won't come about. But our faith is the exercise of our will to suspend disbelief, and choose to see things from God's perspective. "Faith is the...evidence of things not seen" (Heb. 11:1). Lord, help me see my problems through Your eyes. Help me see what You want to do in all situations. Help me to see as You see. Amen.

A Day of Controversy in the Temple

23When Jesus came into the temple, the high priests and elders came up to Him while He was teaching, and asked, "By what authority have You done these things?" 24Jesus answered, "I will ask you just one question. If you answer it, you will know by what authority I have for doing what I do. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 25Where did John's baptism

come from? From heaven, or from men?" They said among themselves, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe John?' {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [26]But if we say, 'from men,' we are afraid of the people, for they all consider John a prophet." {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [27]So they answered Jesus, "We do not know." Then Jesus answered them, "Neither will I tell you by what authority I do as I do."

[28]Jesus told them a parable, "There was a man with two sons. He told the first, 'Son, go and work in my vineyard today.' {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [29]And the son answered, 'I will not.' But afterward he changed his mind and went. [30]Then the father said the same thing to the second son, and he said, 'I'll go,' but he did not go. [31]Which of the two did what his father wanted?" They answered, "The first son." Jesus said, "Verily I say to you, that tax collectors and prostitutes will go into the kingdom of heaven before you. [32]For John came to you living righteously, and you did not believe him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} But tax-collectors and prostitutes believed his message; {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} but you, even after seeing that, would not change your minds and believe the message of John." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

Lord, You love willingness in people, not empty words. Look at my heart to see a servant willing to work for You. Amen.

[33]"Listen to another parable. There was once a land owner who planted a vineyard and built a fence to protect it, and hewed out a vat to store the wine, and built a tower. Then he rented it out to tenants and went on a trip. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [34]When it came time to gather grapes, he sent his servants to the tenants to collect rent. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [35]But the tenants beat his slaves, and killed the second, and stoned the third. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} [36]Again he sent other servants in a group, and the tenants treated them exactly the same way. [37]Finally he sent his son, for he said, 'Surely they will honor my son.' [38]But when they saw the son, they said, 'He is the heir, let us kill him, and get the estate!' [39]So they drove the son out of the vineyard and murdered him. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [40]Now when the owner of the land returns, what will he do to these tenants?" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [41]They answered, "In vengeance he will put the murderers to death, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and rent the vineyard to other tenants, who will quickly pay him the rent." {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6} [42]Then Jesus said to them, "Did you never read this truth in the Scripture: The stone that was rejected by the builders will become the cornerstone; {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} this is the Lord's doing, and it is wonderful to see? {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [43]This is why the kingdom will be taken away from you, and given to a people who will produce its fruit. {268 Judgmental-Praying,

Acts 5:4, 9} 44Whoever falls on that stone will be saved, but whoever the stone falls on will be crushed to pieces." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, You are the only solid foundation I have in my life; You are my foundation stone. I rest on You, and I will not be moved. Amen.

45When the high priests and Pharisees heard His stories, they knew that He was speaking about them. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} 46Although they would like to have Jesus arrested, they were afraid of the people who considered Jesus a prophet. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

Matthew 22

The Parable of the Wedding Feast

1Then Jesus spoke to them in parables once again and said: 2"The kingdom of heaven is like a king, who gave a wedding feast for his son. 3And he sent his servants to call those who had been invited to the wedding feast, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} but they refused to come. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 4A second time the king sent other servants, 'Tell the invited guests that I have my feast all ready, my cattle are butchered, and everything is ready. Come to the wedding feast!' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 5But they did not come, but went about their business, one to his farm, another to his shop, 6and the others seized his servants to beat them and then murdered them. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 7Then the king was furious, and sent his soldiers to destroy those murderers and burned their town. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} 8Then he said to his servants, 'My wedding feast is ready, but those invited are not worthy to come. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8} 9So go out to the country roads to invite everyone you find to my wedding feast.' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 10And those servants went out into the roads to gather everyone they found, both good and bad, and the banquet hall was packed with guests. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} 11When the king entered to see the guests, he saw a man who was not wearing a wedding suit. 12So the king said to him, 'My friend, why are you not wearing a wedding suit?' But the man was silent. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 13Then the king said to his attendants, 'Bind him hand and foot and throw him out into the outer darkness, where there will be weeping and grinding of teeth.' 14For many are invited, but few are prepared." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

Lord, I will not come into Your presence dressed in my own good works. I will come to Your feast dressed in the robes of righteousness of Jesus Christ. Amen.

The Pharisees' and Herodians' Question

15Then the Pharisees went and plotted to trap Jesus. 16So they sent their disciples to

Jesus with the Herodians, to say, "Master, we know that You are an honest man who teaches honestly the way of God. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} You are not afraid of what anyone says. 17What is Your opinion on this question: Is it right to pay Caesar the poll tax, or not?" {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18} 18Jesus saw their hypocritical plot, and so He asked them, "Why are you testing Me, you hypocrites? 19Show Me a coin." 20Then He asked, "Whose likeness and name is this?" {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 21They answered, "Caesar's." Then He said, "Give to Caesar, the things that belong to Caesar, and give to God the things that belong to God." {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 22And when they heard it, they were amazed, so they left Him and went away. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33}

Lord, teach me the simplicity of life. I will give to this world (Caesar) the things that belong to it; I will give to You the things that belong to You. Amen.

The Sadducees' Question

23On the same day some Sadducees, who denied the resurrection, came to Jesus to ask, 24"Teacher, Moses said, 'If a man dies childless, his brother must marry his widow and raise up a family for his brother. 25Now there were seven brothers. The first married and died without children. His widow married his brother. 26The second also died, and the third, and all down to the seventh. 27Last of all the woman died, too. 28Now in the resurrection {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} whose wife will she be? For they all married her." {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} 29Jesus answered them, "You are wrong, because you do not understand the Scriptures nor the power of God. 30In the resurrection men and women do not marry nor are they married, but are as the angels in heaven. 31But you did not read and understand the resurrection of the dead. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} God said to Moses, 32'I am the God of Abraham and the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob?' Now God is not the God of the dead but He is God of the living." 33And when the crowds heard this, they were astonished at His teaching. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

A Legal Question

34The Pharisees heard that Jesus had silenced the Sadducees, so they got together to test Him. 35One of them, an expert in the law, tempted Him, asking, 36"Teacher, what command is greatest in the law?" {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 37And Jesus answered, "'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, and all your mind.' {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 38This is the first and greatest command. 39The second is like it: 'You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.' {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} 40The foundation of the whole law and the prophets are found in these two commands."

We can sum up the Commands with one word, relationship. We must love God first and foremost. Christianity is not about "do's" and "don'ts," it's about making God our primary concern in all we do, all the time. And it's about all that's within us, that is, our heart, soul, and mind. Lord, I can tell You, "I love You" with words, but I will show You by yielding my heart, mind, and body to You. I will live for You. Amen.

Now Jesus Asks a Question

41And then Jesus asked the Pharisees,
42"What is your opinion about the Christ?
Whose son is He?" {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} They answered
Him, "He is David's son." 43Jesus asked
them, "How then does David, moved by
the Spirit, call Him Lord, when he says:
44'The Lord has said to my Lord, sit at my
right hand, and I will put your enemies
under your feet?' {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 45If David has called
the Messiah Lord, how can the Messiah be
his son?" 46And no one could answer Him
and from that time on no one dared ask
Him any more questions. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

Matthew 23

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

1After a while, Jesus went into the courtyard of the temple to teach the multitudes,
2"Beware of the scribes who like to sit in
Moses' seat; 3they make rules for you to
obey, but they themselves do not obey
their own rules. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 4They put heavy and
grievous burdens on your shoulders, but
they will not bear them, nor will they
lift one finger to help you. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 5They love to wear
long robes to get greetings from everyone,
6they love the best seats at celebrations and
in the synagogues. 7You must not seek for
others to call you 'Master,' {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} 8for you have but
one who is 'Master.' 9And you must not
call anyone on earth 'Father,' for the heavenly One is your Father. 10And you must
not be called 'leaders,' for you have only
one Leader, and that is the Messiah. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 11Whoever
will be greatest among you must be your
servant. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 12Whoever will exalt himself will be
humbled, and whoever humbles himself
will be exalted." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

God honors the humble, and those who are humble will be great. Jesus said, "Among those born of women there has not arisen one greater than John the Baptizer, but he who is least in the kingdom is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11). Therefore, "Before honor is humility" (Prov. 15:33). We must pray (1) to recognize our selfish nature; (2) to deny selfish desires; and (3) to be humble. Lord, help me see my selfish nature and may I say, "Not I but Christ" (Gal. 2:20). I will deny my selfish ambitions, and

will glorify You in all I do. May others see Christ in me. Amen.

13"Woe to you scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites—because you shut the door to the kingdom of God and you yourselves will not enter, nor will you let anyone else enter. 14Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! You devour widows' houses, and to show off that you pray long. Therefore you will receive greater judgment. 15How terrible it will be for you scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites—because you go everywhere to make people your proselytes, yet you make them twofold sons of hell. Because they were originally on their way to hell, now as your proselytes they are doubly directed to hell. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 16Woe to you blind guides, you say it is alright to swear by the temple, but not by the gold on the temple; you are fools, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 17what is greater, the temple or the gold? 18You say it is alright to swear by the altar but it's not right to swear by the gift on the altar; you are blind; 19what is greater the altar or the sacrifice? 20The one who swears by the altar, also swears by the things on the altar. 21The one who swears by the temple, swears by it and by Him who dwells in it. 22The one who swears by the heavens also swears by the throne of God, and by Him who sits on the throne." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

Lord, open my eyes to any hypocrisy in my life. Because hypocrites are so blinded to their hypocrisy, I need to see myself through Your eyes. When I see my despicable hypocrisy, I will repent quickly, and instantly plead the cleansing blood of Christ. Amen.

23"How terrible it will be for you scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites—{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} you are careful to tithe the mint that grows at your back door, {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} but you've left undone the weightier things of the law which is judgment, and self-control, and faith. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} It's right to tithe everything God gives to you, but it's wrong to ignore those greater things; 24you strain at a gnat and swallow a camel. 25Woe, how terrible it will be for you scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}—because you clean the outside of the cup, but leave the inside filthy. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 26Blind Pharisees, first cleanse the inside of the cup and bowl, then clean the outside. 27How terrible it will be for you scribes and Pharisees—hypocrites—{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} because you're like a freshly painted grave that looks beautiful, but inwardly you're dead, rotting, stinking corpses. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 28Outwardly you appear to people to be righteous, but inwardly you're full of sin and hypocrisy." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}
29"How terrible it will be for you scribes and Pharisees—{268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} hypocrites—because you build monuments at the tombs of the prophets, and you make a big spectacle of

putting flowers on their graves. [30]You say, if you lived in their day, you would not be part of those who killed them. [31]But you witness against yourselves by the things you do today, that you would murder them. [32]You identify with your father's guilt. [33]You serpents and children of snakes, how will you escape the punishment of hell? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [34]You are just like those to whom the Father sent prophets to preach to them. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} Yet you would scourge them, persecute them, and crucify them. [35]And on your hands is the blood of all righteous martyrs, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah who was killed in the temple next to the altar. [36]Surely all these things will come on this age. [37]O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} who killed the prophets and stoned those who were sent to you from the Father. How often would I have gathered you to Me, as a hen gathers her chicks, but you would not come to Me. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [38]I now have abandoned your house. [39]You will not see Me or understand what I am doing in the world, till I come again in the name of the Lord."

Matthew 24

The Mount of Olives Discourse

[1]Later in the day—Tuesday—Jesus sat with His disciples on the Mount of Olives to look at the city of Jerusalem and the temple. [2]Jesus said, "You see the city and the temple; verily not one stone will be left on another, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} but shall be thrown down." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord Jesus, You predicted the temple would be destroyed, and it happened just as You predicted. Give me confidence to believe every promise You give. Amen.

[3]His disciples asked Jesus privately, "Tell us when this will happen? And what shall be the sign of Your coming? And what shall be the sign of the end of the world?" {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}
[4]Jesus answered, "Don't let anyone lead you astray, [5]because many will come in My name, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} saying, 'I am the Christ!' [6]You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but don't worry because these things must happen before the end. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [7]Nation will fight nation, and alliances of nations will fight other alliances; and there will be earthquakes; [8]these are the beginning of tribulation."

Lord, You predicted the world would hate me. Why am I surprised when it happens? Teach me to believe and act on Your promises. Amen.

[9]"Your enemy will arrest you, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} persecute you, and kill you; all nations will hate the nation of Israel for My sake. [10]Many will

be offended and betray one another, and hate one another. [11]Many false prophets will lead many astray, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [12]and the influence of sin will influence every area of life. Love for Me will become cold. {140 Ephesians' Church-Prayer, Rev. 2:4-6} [13]But those followers of Mine who endure tribulation to the end shall finally be saved. [14]The gospel of the kingdom will be preached to the whole world; then the end shall come. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [15]When you see the abomination of desolation—a pig sacrificed on the altar—which was predicted by Daniel; realize this is the beginning of the Great Tribulation. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [16]Then let my people flee to the mountains for protection, {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [17]let those on the rooftop not go in their house to take anything with them. [18]Let those working in the field not return home for clothes, [19]and those with child will suffer the most; {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [20]so pray your escape will not be in winter or on the Sabbath. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [21]This will be the Great Tribulation {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} which is greater than any since the beginning of the world and greater than any after it. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [22]Unless God shortens these days, no one can live through it, and for God's people, those days will be shortened. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [23]If anyone tells you, 'Here is the Messiah,' or 'There is the Messiah,' don't believe it; {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [24]many false messiahs will come and perform miracles to lead God's people away. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [25]I've told you before, [26]if anyone tells you the Messiah is in the wilderness, don't go out there to check it out. And if they say Messiah is in an inner room, don't believe that either."

The Second Coming

[27]"The coming of the Son of Man will be as spectacular as lightning flashing from the east to the west. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [28]And there'll be so many slain by His coming, that buzzards will gather to eat their flesh."

Lord, I wait for Your coming, "even so come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Amen.

[29]"The sun will be darkened, {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} and the moon won't shine, and stars will fall from the sky, and heaven itself will be shaken as the Son of Man makes His appearance in heaven. [30]Then shall all ethnic tribes mourn when they see Him, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} coming with great power and glory through the clouds. [31]He will send His angels with the sound of a trumpet to gather His people from the four corners of the earth. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20}

[32]"Learn from the parable of the fig tree, when new growth appears and the leaves are growing, realize it is summer; {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [33]so when you see these signs happening, Messiah is

at the door. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 34"This generation of Jewish believers will not pass away until all these signs have appeared. 35Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word—which I promise shall not pass away—but these things will happen as promised. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}
36"But no one knows the hour when Messiah will come, not you, nor anyone else, not even the angels in heaven, neither the Son of Man, but only the Father knows the hour." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Lord, I'm glad I don't know when my last day on earth will come. I'd live for that day, rather than living for You. Help me look to You only. Amen.

37"It will be like the days of Noah. He warned everyone that judgment was coming, {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 38but no one believed him. People went on eating, getting drunk, getting married 39until the flood came. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 40"Two will be working in the field, one will be taken, the other left. 41Two women will be grinding meal, one will be taken, the other left; {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 42watch because you don't know when He will return." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Lord, I expect You to come at any minute. Amen.

43"If the owner of the house knew when a thief would break into his home, he would have been constantly vigilant. 44Therefore, be ready for in just the hour you think He won't return, He will come. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}
45"If the owner made a faithful worker supervisor of all his businesses while he was gone, 46that worker is blessed if the owner returns to find everything in order. 47Verily, the owner would give him a promotion. 48But if the servant is lazy 49and spends his time eating and drinking because he thinks the owner is tarrying, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 50the owner will come back at a time the worker doesn't expect him, 51and will fire the worker and give his job to someone else. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} That worker will suffer with those who weep and gnash their teeth."

Matthew 25

The Parable of the Five Foolish Virgins

1Jesus spoke a parable that the coming of the kingdom is likened to ten bridesmaids with ten lamps who were waiting for the coming of the bridegroom. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 2"Now five were foolish, and five were wise. 3Five foolish bridesmaids didn't take oil with them, 4but five were wise bridesmaids {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} and took oil in addition to their lamps. 5The bridegroom was late and all the bridesmaids slept. {275

Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [6]At midnight there was a shout, 'He's coming! Let all the bridesmaids come meet him.' {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [7]When the ten got ready to light their lamps, {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [8]the five foolish asked the wise, 'Give us some oil because our lamps are going out.' [9]But the wise answered, 'If we give you some of ours, we won't have enough to light the bridegroom's way.' They told the foolish virgins to go buy some for themselves. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [10]The five wise virgins went into the feast with the bridegroom, and the door was shut. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [11]Afterward the five foolish virgins came asking, 'Open the door.' [12]But the bridegroom answered, {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 'I don't know you.'" {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [13]Jesus said, "Verily I say to you, watch continually because you don't know the day or hour when the Son of Man is coming."

Lord, teach me the importance of "now." Help me live in the moment, and not live in the past, nor in the future. Keep me from sleeping when I should be doing what You expect. Lord, I'm ready; come quickly. Amen.

The Parable of the Unprofitable Worker

[14]Jesus spoke another parable about His returning, saying, "A businessman planned to take a long trip, and delegated to various workers, different jobs in the company. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [15]He gave one worker $500,000, another $200,000 and the third $100,000; {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} each according to his ability to manage money. [16]The one with $500,000 invested wisely and doubled his money; {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [17]the one with $200,000 also invested prudently and doubled his money. [18]The worker with $100,000 hid his money carefully so it wouldn't be lost. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [19]After a long time, the owner returned and asked his workers to report what they had done. [20]The one who had $500,000 brought in another $500,000, {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [21] and the owner said, 'You've done well because you were faithful, I'm going to promote you to a larger responsibility.'" {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

Lord, like this worker I want Your approval. Amen.

[22]"The one with $200,000 gave the owner an additional $200,000; {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [23]the owner also congratulated and promoted him. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [24]The worker with $100,000 said, 'I know you are a hard man, reaping where you don't sow, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [25]and I was afraid so I safely hid your money, and here it is!' [26]The owner said, 'You're a lazy worker. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer,

Prov. 13:4} You know I expected profit from my investment. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [27]You should have put it in a bank where it would at least earn interest.' {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [28]The owner took away the $100,000 and gave it to the worker who now had a million dollars." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [29]Jesus said, "If you have gathered much for the kingdom you'll be given more. If you've done little for the kingdom, it'll be taken from you. [30]The owner said, 'Cast the unprofitable servant into outer darkness, where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth.'" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, teach me to faithfully manage my time, talent, and treasure for Your glory. May I be as fruitful as I can be with the gifts You've given me and may I work effectively in the location where You've placed me. Amen.

[31]Jesus explained, "When you see the Son of Man come in His glory, {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [32]all the nations of the earth will stand before Him. The Son of Man will sit on His throne to divide them as a shepherd divides his flock; [33]sheep will be separated to His right hand, and goats to the left. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [34]Then the King will say to those on the right, 'Come in because you are blessed, inherit the kingdom prepared for you.' {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [35]Then Jesus will say to them, 'You are blessed because I was hungry and you fed Me. I was thirsty and you gave Me drink. [36]I was naked and you took Me in. I was in prison and you came and visited Me.' {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [37]Those on the right said, 'When did we see You hungry, or thirsty, [38]or naked, [39]or in prison?' [40]The King shall answer, 'Inasmuch as you did it to my brethren and the poor, you did it to Me.' {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [41]Then the King will say to those on the left, 'Depart from Me into eternal fire prepared for the devil and his demons. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [42]Because I was hungry, you didn't feed Me. When I was thirsty you didn't give me something to drink. [43]When I was a stranger, you didn't take Me in. When I was naked, you didn't clothe Me. When I was in prison, you didn't visit Me.' [44]Then they tried to excuse themselves, 'Lord, when did we see You hungry, or thirsty, or naked, or sick, or in prison, and did not minister to You?' [45]Then He will answer them saying, 'Verily I say to you, inasmuch as you ignored one of these needy, you ignore Me.' [46]Then they will be sent to eternal punishment, but the righteous will go to eternal life."

Lord, I will give to the poor as I would give to You. I will help the needy as I would help You. I will minister to the hungry and thirsty as I would minister to You. Help me see Your presence in all I do. Amen.

Matthew 26

Events on Wednesday

1On Wednesday Jesus said to His disciples,
2"In two days the Son of Man will be delivered up to be crucified." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}
3The religious leaders with Caiaphas the high priest {320 New Covenant-Praying, Heb. 8:8} 4came together to discuss how to arrest Jesus and kill Him. 5But they decided not to do it during Passover, lest there be an uprising among the people. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

The Anointing at Bethany

6That night Jesus attended a feast in Bethany in the home of Simon the leper. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 7A woman poured a pound of perfume from a jar on Jesus' head. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 8The oil was very costly. Some in the crowd were indignant, thinking the ointment was wasted. 9They wanted to sell it and give the money to the poor. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}
10Jesus understood what they were saying, so He answered, "Why are you criticizing the woman? She has done a good thing for Me. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} 11You always will have the poor, and you can do for them what you want to do. But you won't always have Me; {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 12she has anointed My body for its burial. 13Wherever the gospel is preached in the world, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} she will be remembered for her act of worship."

Lord, nothing given to You is wasted. No sacrifice of time, energy, or money is wasted when given to You. Amen.

14One of the twelve—Judas Iscariot—went to the chief priest 15and asked, "What will you give me if I deliver Jesus to you?" The religious rulers gave him 30 pieces of silver, 16so Judas looked for an opportunity to hand Jesus over to them.

Events on Thursday

17On Thursday, the day when the Passover lamb was killed, the disciples asked Jesus, "Where do You want to celebrate Passover?" {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 18Jesus told Peter and John to go in the city and find a man with a pitcher on his head. "Follow him to a house, and ask the owner for a room where I can celebrate Passover. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} He will show you a larger upper room; get it ready for Me to celebrate the Passover." 19And they went and found the man {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} just as Jesus said, and they prepared it for the Passover meal.

The Last Supper

20When evening came, Jesus was sitting at the table with the twelve 21when He said, "Verily I say to you, one of you is going to betray Me." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} 22They were stunned in their hearts, and asked one by one, "Lord, is it I?" {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 23Jesus answered, "The man who dipped his bread with Me in the stew is the

one who is going to betray Me. [24]The Son of Man is going to His destiny as the Scriptures predict, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} but a curse will be on the one who betrays Him. It would have been better for that man if he had never been born!" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [25]Then Judas who was to betray Him, asked, "Is it I, Rabbi?" {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} Jesus answered him, "Those are your words." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

Eleven disciples called Jesus "Lord" because of their relationship to Him. {289 Lordship Salvation-Prayer, Acts 9:6} Judas called Him "Rabbi" because he only looked to Jesus as a teacher. Lord, You are my Lord. Sit on the throne of my heart and rule my life. Amen.

Institution of the Lord's Table

[26]While they were eating, Jesus took bread and blessed it; {472 Table-Blessing Prayer, Mark 6:41} then He broke it and gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take and eat it; this represents My body." {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} [27]He also took the cup and gave thanks; then giving it to them, He said, "All of you drink, {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} [28]for this represents My blood which confirms the covenant, the blood which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of their sins. [29]I tell you, I will never again drink the fruit of the vine till the day when I drink with you in My Father's kingdom." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

Lord, I will remember You when I come to the Communion Table. It is not about the elements and it is not about a church program. It is in remembrance of You. Amen.

Jesus' Prayer in Gethsemane

[30]After singing a hymn, they left the city and went up the Mount of Olives. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2}
[31]Then Jesus said to them, "You will all lose faith over Me tonight, for the Scripture says, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 'Strike the shepherd, and the sheep will be scattered.' [32]But after my resurrection from the dead, I will meet you in Galilee." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [33]Peter answered, "Though all the rest will lose faith in You, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} I will never lose faith." [34]Jesus said to him, "I tell you solemnly, before a rooster crows this very night, you will deny Me three times." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [35]Peter answered, "Even if I have to die with You, I will never deny You." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, keep me from bragging, as Peter did. Amen.

[36]Then Jesus came with them to a garden called Gethsemane, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} and He said to the

disciples, "Sit here while I go a little farther to pray." {73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2} 37Jesus took Peter, James, and John with Him to pray. Jesus became overwhelmed with grief. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} 38Then He said to the three, "My heart is at the point of death! Stay here and keep watch with Me." {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} 39Then Jesus walked on a few steps and fell on His face to pray, and said, "My Father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from Me; and yet not what I want but what You sent Me to do." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 40Then He returned to the disciples and found them asleep. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} He said to Peter, "Could you not then watch with Me one hour? {332 One-Hour Prayer, Mark 14:37} 41You must watch and pray that you enter not into temptation. Your spirit may be willing but human nature is weak." {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

Lord, teach me to pray with wisdom and understanding. May I always know why I am praying, and the things for which I'm praying. May I pray rightly. Amen.

42A second time Jesus went away to pray, {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} "My Father, if this cup cannot pass without My drinking it, may Your will be done." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 43He came back again and found the disciples again sleeping. They were so sleepy they could hardly hold their eyes open. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} 44Then He left them again to pray the third time. 45Then Jesus returned to the disciples and said, "Sleep on! The time has come for the Son of Man to be betrayed into the hands of sinners! 46Get up! My betrayer is here!"

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken

47Even while He was still speaking, Judas, one of the twelve, came with the crowd, who had swords and clubs. They were sent from the high priests and the elders of the people. 48Now His betrayer had told them the signal was this: "The one I kiss is Jesus. Seize Him!" 49And Judas went straight to Jesus and greeted Him; {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} then with hypocrisy, he affectionately kissed Him. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, Judas betrayed You with one of the greatest symbols of love—a kiss. Teach me to always express my love to You honestly and sincerely. Amen.

50Jesus said to Judas, "My friend, do what you planned." Then they came, grabbed Jesus, and arrested Him. 51One of the disciples with Jesus drew his sword, and struck at the high priest's servant cutting off his ear. 52Then Jesus said, "Put up your sword, {326 Non-Violence Prayer, Luke 6:28} for all who draw the sword will die by the sword. 53Don't you know I can ask My Father {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and He will send one hundred thousand angels to protect Me? 54There is no other

way for the Scriptures to be fulfilled." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [55]Jesus said to the soldiers, "Have you come out with swords and clubs to arrest Me, as though I were a criminal? I constantly sat teaching in the temple, and you never laid hands on Me. [56]But this has all taken place so that the writings of the prophets may be fulfilled." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} Then all the disciples left Jesus and ran away. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, Your disciples left You and ran away. May I never do anything like that. Amen.

The Second Trial—Before Caiaphas

[57]The men who had arrested Jesus took Him away to Caiaphas the high priest, where the scribes and elders were assembled. [58]Peter followed Him at a distance to the courtyard of the high priest's home, going inside to sit among the attendants to see what would happen. [59]The high priests and the whole council were looking for false testimony against Jesus, so they could put Him to death. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [60]But they could not agree, although many false witnesses came forward to testify. Eventually two men came forward [61]to agree, "This man claims, 'I can tear down the temple of God, and build it again in three days.'" {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [62]The high priest then arose and said to Jesus, "Have You no answer? What evidence do You have?" [63]But Jesus kept silent. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} So the high priest said to Him, {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} "I put You under oath, in the name of the living God, tell us whether You are the Christ, the Son of God." [64]Jesus answered him, "The words you charged Me with are true. But I tell you, you will all soon see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Almighty, and coming on the clouds of the sky." {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [65]Then the high priest tore his clothes, and said, "He has blasphemed. What more witnesses do we need? You have just heard His blasphemy. [66]What is your opinion?" Then they agreed, "He deserves to die." [67]After that they spit in His face and slapped Him with their fists. Others hit Him, [68]saying, "If You are the Christ, tell us who struck You?" {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Lord Jesus, You suffered all of this for me. Deepen my love to You. Amen.

[69]As Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard, a servant girl said to him, "You, also, were with Jesus the Galilean." [70]But Peter denied before them all, and said, "I do not know the man." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [71]Then he went out into the gate, where another servant girl saw him, and said, "This fellow was with Jesus the Nazarene." [72]Again Peter denied it, and even swore and cursed, "I do not know the man!" {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [73]A few minutes afterward a bystander told Peter, "You are surely one of them, for your accent gives

you away." 74Then he continued cursing and swearing, "I do not know the man!" {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 75And at once a rooster crowed. Then Peter remembered what Jesus had said, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} And he went out and wept bitterly. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

Lord, I know that humans are weak and they fail. Give me strength to always stand up for You. Amen.

Matthew 27

Jesus Delivered to Pilate

1Early in the morning, all the chief priests and the elders of the people met to plan the death of Jesus. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 2They tied Him up and led Him away to hand Him over to Pilate the governor.

Lord, I don't see how religious leaders could plot the death of an innocent man. Perhaps this is why the Jews are spiritually blinded to this day about Jesus. Amen.

Remorse and Suicide of Judas

3When Judas the betrayer found that Jesus had been condemned, he was overcome with remorse and took the 30 silver pieces back to the chief priests and elders saying, 4"I have sinned, I have betrayed innocent blood." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} "What has that got to do with us?" they replied. "That is your concern." 5Judas threw down the silver pieces in the temple sanctuary and left to hang himself. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6The chief priests picked up the silver pieces saying, "It is against the law to put this money into the treasury; it is blood money." 7So after discussing the matter they bought a potter's field with the money as a graveyard for foreigners. 8This is why the field is called the Field of Blood to this day. 9The words of the prophet Jeremiah {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} were fulfilled: "And they took the 30 silver pieces, the price the children of Israel agreed to pay for Him, 10and they bought the potter's field, just as the Lord directed."

The Fourth Trial—Before Pilate

11Jesus stood before the governor, and Pilate asked Him, "Are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "That is what you say."

Lord Jesus, You are not only the King of the Jews, You are also King of my life. Amen.

12But when Jesus was accused by the chief priests and the elders, He refused to answer anything. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} 13Pilate then said, "Don't You hear these many charges they have brought against You?" 14But to the governor's complete surprise, Jesus didn't offer any reply to the

charges. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Barabbas Is Released

15At the Festival of Passover it was the governor's practice to release any prisoner the people chose. 16At this time there was a famous prisoner named Barabbas. 17So when the crowd gathered, Pilate asked them, "Who do you want me to release: Barabbas or Jesus, the one who is called your Messiah?" 18Pilate knew it was out of envy that they had brought Jesus to court. 19Now as Pilate sat in the chair of judgment, his wife sent him a message, "Don't have anything to do with that Man; I had a terrible dream about Him." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 20The chief priests and the elders had persuaded the crowd to shout for the release of Barabbas and demand the execution of Jesus. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 21So when Pilate asked them, "Which of the two do you want me to release to you?" they cried out, "Barabbas." 22"Then in that case," Pilate asked, "what shall I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?" They all cried, "Let Him be crucified!" {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 23"Why?" Pilate asked. "What crime has He done?" But they shouted with a roar, "Crucify Him!" 24When Pilate saw that he could do nothing else, he took a basin of water and washed his hands in front of them and said, "I am innocent of this man's blood." {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} 25And the people shouted back, "His blood be on us and on our children!" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, it's not possible to get rid of Jesus by washing one's hands. When the world rejects Him, I accept Him as my Savior. Amen.

26Then Pilate released Barabbas to them. He ordered Jesus to be scourged {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} and then handed Him over to the soldiers to be crucified. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 27The governor's soldiers took Jesus into the Praetorium and gathered the whole guard around Him. 28They stripped Jesus and made Him wear a scarlet robe.

Jesus Is Mocked

29Then they twisted some thorns into a crown and placed it on His head {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} and placed a reed in His right hand. They knelt before Him saying, "Hail, King of the Jews!" {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 30And they spat on Him and took the reed and struck Him on the head with it. 31When they had finished making fun of Him, they took off the cloak and dressed Him in His own clothes and led Him away to crucify Him. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Lord, while the world tries to humiliate Jesus, as did the soldiers, one day Jesus will be their judge at the Great White Judgment throne. Amen.

32On their way to crucify Him, they met a man from Cyrene, Simon by name, carrying His cross. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb.

5:4} 33When they reached the place called Golgotha, the place of the skull, {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 34they offered Him wine to drink mixed with gall. When He tasted it, He refused to drink it.

On the Cross

35When they had finished crucifying Him {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} they cast lots for His clothing, 36and then they sat down to keep guard. 37Over His head was placed a shingle that read: "This is Jesus, the King of the Jews." 38Two thieves were crucified with Him, {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} one on the right and the other on the left. 39The passersby hurled abuse at Him; they nodded their heads, {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 40saying, "You said You would destroy the temple and rebuild it in three days! Then save Yourself! If You are the Son of God, come down from the cross!" {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} 41The chief priests with the scribes and elders mocked Him in the same way. 42"He saved others," they said, "but He cannot save Himself. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} If You are the King of Israel, come down from the cross, and we will believe You. 43He trusted God; now let God save Him. For He did say, 'I am the Son of God.'" 44Even the thieves who were crucified with Him mocked Him in the same way.

From Noon until 3 P.M.

45At noon darkness fell over all the land until three o'clock. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 46Then Jesus cried with a loud voice, "*Eli, Eli, lama sabachthani?*" that is, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?"{175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 47When those who stood there heard this, they said, "The man is calling on Elijah."

At this moment Jesus became the sin of the world (John 1:29, 2 Cor. 5:21). Notice Jesus did not pray "My Father," His usual name. Rather, Jesus prayed, "My God," which means Jesus was separated from the Father because the Father couldn't look on the sin that was on Jesus. Jesus was offering Himself as the sin sacrifice to God. Lord, I don't know why You died, but I gratefully receive Your salvation. Amen.

48One of the soldiers quickly ran to get a sponge dipped in vinegar and put it on a reed for Jesus to drink. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} 49But the rest of them said, "Let's see if Elijah comes to save Him." 50Then Jesus, crying out in a loud voice, yielded up His Spirit. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

51Then the veil of the temple was torn in two from top to bottom. There was an earthquake; and rocks were split; 52the tombs opened and the bodies of many holy men rose from the dead {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 53and came out of the tombs {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} and entered the Holy City and appeared to a number of people. 54The centurion, and the other soldiers guarding Jesus, saw the earthquake and everything else that was taking place, and they were terrified. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} They

said, "Truly this was the Son of God." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Lord, I pray that people everywhere will read this story and agree with the Roman officer, "Jesus is God's Son." Amen.

55And many women were watching from a distance, the same women who had followed Jesus from Galilee and took care of His needs. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} 56Among them were Mary of Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Joseph, and the mother of Zebedee's sons.

Lord, I'm glad there were witnesses to His death to verify what happened when Jesus died (history is an accurate record by credible eyewitnesses). Amen.

The Burial of Jesus' Body

57When evening came, Joseph, a rich man of Arimathaea, who had become a disciple of Jesus, {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 58went to Pilate and asked for the body of Jesus. Pilate gave orders for it to be handed over. 59So Joseph took the body, wrapped it in clean linen {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 60and put the body in his own new tomb which he had hewn out of the rock. He then rolled a large stone across the entrance to the tomb and left. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}

Friday until Sunday Morning

61Now Mary Magdalene and the other Mary were there watching where Jesus was buried. 62The next day after the Passover was over, the chief priests and the Pharisees went to Pilate 63and said, "Sir, we remember what this imposter said while He was still alive, 'After three days I shall rise again.' {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 64Therefore order guards to secure the grave until the third day. We fear His disciples will come and steal the body and tell the people, 'He has risen from the dead.' If this happens, it would be worse for us than the first." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 65"You have your guard," Pilate said to them. "Go and make it as secure as you can." 66So they went and placed guards at the grave, putting an official seal on the stone.

Lord, if it hadn't been for the soldiers, people might have believed the lie that His disciples stole His body. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} Amen.

Matthew 28

At the Tomb Early Sunday Morning

1After the Sabbath was over, just as a new day was dawning, on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to the grave. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 2Suddenly there was a violent earthquake, for the angel of the Lord came down from heaven, and rolled away the stone {188

God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} and sat on it. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [3]His face shone like lightning, and his robe was white as snow. [4]The guards were so afraid of him that they fainted and collapsed. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7}

Lord, thank You for opening the tomb so the world could look in to see it was empty. Amen.

[5]The angel spoke to the women, "Do not be afraid. I know you are looking for Jesus, {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} who was crucified. [6]He is not here, for He has risen, as He said. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Come and see where His body was lying. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [7]Then go quickly and tell His disciples He has risen from the dead {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} and He is going to Galilee; it is there you will see Him." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

Lord, I know the Resurrection is true, not just because of this story or an empty tomb. I know it's true because the resurrected Jesus lives in my heart. Amen.

[8]The women were overjoyed {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and quickly left the tomb and ran to tell the disciples.

The Appearance of Jesus to the Women

[9]As they were going, Jesus met them. "Greetings," He said. And the women, falling down before Him, grabbed His feet and worshiped Him. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [10]Then Jesus said, "Do not be afraid; {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} go and tell My brothers that they must go to Galilee; they will see Me there." {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14}

[11]While the women were on their way, some of the guards went into the city to tell the chief priests what had happened. [12]The Jewish leaders held a meeting, and after a long discussion they gave a large sum of hush money to the soldiers, {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} and told them, [13]"'This is what you must report, 'His disciples came during the night and stole the body while we were asleep.' {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [14]And should the governor hear about this, we will make things right with him, and see that you do not get into trouble." [15]The soldiers took the money and obeyed their instructions. This story was spread among the Jews to this day.

The Appearance on a Mountain

[16]But the eleven disciples went to Galilee, to the mountains where Jesus had arranged to meet them. {526 Wait-Prayer, Ps. 27:14} [17]When they saw Him they worshiped Him, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} though some doubted. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16}

The Great Commission

[18]Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [19]Go, therefore, make disciples of all

ethnic groups; {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [20]and teach them to obey all the things I told you. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} And lo, I am with you always; even to the end of the age."

Jesus was absolutely clear that He wanted His followers to obey Him. Obedience is not compliance to a set of rules, but obedience happens when our inner character conforms to what Christ requests {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} in a habitual consistent manner. Isn't this transformation? Lord, I will obey You from the inside out, not because of rules. It will be sacrificial love, knowing faith, and heavenly inspired obedience. Amen.

Mark

Ch 1: The Temptation of Jesus 1407
Ch 2: Getting a Friend to Jesus 1410
Ch 3: The Shriveled Hand Healed 1412
Ch 4: The Sermon by the Sea 1414
Ch 5: Jesus Heals a Violent Demon-Stricken Man 1416
Ch 6: The Twelve Sent Two by Two 1419
Ch 7: Questions about Ceremonial Cleansing .. 1422
Ch 8: Jesus Feeds Four Thousand 1423
Ch 9: The Transfiguration 1426
Ch 10: Jesus Teaches about Divorce 1429
Ch 11: The Triumphant Entry 1431
Ch 12: Teaching in the Temple 1433
Ch 13: The Mount of Olives Discourse 1435
Ch 14: Events on Wednesday 1437
Ch 15: The Third Trial—Before the Sanhedrin. 1440
Ch 16: The Visit of the Women to the Tomb 1442

MARK

Key Words: *Immediately* (see Mark 1:12)

Key Verse: "For even the Son of Man did not come to be served, but to serve, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Mark 10:45).

Theme: Mark presents Jesus as a servant. Also He is seen as a mighty worker doing miracles. The key word "immediately" reveals the character trait of a servant who immediately serves His master, that is, Jesus' heavenly Father. Notice the things that are not emphasized about servants: their birth, genealogy, sayings (sermons and parables), and fulfillment of prophecy. Mark does not refer to these aspects of Jesus.

Prepare your heart to read about Jesus, the humble servant, who "thought it not robbery to be equal with God but emptied Himself of the 'form of God' and was found in the 'appearance as a man' so He might serve people and die for their sins" (Phil. 2:5-12). Then, pray to become a better servant and minister to the needs of others. *Lord, I want to be a servant, but I confess my proud heart. I like to be number one. Forgive me! Give me the heart of serving others. Amen.*

Mark 1

The Temptation of Jesus

1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 2 as His coming was predicted by Isaiah the prophet.
"Look, I am sending My messenger before You; He will prepare Your way. 3 He will be the
voice of one crying in the wilderness, who is preparing the way for the Messiah, saying,
'Make the paths straight for Him.' 4 He was John the Baptizer appearing in the wilderness,
preaching baptism and repentance to be forgiven of sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.
3:2, 8} 5 People flocked to John from all over Judah and Jerusalem to confess their sins and
be baptized by him in the Jordan River. 6 John wore camel's hair clothes and a leather belt
around his waist. He ate locusts and wild honey. 7 John announced, "Someone is coming
after me who is more powerful than me. I am not worthy to stoop and untie His sandals.
8 I have baptized people in water, but He will baptize people in the Holy Spirit." {224 Holy
Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}

Lord, I want the renewal of the Holy Spirit and the filling of the Holy Spirit. I want the Spirit to lead me, use me, and grow the fruit of the Spirit in my inner person. I want the Holy Spirit's power. Amen.

[9]Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan River. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [10]Immediately coming out of the water, He saw heaven open and the Spirit descended on Him like a dove. [11]He heard a voice from heaven, "You are My Son whom I love. I am well pleased with You." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

The Temptation of Jesus

[12]Immediately, the Spirit led Jesus into the wilderness. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [13]Jesus fasted 40 days {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} and afterward He was tempted by satan. He was with the wild animals and the angels took care of Him. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}

We all will have a desert experience, as Jesus did. It is a time of testing, as Jesus was tempted by satan. Our desert experience is something we do alone, and it's there God helps us through angels (1:13), through the Holy Spirit (Luke 4:1), through Scripture (Luke 4:4, 7, 10). Lord, thank You for helping me in my past "desert experiences." Help me in the future when I am tempted again. May I glorify You in my victory over the world, the flesh, and the devil. Amen.

[14]After John was arrested, Jesus went and preached the gospel in Galilee. [15]"Repent and believe the gospel. The time has come, and the kingdom of God is near." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Jesus Calls Fishermen

[16]As Jesus walked by the Sea of Galilee He saw Peter and Andrew casting their nets into the sea. [17]Jesus called out to them, "Come, be My disciples and I'll teach you how to catch people." {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [18]Immediately they left their nets and followed Jesus. [19]A little farther, Jesus saw two more fishermen, James and John. They were mending their nets with their father Zebedee and the servants. [20]Jesus called them also to be His disciples, and immediately they left their nets to follow Jesus. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5c

Lord, teach me instant obedience so I can serve You better. Amen.

Jesus Attends Sabbath Services

[21]Jesus went into the synagogue as was His custom every Saturday. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} Because Jesus was a visiting rabbi, the elders gave Him an opportunity to teach the people. [22]They were amazed at what Jesus said and the way He said it. Jesus' words were authoritative, not like the others. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [23]There was

a demon-possessed man in the congregation who screamed out to Jesus, [24]"Jesus of Nazareth, what do You want with me? Have You come to destroy me?" This was the demon speaking through the man. The demon said to Jesus, "I know who You are—You are the Holy One of God. You are El Elyon, the possessor of heaven and earth." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [25]Jesus commanded the demon, "Be quiet!" Then Jesus said, "Come out of the man." [26]The demon screamed loudly, then the man shook uncontrollably with convulsions, {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} and the demon came out of the man. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [27]The crowd was amazed saying, "What is this new teaching? Even demonic spirits obey Him." [28]The people went back to their homes telling everyone about the mighty power and message of Jesus Christ. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I bow before Your omnipotent power. Amen.

Jesus Heals Peter's Mother-in-Law and Others

[29]Jesus left the synagogue and went to Peter's house [30]where his mother-in-law was sick with a fever. [31]When Jesus heard about it, He took her by the hand, helped her up and the fever went away. She got up and prepared a meal for them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

[32]At sundown the sick and demon-possessed were brought to Peter's house for healing, [33]and the whole town crowded in to see what would happen. [34]Jesus cured many of them {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} and cast demons out of others, but He wouldn't permit demons to speak because they knew who He was. [35]In the morning Jesus woke up before anyone else and went into a private place to pray. {168 First Prayer Each Day, Luke 11:1-2} [36]Simon and the others searched [37]until they found Him. Then Peter said, "Master, everyone is looking for You." {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [38]Jesus told them He couldn't stay in Capernaum, but He said, "Let us go to the towns of Galilee so I can preach to people there. That is why I came into the world." {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [39]Jesus preached in synagogues all over Galilee and cast out demons. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8}

After a busy day of ministry among the crowds, Jesus got up early the next day, drawing Himself apart from people to be blanketed in the presence of His heavenly Father. Was it for human strength or wisdom, or for directions or ability? Probably not! Jesus drew near to the Father for divine fellowship. Lord, I will draw away from the crowds for many reasons. I need strength, wisdom, direction, and power. Also I want to worship You and have fellowship with You. But most of all, I want to know You more intimately. "Be still and know that I am God" (Ps. 46:10). Amen.

40As Jesus went through Galilee, a leper pleaded with Him, "If You are willing, You can heal me." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 41Because Jesus was moved with love for him, He touched the leper and said to him, "Be healed!" 42Immediately his leprosy was healed. 43Jesus warned him and sent him away. 44Then Jesus sent him to be examined by a priest, and to make an offering that was required by Moses. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} Jesus also told him not to tell anyone, 45but the man told everyone what happened. As a result, Jesus could no longer enter any town, and even when He stayed in the fields, people came to Him from all around. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, when You do a work in my heart, it is hard to keep quiet. Just as a light must shine, I want to tell others what You've done for me. I want You to touch me today, to heal me of my sin and failure; then let me touch You today to experience Your victorious power. Amen.

Mark 2

Getting a Friend to Jesus

1Jesus was in Peter's house in Capernaum when a crowd gathered to hear Him teach, 2so that the house was packed with people. 3Four men brought a man with palsy to Jesus, 4but they could not get in the house because there were so many people. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} They took the sick man up to the roof, then removed tiles in the roof, and let down the palsied man in front of Jesus. 5Jesus knew they had faith for healing, so He said, "Son, your sins are forgiven." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 6There were some Jewish leaders in the crowd who criticized Jesus in their hearts, saying, 7"Who can forgive sins but God? This man is blaspheming God. Does He think He is God?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 8Jesus knew their thoughts and said to them, "Why are you criticizing in your mind? 9Which is easier to say, 'Your sins are forgiven' {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} or 'Arise, pick up your bedroll and walk?'" 10Then Jesus told them He would prove that He is the Messiah—the Son of Man who can forgive sins. 11Jesus then told the man, "Get up, pick up your bedroll and walk." {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} 12The man jumped to his feet, took his bedroll, and everyone saw him walk. They were astounded and praised God saying, "We have never seen anything like this." {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Lord, I too am amazed at the things You've done in my life. You've forgiven my sins, given me purpose to live for You, and the joy of the Holy Spirit. You have a wonderful plan for my life and You've given me determination to be victorious over sin and tell others about salvation. Thank You for transforming me. I praise You for the way Jesus

handled those who criticized Him. I am astounded at everything You do. Amen.

The Call to Matthew

13Jesus left Capernaum and followed the road that ran alongside the Sea of Galilee. 14When Jesus came to the customs office, He saw Levi sitting there calculating taxes. Jesus said to him, "Follow Me," and to everyone's amazement, Levi left the tax office to follow Jesus. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5}

Lord, may I instantaneously obey when Jesus enters my life and calls me to do a job. Keep reminding me that there is no sinner who is too hardened to follow You as a dedicated disciple. Teach me to love the unsaved, as You loved Matthew. Amen.

15That evening, Levi gathered a number of his friends to hear Jesus—politicians and tax collectors. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} 16When the Jewish leaders saw Jesus eating with the crowd, they asked His disciples, "Why does your master eat with questionable characters?" {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 17When Jesus knew what the religious leaders asked, He asked a question to get His point across, "Do the healthy need a doctor, or is it the sick who need help? I did not come to offer salvation to people who think they are good enough, but I offer salvation to sinners." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

18The disciples of John the Baptizer and the Jewish leaders fasted as part of their religious activities. They approached Jesus, asking, "Why do these disciples of John the Baptizer and Pharisees fast but Your disciples do not?" {265 John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8} 19Jesus answered, "Do you expect wedding guests to fast when they are at the wedding feast? They eat as long as they are with the bridegroom, 20but they will fast when the bridegroom is taken from them." {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

Lord, I will fast to demonstrate Your power in my life. I will not let my appetite master me, but I will let You master me when I fast for You alone. Amen.

21Jesus continued, "No one sews a patch of unshrunken cloth on an old coat. If he does, the new patch will shrink and tear the old coat and it will be worse than ever. 22No one puts new wine into an old wineskin, because as the new wine ferments, it will burst the old wineskin. The wine will be lost and the wineskin ruined." {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}

Lord, teach me when to embrace the new, and guide me when to leave the old. Amen.

Debate about the Sabbath

23As Jesus journeyed home from the Passover at Jerusalem, He went past the corn fields on the Sabbath and His disciples picked the grain and ate it. 24The Pharisees criticized them because they broke the Sabbath law. {374 Praying against the Lies

of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 25Jesus answered that David went into the tabernacle to eat the shewbread when he was hungry and those with him also ate it. 26Jesus also mentioned that the priest ate showbread on the Sabbath day which outwardly broke the law. Then Jesus added that Hosea the prophet said, "God wants us to be merciful; He doesn't want us to just keep the law. God wants us to know Him, not just bring in burnt sacrifices to Him." 27Finally Jesus noted, "The Sabbath was made to serve man, not for man to keep its law." 28Jesus proclaimed, "Therefore the Son of Man is master of the Sabbath, not the reverse." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I will use Your day for worship, service, and learning about You. Be glorified in my observance of Your day of rest and worship. Amen.

Mark 3

The Shriveled Hand Healed

1When Jesus got to Capernaum, He entered the synagogue, and a man was there with a shriveled up hand. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 2The Jewish leaders watched Jesus closely to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath day so they could charge Him with breaking the law. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 3Jesus said to the man with the shriveled up hand, "Stand in the middle of the people." 4Then Jesus asked, "Is it right to help or hurt on the Sabbath day? To kill or save lives?" Jesus continued, "If a man's sheep fall into a pit, isn't it proper to rescue the sheep on a Sabbath day? Isn't a man worth more than a sheep?" But the Pharisees wouldn't answer Jesus. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} 5He looked at them with anger, being grieved for their hardness of heart. Jesus then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man held out his withered hand and it was completely restored. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 6And the Jewish leaders refused to believe in Him, but began making plans to destroy Jesus. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Lord, I don't want to be critical of anyone who comes to You for help or healing as the Jewish leaders criticized You. I marvel at Your compassion on those who hurt or need Your help, and at Your patience with those who reject You. Amen.

Multitudes Healed

7Jesus and His disciples left to go to the seaside; multitudes followed Him from Galilee, Judea, 8Jerusalem, Idumea, Tyre, and Sidon because they heard about His miracles. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17}

Lord, I want to be where You are worshiped and Your Word is preached. I will congregate with Your people on a weekly basis. Amen.

[9]Jesus told His disciples to have a boat ready because the crowds were crushing Him. [10]Jesus had cured so many people that anyone with an ailment crowded in to touch Him. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [11]When people possessed with demons encountered Jesus, they fell down at His feet screaming, "You are the Son of God." [12]But Jesus warned them repeatedly that they should not make Him known. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Lord, Your healing power demonstrates You are a powerful God and Your tenderness demonstrates You are a loving God. Amen.

Choosing the Twelve

[13]Jesus went up into the hill country and He continued all night in prayer. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [14]The next day He called certain men to be His apostles so they would be with Him to learn, and then they would be sent forth to preach, [15]heal and cast out demons. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6}

Why did Jesus call twelve apostles? He wanted them "to be with Him." Lord, keep me from being so busy that I forget "to be with Him." Lord, I will spend time with You before I spend time ministering to others. Amen.

[16]Simon, whom Jesus called Peter, [17]was the leader of the first group of four that included James and John whom Jesus named the Sons of Thunder, and Andrew was in that group. [18]The second group of four apostles was led by Philip, and included Bartholomew, Matthew, and Thomas, the one with a twin brother. The third group of four was led by James the short one, and included Thaddeus and Simon, the former terrorist fighter, [19]and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Jesus. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62}

Lord, teach me to pray about important decisions as You prayed before choosing the twelve disciples. Amen.

The Long Day

[20]The crowds demanded so much attention that the disciples and Jesus couldn't even get away to eat their lunch. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [21]But those who followed Jesus said, "You can't keep on going if you don't eat something." They added, "Jesus is not thinking straight." [22]Then the scribes who came from Jerusalem to examine Jesus said, "He is possessed by Beelzebub, a ruler of demons, and Jesus cast out demons by this power." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [23]Jesus gathered people around Him and said, "How can satan cast out satan? {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} [24]If a kingdom is divided against itself, can that kingdom stand? [25]If a house is divided against itself, can that house stand? [26]If satan rises up against himself, and is divided, he cannot stand; he will fall. [27]No one can go into the house of a strong man to destroy his property unless

the strong man is tied up. First, he binds the strong man, then destroys his property." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 28Jesus continued, "Truly I tell you, all sins shall be forgiven those who sin, including their blasphemy. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 29But those who blaspheme the Holy Spirit will never be forgiven; they are in danger of eternal damnation." {509 Unpardonable-Sin Prayer, Matt. 12:30-32}

If someone thinks he has committed the unpardonable sin, he probably hasn't because a sin that great would harden a person against God. While the exact sin is debatable among believers, one thing we know for sure: those who die outside of Christ have sins that are not pardoned. Lord, I know I'm on my way to heaven because I am convicted of sin and I am terribly distraught when my fellowship with You is broken. I only plead the blood for forgiveness and cleansing (1 John 1:7-10). Amen.

30Jesus said this because His enemies said He was demon-possessed. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 31Then Jesus' mother and brothers came to the edge of the crowd and called for Jesus to go with them. 32With the crowd sitting around Him, they said, "Behold, Your mother and brothers are calling for You to go with them." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 33 Jesus answered them, "Who are My mother and brothers?" 34Then looking at those sitting about Him He said, "Here are My mother and My brothers. 35Those who do the will of God are My brothers, and sisters, and mother." {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Father, I'm glad to be Your child, and I count all other believers as my sisters and brothers. Give me a love for You and for all of them. Amen.

Mark 4

The Sermon by the Sea

1As Jesus was teaching by the seaside, a huge crowd gathered around Him so He entered a boat and sat down to teach the people on the shore. 2He taught them many lessons in parables. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 3"Look," He pointed to a farmer in a field, "a sower went out to sow, 4and as he sowed, some seed fell on the path around the field. The birds came to eat it up. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 5Other seed fell on rocky soil where it had little dirt, and because it had no earth, it sprang up quickly, 6but when the sun came up, it was scorched. Because it had no root, it died. 7Other seed fell in among thorns. The growing thorns choked it, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} so it yielded no crop. 8And other seed fell in the good earth and yielded a crop of thirty, sixty, even a hundredfold. 9Whoever has ears, let him hear and do." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, I want to do more for You than I do. May I grow where You've planted me and

may I produce the fruit of the seed (spiritual gift) within me. May I bring glory and fruitfulness to Your kingdom. Amen.

10When Jesus was by Himself, those near Him and the twelve asked what the story meant. 11Jesus told them, "You can know the secret of God's kingdom, {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} but outsiders can't understand spiritual things, so I use stories when I speak to them. 12Because all that they see they may not perceive and for all they hear they do not understand, so they do not turn for forgiveness." {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 13Jesus then told them, "you must understand this story to grasp the other stories. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 14The sower sows God's message. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 15Those on the pathway where the message is sown forget it as soon as they hear it. Satan comes and snatches away God's message that was sown in their hearts. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 16The seeds on rocky soil are those who readily receive God's message, 17but it doesn't take root in them. They give up. When persecution comes because of the message, they immediately stumble and fall. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 18Others are those sown among thorns—they hear the message of God 19but the cares of the world and the taste of wealth and the attraction of entertainment choke God's message and it becomes fruitless. {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.} 20But those sown on good dirt are those who hear and accept God's message and yield fruit thirty, sixty, even a hundredfold." {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26}

Lord, I will watch for hard soil in my heart; make me tender to You. I will let Your roots grow deep in my heart to overcome trials and suffering. I will immediately pull up my weeds that will tempt me to sin. Lord, I want to have a clean, healthy body to serve You. Amen.

21Jesus said to them, "Do you hide a lamp under a basket or under a bed? No! You put it on a lamp stand. 22Nothing will be hidden until it is shown, and nothing is kept secret until it is revealed. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 23Whoever has good ears let him hear and obey." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 24Jesus also said, "Be careful about what you hear. The shovelful you shovel out to others will be shoveled to you tenfold. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} 25The one who has shall be given more, and the one who does not have shall lose what he has." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

26And Jesus said, "The kingdom of God is like a man scattering seed in the earth, 27and then he goes to sleep while the seed sprouts and springs up, but he does not know how or when it happens. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 28The earth produces from itself. First, the blade, then a head, then the full-grown wheat in the head. 29When the crop is ripe,

he puts in the sickle because harvest has come." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, teach me seed-power, so that I may plant the seeds of the gospel into the hearts of lost people. Amen.

30Jesus also said, "To what may we compare the kingdom of God or by what parable may we understand it? {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 31The kingdom is like a mustard seed—smaller than any known seed on earth. 32Yet, when planted, it grows up to be larger than any bush, so that wild birds roost in its branches." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 33With many such stories, Jesus told them God's message as far as they could understand it. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 34He spoke only in stories and explained everything privately to His disciples. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4}

Jesus Calms the Storm

35Toward noon, Jesus said, "Let us cross over to the other side." 36So leaving the crowd, {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} they sailed Him to the other side. 37A heavy storm came up {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} and the waves filled the boat so that the boat was sinking. 38Jesus was asleep in the stern. They woke Him up and said, "Teacher, do You realize we are sinking?" {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, teach me to turn to You when the storms of life threaten me. Amen.

39He rose up, stopped the wind and said to the sea, "Peace! Be still!" So the wind died down and the sea was calm. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 40Jesus said to them, "Why are you afraid? Where is your faith?" {514 Victory Over Doubt-Prayer, Mark 11:23} 41They were afraid and said to one another, "Who is He, that even the wind and the sea waves obey Him?" {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Mark 5

Jesus Heals a Violent Demon-Stricken Man

1They landed in the area of Gad, on the opposite side of the lake from Capernaum. 2As soon as He got out of the boat, a demon-possessed man, {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 3who was living in the tombs, accosted Jesus. No one could subdue him, even with chains. 4Many times he had been bound with ropes and chains, but the chains were broken and the ropes snapped. No one could control him. 5He lived night and day among the tombs and in the mountains, screaming and cutting himself with stones. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 6He noticed Jesus from a distance, then ran and knelt before Him, {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 7screaming, "What do You have to do with me, Jesus, Son of the Most High

God? I plead with You, do not torment me," [8]for Jesus had said to him, "Unclean spirit, come out of the man." {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} [9]Jesus questioned the man, "What is your name?" The man answered, "My name is Legion, for we are many." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [10]Then the demons urgently begged Him not to send them away. [11]There was a large herd of hogs feeding there on the mountainside. [12]The demons appealed to Jesus, "Send us to the hogs so we may enter into them!" [13]Jesus permitted it and so the demons went into the hogs. Then the herd of about two thousand hogs rushed headlong down a precipice into the sea and drowned. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}

Lord, I believe there are evil spirits in the world that would destroy me. Deliver me from the evil one, and protect me by my guardian angel. Amen.

[14]Those tending the hogs ran to tell the news in town. Many people came to see what had happened. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [15]They saw the demoniac, who had been possessed of the legion, sitting calmly, dressed and sane. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} They were frightened. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [16]Those who had seen it, told them what occurred to the demoniac; they also told them about the hogs. [17]Then they began to beg Jesus to leave their country. {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [18]As Jesus was leaving, the demoniac asked to go with Jesus, {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [19]but He said, "No." Instead Jesus said to him, "Go back to your family and friends and tell them everything the Lord has done for you and the mercy He showed you!" {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} [20]And the healed man went to announce throughout Decapolis everything that Jesus had done for him, and all were astonished. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, I will be like this healed man. I will go tell people what You have done for me. Amen.

The Woman and the 12-Year-Old Girl

[21]When Jesus had crossed by boat back to Capernaum, a great multitude was waiting for Him on the shore. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [22]Then a leader of the synagogue named Jairus came immediately and fell at His feet {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [23]and begged Him, "My daughter is at the point of death. Come and place Your hands on her that she may be healed." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [24]So Jesus followed him and a multitude followed them.

Lord, teach me to seek Your help when I have a life-threatening problem. May I come first to You instead of trying all other solutions as

did the woman with an issue of blood (Mark 5:26). Amen.

25A woman who had a blood hemorrhage
for 12 years 26had been treated by many
physicians. She spent all she had without
getting better, and was growing worse.
{465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
27She heard Jesus was coming so she got
in the crowd behind and touched the hem
of His robe. 28She kept saying, "If I only
touch the hem of His robe, I'll be healed."
{435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4}
29Instantly, her hemorrhage stopped, and
she felt in her body that she was healed.
{214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 30Jesus
was instantly conscious that power had
gone from Him, so He turned around
to the crowd and asked, "Who touched
Me?" {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph.
3:20-21} 31His disciples remarked, "The
crowd is pressing You on all sides and
You ask, 'Who touched Me?'" 32But Jesus
looked around to see who had done it.
{194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}
33Then the woman was afraid and knowing
what had happened to her, came and fell
at His feet. She told Him everything. {538
Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} 34But Jesus
said to her, "Daughter, your faith, not your
touch, has saved you. Go in peace because
you are healed." {241 Inner-Assurance
Praying, 1 John 5:10}

Lord, the woman kept thinking a "touch" would heal her. But You called her into public view to tell her, "Your faith has made you whole." Amen.

35While He was still speaking, some ser-
vants came from the ruler's house and told
him, "Your daughter is dead. Don't trouble
the Master anymore." {504 Unbelief-Hin-
drance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 36But Jesus,
overhearing the message, said to the syna-
gogue ruler, "Do not fear; only trust Me!"
{466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}
37Jesus permitted no one to accompany
Him except Peter and James and James'
brother John. {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke
11:2} 38When He came to the ruler's house,
He saw confusion with loud weeping and
wailing. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer,
Gen. 23:1-3} 39As He entered, Jesus asked
them. "Why this confusion and weeping?
The girl is not dead, she's only asleep."
{244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 40They
ridiculed Jesus, but He put them out of
the house and took along the child's father
and mother and those with Him, and went
to where the child was. {99 Death-Facing
Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 41Then taking the child's
hand, he said to her, "*Talitha cumi*," which
is translated "Little Girl, get up by My
Word." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}
42Instantly the 12-year-old girl got up and
walked. Everyone was astonished, {470
Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 43but
Jesus strictly charged them that no one
should know what happened, and told
them to give her something to eat. {300
Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer,
John 6:11}

Mark 6

The Twelve Sent Two by Two

[1]Jesus left Capernaum and came to His hometown with His disciples following Him. {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4} [2]On the Sabbath He began teaching in the synagogue where many listeners were utterly amazed. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} "Where did He get all this wisdom?" they remarked. "What knowledge has been given Him and what are these miracles that He does? [3]Is not this the carpenter, the son of Mary and the brother of James and Joseph and Judas and Simon? And do not His sisters live here?" And they were offended by Him. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [4]Jesus said, "A prophet has honor except in his own community and among his own people." [5]So He could do no mighty miracles there, except He laid hands on a few sick and healed them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [6]Jesus marveled at their unbelief {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} so He went to nearby villages to teach. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, I know that my unbelief hampers Your work through me. Just as Jesus couldn't do many miracles in Nazareth because of their unbelief, so my lack of faith curtails Your work through me. Give me more faith. "I believe! Help me when I don't believe enough" (Mark 9:24). Amen.

[7]Jesus called the twelve to Himself and then He began to send them out two by two, giving them authority over demons {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} and [8]telling them to take nothing for the trip except a staff {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}—no food, no purse, no money, [9]but to wear sandals; and not to take a change of clothing. [10]He explained, "Whenever you enter a house, stay there until you leave the town. {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2} [11]And if a town will not receive you nor listen to you, shake off the dust from your feet. Truly I tell you, it will be easier for Sodom and Gomorrah in the judgment than for that town." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, help me put my emphasis on those who will receive Your ministry. I will preach to all, but spend my time with those who will receive Your Word. Amen.

[12]So they went out preaching that men should repent. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [13]They cast out many demons {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and healed many sick, anointing them with oil. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}

The Murder of John the Baptizer

[14]When King Herod heard about it, he said, "John the Baptizer has risen from the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} therefore these powers are working in Jesus." [15]Some said, "He is Elijah"; others said, "He is a prophet,

or one of the prophets." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [16]But on hearing about Jesus, Herod said, "John, whom I beheaded, has been returned to life." {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [17]For Herod himself had sent soldiers to arrest John, and had him put in chains in prison. He had married Herodias, his brother Philip's wife. {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [18]But John had told Herod, "You have no right to have your brother's wife." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [19]So Herodias wanted to get even, and wanted him executed. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [20]But she couldn't get it done because Herod was afraid of John, whom he knew to be a righteous and holy man. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} Therefore Herod protected him and was confused for he enjoyed listening to him. [21]Then an opportunity came; it was Herod's birthday when he gave a banquet to his nobles and officers and Galilean chiefs. [22]Herodias' daughter came in and danced. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} She pleased Herod and his guests so that the king said to her, "Ask whatever you want and I will give it to you." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [23]Then he made an oath, "Whatever you ask me, I will give it to you up to half of my kingdom." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [24]She went to ask her mother, "What shall I ask?" The mother said, "The head of John the Baptizer." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [25]The daughter hurried to the king and said, "The head of John the Baptizer." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [26]Although exceedingly sorry, yet because of his oath and the pressure of his guests, {522 Vow-Violation Prayer, Ps. 65:1} [27]immediately the king sent a guard with orders to bring John's head on a plate. He went, beheaded John in prison, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [28]and brought his head on a plate and gave it to the daughter who presented it to her mother. [29]And when His disciples heard of it, they came and took up his body and buried it in a tomb. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3}

Lord, help me to be careful of those who have a grudge against You and Your servants. Amen.

Feeding the Five Thousand

[30]The apostles returned to Jesus and reported everything they had done and taught. {262 Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Heb. 7:24-25} [31]Then He instructed them, "Come away with Me to a private place in the desert to rest awhile." For so many were pressing around them they could not even conveniently eat. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16}

[32]So they left in a boat for a private spot by themselves. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [33]But the people saw them leaving, and ran there on foot and arrived ahead of them. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} [34]When Jesus got out of the boat, He saw a large crowd and was deeply moved for them; because they were like sheep without a shepherd. And He began to teach them many things. {292 Love-Abounding

Prayer, Phil. 1:10} 35As the hour grew late, His disciples came to Him and said, "This is a secluded spot and the hour is late. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} 36Send them away so they may go to the surrounding towns to buy something to eat." {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} 37But Jesus answered them, "You give them something to eat!" They answered Him, "Shall we go and buy food to feed them?" {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} 38He asked them, "How many loaves do you have?" They answered, "Five loaves and two fish." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 39Jesus told them to have the people all sit on the grass {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 40by groups of hundreds and fifties. 41Jesus took the five loaves and two fish and looking into heaven, blessed the food and broke it {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} and gave it to the disciples to give to the people. He also divided the two fish. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 42Everyone ate and was filled. 43They picked up 12 full baskets of the bread and fish that were left over. 44About five thousand men were fed. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1}

Lord, You are able to do big things with anything "little" that is given to You, and blessed by You. That's the prayer of my life; I am "little" when compared to many; use me. I give myself to You. Amen.

45Immediately Jesus urged His disciples to get into a boat to cross over to Bethsaida. He dismissed the crowd, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 46and left to go to a mountain to pray. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1}

Lord, after great manifestations of Your power, teach me to seek Your fellowship in prayer. I recognize all great things come from You and I praise You for all You do. Amen.

Jesus Walks on Water

47During the night, the boat was half way across the sea and He was on the land. {175 Forsaken-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 48Jesus saw them toiling hard at rowing because a storm had come up. He went to them around the fourth watch of the night walking on the sea. Jesus made as if He would pass them by. {122 Distraction to Prayer, Exod. 17:11} 49But the disciples saw Him walking on the sea and thinking it was a ghost, they yelled; {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 50for they all saw Him and were scared. Jesus said to them, "Be of good cheer; it is I." {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} 51He then came to them in the boat, and the wind was calm. They were amazed. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 52They did not understand the miracle of the loaves and they were filled with doubt. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

53They crossed over to arrive at Gennesaret. But as soon as Jesus got out of the ship, 54the people recognized Him {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 55and they circulated throughout the area that Jesus was there and people began bringing

to Him the sick on their mats. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 56Wherever He went in villages or towns, the people brought their sick and begged Jesus to let them touch the hem of His robe. And as many as touched Him were healed. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4}

Mark 7

Questions about Ceremonial Cleansing

1Jewish leaders came from Jerusalem to Capernaum, to find fault with Jesus' religious practices. 2They were angry because Jesus' disciples ate bread with defiled hands; they didn't wash their hands ceremonially before eating. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 3The leaders cleansed themselves ceremonially, 4when they came from the marketplace; they did the same to all eating utensils. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 5The leaders asked Jesus why His disciples didn't keep the tradition of the elders? {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} 6Jesus answered by quoting Isaiah, "This people honors Me in outward ways, but their heart is far from Me. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 7They vainly worship Me, teaching their doctrine as the Word of God." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} Jesus told the Jewish leaders, 8"You leave the Word of God {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} and hold to your traditions such as washing pitchers and cups and such things. 9You ignore God's commands to keep your traditions. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 10Moses told you to honor your father and mother and the one who speaks evil of father and mother shall be put to death. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} 11But you say, 'My mother and father are better off because they gave birth to me.' This statement does not honor your parents; 12you no longer allow people to honor his parents. 13You deny Scriptures by your tradition that is handed down from generation to generation." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 14Jesus then spoke to the crowd, {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 15"Nothing that goes into a man's mouth defiles him; the things that come out of his heart are the things that defile him. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}16Listen to this truth if you have ears in your heart." {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} 17When Jesus went into a house away from the crowd, the disciples asked Jesus to explain what He meant. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 18Jesus answered, "Don't you understand; a person is not defiled by what goes in the mouth, but by what comes out of the heart. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 19What goes into the mouth, enters the stomach, and finally is discharged from the body, {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} 20but things that come out of the heart defile a person, {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.} 21for out of the heart come evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, sexual perversions, 22thefts, lying, pride, and anger. 23The things that come out of the heart defile a

person, not eating with unwashed hands." {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.}

Lord, I know "the heart is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked" (Jer. 17:9). I read about its evil in Scripture, and I see it in my life. I rededicate myself to You, and separate myself from sin. Make me holy! Amen.

Jesus Visits Lebanon

[24]Jesus left Galilee and went to Tyre and Sidon, and slipped quietly into a house for rest where the crowd wouldn't exhaust Him. But the crowds found out where He was, {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [25]and a woman whose daughter was possessed with a demon fell down before Jesus. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [26]She was a Syrophoenician, who begged {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} Jesus to cast the demon out of her daughter. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [27]Jesus said, "No one takes bread from the children, and gives it to the dogs under the table." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} So Jesus didn't respond in a positive way but referred to her as a dog, the Jewish word for Gentile. [28]But the woman showed faith by replying, "Yes, Lord, but the dogs under the table get to eat the crumbs." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [29]Jesus answered, "Woman, you have great faith; you will get what you asked." [30]When the woman left the house, she found that the demon had gone out of her daughter. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

[31]Jesus left the area of Tyre and went through Sidon to the area of the Ten Cities by the Sea of Galilee. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [32]They brought to Jesus a man who was deaf and had a speech impediment. They begged Jesus to lay His hand on the man. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [33]So Jesus took him away from the crowd and put His fingers in his ears with spit from His tongue. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [34]Then Jesus looked up to heaven sighing and said, "*Ephphtha*," which means "Be opened." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [35]Immediately the man could hear and speak clearly. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [36]Then Jesus charged them not to tell anyone; but the more He asked them to keep quiet, the more they kept telling the news. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [37]So the people were astonished {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} saying, "He has done everything good. He even makes deaf people hear and dumb people talk." {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

Mark 8

Jesus Feeds Four Thousand

[1]Then another great crowd gathered and had nothing to eat. Jesus said, [2]"I have compassion on these people, for they have been with Me three days and have nothing to eat. [3]If I send them away hungry, they will faint on the road for some of them

have come a long way." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [4]But His disciples answered, "Where can we get food in this isolated place?" [5]Then Jesus asked, "How many loaves of bread do you have?" They answered, "Seven." {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [6]So He told the crowd to sit on the ground. He took the seven loaves and gave thanks {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} and broke them in pieces and gave to His disciples to distribute. [7]There were a few small fish there, and He also blessed them and the disciples passed these to the people. {472 Table-Blessing Prayer, Mark 6:41} [8]They ate and had all they wanted. Then the disciples took up the food left over which filled seven baskets. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [9]There were about four thousand people present. [10]Then He sent them away and got in a boat to cross to the area of Dalmanutha. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

[11]The Pharisees again met Jesus to talk with Him and try to trip Him up. They asked Him to show them a spectacular miracle from heaven. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [12]But Jesus sighed in His Spirit, "Why do these people ask for a spectacular miracle? I truly say, no sign will be given them at this time." {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} [13]And He got into the boat and crossed back over to the other side. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

[14]Now the disciples had forgotten to bring any food. They only had one loaf with them in the boat. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [15]So Jesus warned them, "Be careful! Guard yourselves against the yeast (influence) of the Pharisees and the yeast of Herod." {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [16]The disciples had been discussing the fact that they forgot to bring bread. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [17]When Jesus heard them, He said, "Why are you talking about having no bread? {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [18]Do you not remember? {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} Are your minds forgetful? Can your eyes not see? Can your ears not hear? [19]Remember how many baskets you picked up after I broke the five loaves for the five thousand? {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [20]Remember how many baskets were left over when I broke the seven loaves for the four thousand?" {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [21]Then He asked, "How is it that you do not believe?" {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33}

Lord, I will not ask You for a miracle to prove who You are. You have done such a great transformation in my heart that I could never doubt that You are the God of miracles, and the Lord of the universe. Amen.

[22]When they came to Bethsaida, a blind man was brought to Him. They begged Jesus to touch him. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [23]Jesus took the blind man by the hand and led him out to the village, then put spit in his eyes, laid His hands on him, asking, "Do you see anything?" {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [24]He looked around and answered, "I see the

people like trees swaying." [25]Then Jesus laid His hands on his eyes a second time. The blind man was cured, and saw everything plainly. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [26]So Jesus sent him home instructing him, "Do not go into the village, or tell anyone there about this."

Jesus Visits Caesarea Philippi

[27]Then Jesus and His disciples left Galilee to go to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. While walking, He asked His disciples, "Who do people say that I am?" [28]They answered, "Some say John the Baptizer; others say Elijah, and still others that You are one of the prophets." [29]Then He asked them, "But, who do you say that I am?" Peter answered, "You are the Christ." {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} [30]Jesus then carefully told them, "Do not tell this to anyone." {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} [31]Then Jesus told them for the first time that the Son of Man had to go through great suffering and be rejected by the elders, the high priest and the scribes, and be killed but rise again in three days. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [32]So Peter took Jesus aside and rebuked Him. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [33]But Jesus turned to look at His disciples and rebuked Peter saying, "Get behind Me, satan! For what you say is not from God but from men." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

Lord, forgive me when I think the way humans think. I will search the Scriptures to think the way You think. Amen.

[34]When Jesus called the people and His disciples, He said, "Whoever becomes My disciple must say, 'No' to self-interest; take up his cross, and follow Me continually. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [35]Whoever tries to save his life, will lose it, and whoever gives up his life for Me and the gospel, will save it. {94 Crown of Righteousness-Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:8} [36]For what shall it benefit a person to gain the whole world and lose his life? {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [37]What price can a person give to buy back his life? [38]For whoever is ashamed of Me and My words in this adulterous sinful age, then the Son of Man shall be ashamed of him when He comes in the Father's glory with the holy angels." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

There are three steps to becoming a disciple of Jesus. First, we must focus on it by picking up our cross to follow Jesus. What is a "cross"? It is our instrument of "crucifixion." Each has a difficult instrument that brings us to Christ and His cross, where we identify with Christ and get forgiveness of sins. Second, we must "follow," which means getting as close to Jesus as possible. Third, we must deny self to do God's will. Lord, I will pick up my cross daily. I will follow as close as possible as I deny self. Amen.

Mark 9

The Transfiguration

[1]And Jesus said to them, "I truly say to you, some of those standing here will live long enough to see the kingdom of God come with power." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

The Transfiguration of Jesus

[2]After six days Jesus took Peter, James, and John and led them up on a high mountain, alone by themselves. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22}

Lord, thank You for these "mountaintop" experiences where I see You clearer than ever before, and I am closer to You than ever before. I know I can't live on the mountaintop, but I'll remember them until the next time. Amen.

[3]His appearance was changed in their presence and His clothes shined exceedingly white, whiter than any bleach could wash them. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} [4]Then Elijah and Moses appeared to them, talking with Jesus. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [5]Then Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is good to be here. Let us build three tents, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} [6]Peter didn't realize what he was saying because he was so frightened. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [7]Then a cloud overshadowed them, and they heard a voice out of the cloud, "This is My Beloved Son, listen to Him!" {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [8]And instantly, they saw no one with them but Jesus. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [9]After they were going down the mountain, Jesus cautioned them not to tell anyone what they had seen, until the Son of Man was risen from the dead. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [10]And they kept that saying as they continued to discuss among themselves what rising from the dead meant. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [11]Then they asked Him, "Why do the scribes say that Elijah must come first?" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [12]Jesus answered, "Elijah will come first and restore all things so how is it that Scripture says the Son of Man will suffer much and be rejected? {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [13]But I tell you, Elijah has already come, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} and they did to him what they wanted."

The Disciples Can't Heal

[14]When Jesus came to the other disciples, a great crowd was around them and some scribes were arguing with them. {122 Distraction to Prayer, Exod. 17:11} [15]When the people saw Jesus, they ran up and greeted Him. [16]Then Jesus asked, "What are you arguing about?" {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [17]A man from the crowd answered Him, "Master, I brought my son to be healed. He has a demon that causes him to be dumb. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [18]He has convulsions and foams at the mouth and grinds his teeth, and he's dying. So

I asked Your disciples to cast out the demon, but they couldn't do it." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [19]Jesus answered, "Oh, unbelieving generation! How long must I be with you before you understand? Bring the boy to Me." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [20]As soon as the demon saw Jesus, the boy had a convulsion and fell to the ground wallowing and foaming at the mouth. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [21]Then Jesus asked the boy's father, "How long has he been like this?" The father answered, "From childhood. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [22]Many a time the demon has thrown him into the fire or into the water to drown him. Is there anything You can do for him? Have compassion on us and help us!" {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} [23]Jesus said, "Everything is possible for him who believes." {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23}

Jesus promised, "All things are possible for the person who believes." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} But does that include cars, wealth, and personal happiness? We must first believe, and that involves coming to Christ, following Christ, and denying self (including denying dreams of money, stuff, and even health). Possibility praying involves getting as close to God as possible, and obeying Him as explicitly as possible. {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23} Lord, put Your desires within me, take my selfish desires away from me. Get me to the place where I can pray for impossible things. Amen.

[24]The boy's father cried out, "I believe, help my unbelief." {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [25]When Jesus saw that a crowd was running to see what He would do, He rebuked the demon and said, "You deaf and dumb spirit, come out of him. I command you never go into him again." {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [26]Then the demon cried out and violently shook the boy, and came out of him. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} The boy looked like he was dead, so much so that the people thought he was dead. [27]But Jesus took his hand and raised him up. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [28]When Jesus went privately in the house, His disciples asked Him, "Why could not we cast out the demon?" {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Lord, often I see my weak faith. Strengthen my faith to do exploits for Your glory. Amen.

[29]Jesus answered them, "This kind can only be cast out by prayer and fasting." {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [30]Then they left and went through Galilee, but Jesus did not want anyone to know it. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [31]He was giving His time to teaching His disciples. He said, "The Son of Man will be turned over into men's hands, and they will kill Him, but after three days He will rise again." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [32]But the disciples

did not understand what He meant, and they were afraid to ask Him. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4}

Childlike Faith

33When they reached the house in Capernaum, He asked them, "What were you talking about on the way home?" {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} 34But they did not answer Him, for they had discussed which one of them was the greatest. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

God's service reverses the world's order: that is, give to receive; humble yourself for power with God; low is the way up, and weakness leads to strength. Jesus wanted us to learn servanthood, so He washed the disciples' feet, and said, "You also ought to wash one another's feet" (John 13:14). The very fact we inwardly refuse humble service reveals our powerless life. Lord, I am willing to wash feet, so I can serve others outwardly. Amen.

35So Jesus sat down and called the twelve together and said, "If anyone desires to be the first, he must be the last and the servant of all." {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 36Then He took a little child and stood him in the midst. Jesus took the child in His arms, and said, 37"Whoever will be My disciple, will receive one little child like a child receives Me. Whoever receives Me, receives the One who sent Me." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

Mistaken Zeal of John the Apostle

38John said to Him, "Master, we saw a man driving out demons in Your name, and we tried to stop him, for he was not one of us." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 39Jesus said, "Do not stop him, for there is no one who will do a miracle in My name {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} that will speak lightly of Me. 40For whoever is not against Me is for Me." {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

Lord, I am for You. Teach me to love all those who love You. Amen.

41"For whoever gives you a cup of water in My name I truly say, he will get his reward. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 42And whoever leads one of these children to do wrong, he might as well have a huge millstone hung around his neck and be thrown into the sea. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 43If your hand makes you do wrong, cut it off. It is better to go into life maimed than go to hell with both your hands 44where the worm doesn't die and the fire is not quenched. 45-46And if your foot makes you do wrong, cut it off. It is better to go through life crippled than keep both feet and go to hell. 47And if your eye makes you do wrong, cut it out. It is better to go into the kingdom of God with only one eye than keep both eyes and be thrown into hell. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} 48Because there the fire never dies and is never put out. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 49Everything must be seasoned with fire. 50Salt is good

but if salt loses its seasoning power, how can it be good again? You must look at all things through salt, and live in peace with one another." {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

Mark 10

Jesus Teaches about Divorce

[1]Jesus left and went to the Judean territory on the other side of Jordan. The crowds gathered around Him and as usual He taught them. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [2]Pharisees came and questioned Jesus to trip Him up. "Is it lawful for a man to divorce his wife?" {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [3]Jesus answered, "What did Moses command?" {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [4]They said, "Moses allowed the writing of a divorce certificate to let her go." [5]Jesus answered, "Because of your hard hearts he wrote this commandment: {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.} [6]"But from the beginning of creation, God said, "Male and female He made them; [7]therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and cleave to his wife, [8]and the two shall be one flesh. They are no longer two, but one flesh. [9]Therefore what God has joined together, man shall not divide them.'" {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [10]As Jesus went in the house, the disciples asked Him again about divorce, and [11]He told them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, [12]and if she divorces her husband and marries another she commits adultery."

[13]Children were brought to Him to touch, but the disciples stopped them. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} [14]When Jesus saw that, He rebuked them and said, "Allow the children to come to Me; do not hinder them, for the kingdom of God belongs to children. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} [15]Verily, whoever will not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall not enter into it." {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [16]Then He took them in His arms, and blessed them and laid His hands on them. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

Lord, give me the simplicity of children's faith. Amen.

The Rich Young Ruler

[17]As He was walking on the road, a young man ran to Him and knelt before Him and asked, "Good master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?" {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} [18]Jesus answered, "Why do you call Me good? There is none good except God. [19]You know the commands: do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not witness falsely, do not lie; honor your father and mother." {143 Establishing Doctrine by Prayer, Titus 1:5} [20]The young man replied, "Master, I have kept all these things from my childhood." {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [21]Jesus, looking at him in love, told him, "You lack one thing. Go, sell all you have and give to the poor, and you will have treasure in

heaven. Then come follow Me." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 22At this, the young man was convicted and walked away downcast for he possessed great wealth. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}

23Jesus looked around and said to His disciples, "It is difficult for those possessing wealth to enter the kingdom of God!" {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 24The disciples didn't understand His remarks; but Jesus spoke to them again, "Young men, it is difficult for those who trust in wealth to enter the kingdom of God. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 25It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle than for a wealthy person to enter the kingdom of God." 26The disciples said to Him, "Who then can be saved?" {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 27Jesus looked on them and replied, "With men it is impossible, but everything is possible with God." {508 Unlimited-Prayer, Phil. 4:13}

Lord, teach me the impossibilities that You can do. I know you are the God of impossibilities, but my weak faith makes me doubt. Stretch my faith to believe for bigger miracles. Amen.

28Peter answered Him, "We have given up everything to follow You." {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} 29Jesus answered, "Truly I say to you, no one who has left home or brothers or sisters or mother or father or children or lands for Me and the gospel, {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} 30who will also receive a hundred times over now in this life—along with persecutions, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} and in the future, eternal life. 31But the first shall be last and the last shall be first."

The Selfish Ambition of James and John

32As they were going up to Jerusalem, following Jesus, they were amazed. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} Then calling the twelve, Jesus began again to tell them what would happen to Him there. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 33"The Son of Man will be delivered to the chief priests and the scribes who will condemn Him to death, will hand Him over to the Gentiles {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 34to mock Him, flog Him, spit on Him, and after three days He will rise again." {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20}

35Then James and John, the sons of Zebedee, came to Jesus and asked, "We want You to grant us what we request." 36So, Jesus answered them, "What do you want Me to do for you?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 37They said, "Let us be seated with You in glory, {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} one at the right and the other at Your left." 38But Jesus replied, "You do not realize what you are asking. Are you able to drink the cup that I drink {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} and be baptized with the baptism?" {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

Lord, I'm like James and John; I want You to do things that make me look great. Forgive my egotistical heart. I want to do things that make You look great. Amen.

[39]They replied, "We are able." Then Jesus said, "You will drink the cup I drink and you will be baptized with the baptism I face, {342 Partial Answer-Prayer, Exod. 33:2-3} [40]but sitting at My right or left is not Mine to give. It is for those who deserve it." {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [41]When the other ten disciples heard what was asked, they were angry at James and John. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [42]But Jesus called to them and said, "You know how the Gentiles rule over those under them, and how their chiefs exercise authority over them; [43]but this is not what I want you to do. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} [44]Whoever will be great among you, shall be your servant, and whoever wants to be first among you, shall be last. [45]For even the Son of Man did not come to be ministered to, but to minister and to give His life a ransom for many." {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}

Lord, teach me to serve as You came to serve. Amen.

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

[46]As Jesus was leaving Jericho with His disciples and a great crowd, Bartimaeus, son of Timaeus, a blind beggar, was there sitting by the roadside; {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [47]when he heard that Jesus of Nazareth was coming, he began to shout, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [48]Some rebuked him to keep quiet, but he shouted even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me!" {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8}

Lord, give me the boldness of Bartimaeus to call out to You, even when others try to make me be quiet. Amen.

[49]Jesus stopped and said, "Call him!" {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} So they told the blind man, "Be of good cheer, Jesus is calling for you." [50]He dropped his coat and ran to Jesus. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} [51]Jesus asked him, "What do you want Me to do for you?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} The blind man said, "Rabbi, I want to see again." {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [52]Jesus told him, "Go! Your faith has healed you." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} Immediately he recovered his sight and followed Jesus. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23}

Mark 11

The Triumphant Entry

[1]Jesus and the disciples came to Jerusalem, at Bethphage and Bethany by the Mount of Olives. He sent two of His disciples to go into the opposite village {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [2]and said, "When you get there, you will

find a donkey hitched to a post on which no one has ever sat. Untie and fetch it. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 3If anyone asks you, 'What are you doing?' answer, 'The Lord needs it,' and he will send the donkey with you without delay." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 4They went and found the donkey hitched outside a door and untied it. 5Some of the bystanders asked them, "Why are you untying the donkey?" {317 Natural-Bless Prayer, Matt. 5:45} 6They answered what Jesus told them to say. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

7Then they brought the donkey to Jesus, spread their robes on it, and Jesus rode on it. 8Many spread their garments on the road, and others waved branches they had cut. {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} 9Those walking ahead and behind began shouting, "HOSANNA! Blessed be He who comes in the name of the Lord! {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} 10Blessed be the coming kingdom of our father David! HOSANNA in the highest!" {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

Lord, I cry out praises to Jesus my King and Savior. I cry out HOSANNA, for You are the Son of God. Amen.

11Jesus entered Jerusalem and went into the temple to see everything. As night approached, He went to Bethany with the twelve.

Cursing the Barren Fig Tree and Cleansing the Temple

12Next morning, as they were leaving Bethany, Jesus was hungry, and 13He saw a fig tree with leaves at a distance. He went to find fruit on it but He found nothing but leaves. 14Jesus said, "May no one eat fruit from you forever." And His disciples observed what He did.

15When they reached Jerusalem, Jesus entered the temple and began to throw out the sellers who were in the sanctuary. He threw over the tables of the money-changers and the stalls of those who sold doves. 16He did not allow anyone to carry anything through the temple. 17He said, "It is written, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer among all nations.' But you have made it a den of robbers."

Lord, You want prayer for all nations; that's why You commanded Your disciples to go "make disciples" from all nations (Matt 28:19). I join with those from all nations to praise You. Amen.

18The scribes and chief priests heard it, and looked for ways to kill Him because they were afraid of Him because all the people received His teaching. 19That evening. Jesus left the city.

The Withered Fig Tree

20On Tuesday morning Jesus and the disciples saw that the fig tree He had cursed the previous day was dead and withered. 21Peter was amazed that the tree had withered to its roots. 22Jesus answered, "Let

God's faith control you. [23]Verily, if you will say to a mountain, 'Be removed and thrown in the sea' and you don't doubt but believe that you will receive what you ask, You shall have it." [24]Jesus then explained, "You shall have all things for which you ask if you believe before you pray."
[25]Jesus then instructed, "When you begin to pray, you must forgive those with whom you have an issue so that your Father may forgive your sin; then you have a basis for getting an answer to your prayer. [26]If you do not forgive others, neither will your heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

Lord, I have a hard heart that sometimes holds grudges, or I don't like some other people. I forgive all that You bring to my mind at this time. I want You to forgive all my sins. Amen.

A Day of Controversy in the Temple

[27]Again Jesus entered Jerusalem and walked around in the temple. The chief priests and scribes and elders approached Him to ask, [28]"By what authority are You saying these things or who gave You authority to do miracles?" [29]Jesus answered them, "I will ask you one question; if you can answer Me, then I will tell you My authority. [30]Was the baptism of John from heaven or from men?" [31]They disagreed among themselves saying, "If we answer 'from heaven,' He will say, 'Why then did you not believe Him?'" [32]But they didn't want to say, "From men,"—they were afraid because the people considered John to be a prophet. [33]So they told Jesus, "We do not know." Jesus replied, "Neither will I tell you My authority for doing these things."

Lord, I forgive those who sin against me and I want You to forgive me for my wrong feelings against any. Forgive me of all my sins so You can answer my prayers. Amen.

Mark 12

Teaching in the Temple

[1]Then He began to speak to them in parables. "A man planted a vineyard and fenced it in and dug out a wine vat and built a tower. Then he rented it to tenant farmers, and went on a trip. [2]At the harvest he sent a servant to collect his share of the harvest. [3]But the tenants took him and beat him and sent him back without anything. [4]Then the man sent another servant and the tenants beat him and treated him terribly. [5]Then he sent a third one, and they killed him. Others they beat and some they killed. [6]He prepared to send his only son; for he thought, 'Surely they will respect my son.' [7]But those tenants said, 'This is the heir; let us kill him and the farm will be ours.' [8]So they killed him, and threw his body outside the vineyard. [9]What will the owner of the vineyard do? He will kill those tenants and give the vineyard to others. [10]Have you never read the Scripture: 'The stone which the builders rejected now has become the cornerstone;' [11]this is the work of the Lord

which is wonderful to see." [12]Then the Jewish leaders tried to have Him arrested, but they were afraid of the people. They knew that Jesus applied this parable to them. So they left and went away.

The Pharisees' and Herodians' Question

[13]Then they sent some Pharisees and Herodians to trip Jesus in an argument. [14]They came to Him and said, "We know that You always tell the truth, and respect no one, but teach the way of God honestly. [15]Is it right to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" Now Jesus saw their plot so He said to them, "Why are you trying to trip Me up? Bring Me a coin." [16]And they gave Him one. Then He asked, "Whose picture and title is on this coin?" They answered, "Caesar's." [17]So He said, "Give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God."

The Sadducees' Question

[18]And they were utterly amazed at His wisdom. Then some Sadducees, who believed there was no resurrection, tried to trick Him with this question: [19]"Teacher, Moses gave us a law that when a man's brother dies leaving a wife but no child, the man must marry the widow to raise up an heir for the family."

Lord, I believe in the resurrection, and I know I'll be raised because I now enjoy Jesus Christ in my heart. He was raised first, so I too will be raised. Amen.

[20]"There were once seven brothers. The eldest married a wife but died and left no heir, [21]and the second brother married her and died leaving no heir; and so did the third. [22]None of the seven left an heir. At last the woman died. [23]Now at the resurrection, whose wife will she be for she was married to all seven?" [24]Jesus answered, "You are wrong in your interpretation. You do not understand the Scriptures or the power of God. [25]For when people rise from the dead, they will not marry nor are they given in marriage, but are as the angels in heaven. [26]But about the rising of the dead—did you not read where Moses at the burning bush heard God say, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob?' [27]He is not the God of the dead, but He is God of living people!"

A Legal Question

[28]Then one of the scribes on hearing Him asked, "Which command is the greatest of all commands?" [29]Jesus answered, "The greatest is, 'Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is one Lord, [30]and you must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.'"

Lord, I love You with all of my talents, with all my time, with all my treasures. I love You. Amen.

[31]"And this is the second, 'You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.' No other command is greater than these."

Lord, teach me to love others deeply {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}, as You instructed me. Amen.

32Then the scribe said to Jesus, "Indeed, Teacher, You have properly said that there is one Lord and no other but Him, 33and to love Him with all one's heart, all one's understanding, and all one's strength, and to love one's neighbor as one loves himself is far more important than all the burnt-offerings and sacrifices." 34Jesus saw that He had answered thoughtfully, so He said, "You are not far from the kingdom of God." And no one dared ask Him any more questions.

Now Jesus Asks a Question

35While Jesus was teaching in the temple, He asked them, "How can the scribes say that the Messiah is the son of David 36when David himself, under the influence of the Holy Spirit, said: 'The Lord has said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand until I make Your enemies the footstool of Your feet?"'" 37The people wanted to hear more from Him.

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

38He continued to say, "Beware of the scribes who desire to go about in long robes, to be honored in public places, 39to have the front seats in the synagogues, to be honored at banquets. 40These are men who devour widows' houses and cover up their greed with long prayers. They will receive a much heavier judgment."

Lord, keep me from hypocrisy. It's so blinding, I don't always know when I'm being hypocritical. Amen.

41Then Jesus sat in front of the collection box to watch the people as they gave their money. Many rich people were dropping in large amounts of money. 42Then a poor widow came to drop in two small coins. 43Jesus called His disciples and pointed out, "I say to you, this poor widow has given more than the others who have been given much into the collection box. 44For they gave out of their abundance, but she gave out of her need; yes, she gave out of what she needed to live on."

Lord Jesus, I give You all that I have, not for the applause of people but because You gave all that You had—Your life—for me. Amen.

Mark 13

The Mount of Olives Discourse

1As Jesus left the temple, one of His disciples said to Him, "Teacher! Look at these giant stones; this is a beautiful building!" 2Jesus answered him, "Do not be overwhelmed by this giant building. Not one stone will be left upon another; all will be torn down." 3He got on the Mount of Olives opposite the temple where Peter, James, John, and Andrew asked Him, 4"When will all this take place? And what will be the sign that this will happen?"

Lord, I don't know when You'll return to judge the earth, so I'll just live faithfully each day. Amen.

5Jesus told them, "Let no one mislead you
about the future. 6Many will come call-
ing themselves Messiah, and saying, 'I am
He.' But they will deceive many. 7When
you hear about wars and rumors of war,
don't be alarmed. Wars will come, but the
end is not yet. 8One nation will rise up to
fight another, and one kingdom against
another. There will be earthquakes and
famines; that is only the beginning of the
birth pangs. 9Protect yourselves; you will
be turned over to courts and synagogues
where you will be beaten and persecuted.
You will be brought before governors and
kings for My sake. 10But before the end,
the gospel must be preached to all nations
(ethnic tribes). 11When they try you in
court, do not be concerned about what
you should say for it is not you who will
be speaking, but the Holy Spirit will speak
through you. 12Brother will hand over
brother to death, and a father his child,
and children will rise up against their par-
ents and have them killed. 13You shall be
hated by everyone because of My name.
But whoever endures to the end will be
saved. 14So when you see the abomination
of desecration standing where he has no
right to stand (mentioned by Daniel), let
the reader beware. Let those who remain
in Judea flee to the hills. 15Let him who is
on the roof not go down to get any posses-
sions. 16Let him who is in the field not go
back to get his coat, 17and pregnant moth-
ers and those with nursing babies beware.
18Pray that it may not be in winter, 19for
there will be a greater tribulation at that
time than ever before since the beginning
of creation, and never will be again. 20If the
Lord does not cut short those days, no one
will escape, but for the sake of the elect,
God will cut them short."

Lord, teach me when to "run away" from persecution, and when to submit to martyrdom. Amen.

21"Then if anyone tells you, 'Look, the
Christ is here!' or, 'Look, He is there!'
don't believe it. 22For false Christs and
false prophets will come and perform signs
and wonders, to lead you astray; even if
possible the elect. 23Watch out, I am warn-
ing you before it comes."

Lord, I expect You at any moment. Amen.

24"But in those days the sun shall be dark-
ened and the moon will not give light;
25the stars will fade from the sky and the
heavens will be shaken. 26Then shall the
Son of Man come in the clouds with great
power and glory. 27Then He shall send
angels to gather His chosen from the four
ends of the earth."

Lord, I will watch anxiously for Your return, because I don't know the day or hour of Your

return. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} Amen.

Parable of the Fig Tree

28"Learn from the fig tree: Whenever her branches are tender and there are leaves, you know that summer is near. 29So when you see these things happen, you will know that He is at the door. 30Verily this present generation shall not pass until all these take place. 31Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My Word shall not pass away.
32 "No one knows the exact date and hour, no one except the Father; neither the angels in heaven nor the Son. 33Watch and pray, for you do not know the time when the Son of Man will come. 34A man who leaves his home to go away authorizes his servants and assigns each his work, with the guard appointed to watch them. 35Therefore watch, for you have no idea when the master of the house arrives—in the evening or at midnight or in the morning. 36If he comes unexpectedly, he might find you sleeping. 37Therefore I say to you, watch!"

Mark 14

Events on Wednesday

1The Passover was due in two days. The chief priests and the scribes schemed how they might arrest and execute Jesus, 2but they said, "Not during the festival, or else the people will revolt."

The Anointing at Bethany

3While in Bethany at the home of Simon the leper, Jesus was reclining at the table, when a woman came with a very valuable jar of perfume, and broke the jar, and poured the ointment on His head. 4But some indignantly said to one another, "Why is she wasting this ointment? 5This could have been sold for a great price and given to the poor."

Lord, I give my money to You; it is not wasted. I give my time to You; it is not lost. I give my talent to You; it is not misused. Amen.

6But Jesus said, "Leave her alone! Why do you embarrass her? She has honored Me. 7For we always have the poor, and whenever we wish, we can give to them. But you will not always have Me. 8She has done what she could; she has prepared My body for burial."

Lord, help me always do what I can for You, just as the woman did what she could. Amen.

9"I say to you, wherever this gospel shall be preached over the whole world, what she has done shall be remembered as her memorial."
10Then Judas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went to the chief priests to betray Jesus. 11When the priests learned of it, they were glad and promised to give him money. So he looked for an occasion of how he might conveniently betray Jesus.

Events on Thursday

12On the first day of the Festival of Bread without Yeast, when the Passover lamb

was annually sacrificed, His disciples asked Him, "Where do You want us to prepare a place where You may eat the Passover?" [13]Then Jesus sent out two of His disciples telling them, "Go into the city where you'll see a man carrying a water pitcher; follow him. [14]And wherever he enters, say to the owner, 'The Teacher asks, "Do you have a guest room where I can eat the Passover with My disciples?"' [15]He will show you a large upper room—prepare that room for us." [16]His disciples went to the city, and found the man as Jesus had told them, and they prepared for the Passover.

The Last Supper

[17]As evening came, Jesus arrived with the twelve. [18]As they were reclining and eating, Jesus said, "I know that one of you who is eating with Me shall betray Me." [19]They were all disturbed and said, one after another, "Is it I?" [20]He answered, "One of the twelve, who will dip with Me. [21]The Son of Man is going the way of death that has been written about Him, but how terrible it will be for that man who betrays the Son of Man. It is better for that man if he were never born."

Institution of the Lord's Table

[22]At the meal He took bread, blessed and broke it, then gave to them saying, "Take! Eat! This is My body." [23]Also He gave thanks for the cup and He gave to them and they all drank. [24]He said, "This is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many. [25]I say to you, I will no more drink of the vine until that day when I will drink it new in the kingdom of God."

Jesus' Prayer in Gethsemane

[26]They sang a hymn, and went to the Mount of Olives. [27]Jesus said to them, "This night all will be offended because of Me, for it is written, 'Strike the shepherd and the sheep will flee.' [28]But after my resurrection I will go before you into Galilee." [29]Peter said to Him, "If all leave You, I will never do it." [30]Jesus told him, "I tell you, during this night before the rooster crows, you will disown Me three times." [31]But Peter insisted, "Even if I must die with You, I shall never disown You." They all said the same thing.

[32]They came to a place called Gethsemane, and Jesus told His disciples, "Sit here while I go pray." [33]He took with Him Peter, James, and John. As He began to feel deeply distressed, [34]He said to them, "My soul is deeply grieved. Stay here." [35]He went a little farther and fell on the ground and prayed. "If it is possible, let this hour pass from Me. [36]Abba, Father, all things are possible with You, let this cup pass from Me! But not My will, but Your will be done." [37]Jesus came and found the disciples asleep and said, "Simon, are you sleeping? Could you not watch with Me for one hour?" (This statement from Matt. 26:40).

"One hour" is the only time suggested for prayer in Scripture. But most believers only pray for short periods of time. Since this is a specific suggestion, shouldn't we pray "one hour"? Lord, I will pray many times throughout the day. I will begin and end my

days with prayer. But I will be obedient, I will pray for "one hour." Amen.

38"Watch and pray so you will not be
tempted. The spirit is willing, but the flesh
is weak." 39Jesus left again to pray, saying
the same words. 40He then returned to
find the disciples asleep once more. And
they did not know how to explain their
disobedience. 41He then came a third time
and said, "Sleep and rest; the hour has
come. The Son of Man is betrayed into the
hands of sinners. 42Rise, let us go! Look,
My betrayer is here."

No one can begin to understand the dread of Jesus' prayer as He faced the cross and the task of becoming our sin. God had never faced this moral dilemma before, so Jesus cried, "Abba, Father.... Take this cup away from Me." First, Jesus used the intimate "Papa" to approach the Father like a fearful child climbing into his daddy's lap when he's afraid or doesn't want to do something. He pleads intimacy. But second, Jesus faced the inevitable because of His love for us, "Nevertheless, not what I will, but what You will." Lord, I come to You when I'm absolutely scared. Help me! Protect me! Save me! Amen.

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken

43While He was yet talking, Judas, one
of the twelve, came and brought a crowd
with swords and clubs commissioned by
the chief priests, scribes, and elders. 44The
betrayer had given them a sign: "The one I
shall kiss is the one. Arrest Him and take
Him away." 45As soon as Judas came, he
stepped up to Jesus and said, "Rabbi!" and
kissed Him. 46Then they grabbed Him and
bound Him. 47One of His disciples stand-
ing close by drew his sword and cut off the
high priest's servant's ear. 48And Jesus said
to them, "Have you come out against a vio-
lent man with swords and clubs to arrest
Me? 49I was with you daily in the temple
teaching. Why did you not seize Me then?
But the Scripture must be fulfilled." 50And
the disciples left Jesus and ran away. 51But
a certain youth followed Him, wearing a
linen cloth around his body, and when the
soldiers grabbed him, 52he dropped the
linen cloth and ran from them.

The Second Trial—Before Caiaphas

53They brought Jesus before the council
of the high priest, chief priests, elders,
and scribes. 54Peter followed from a dis-
tance until he was inside the high priest's
courtyard. There he sat down with the
servants to warm himself by a fire. 55The
chief priests and Sanhedrin were looking
for a reason to execute Jesus, but couldn't
find one; 56for while many bore false wit-
ness against Him, their testimony was
not consistent. 57Some testified falsely,
58"We heard Him say, 'I will tear down
this temple and in three days will build
it up.'" 59But their words did not agree.
60Then the high priest stood to ask,
"Jesus, why are You not answering these
accusations?" 61Jesus kept quiet and never
answered. Again the high priest ques-
tioned Him, "Are You the Christ, the Son

of the Blessed?" [62]Jesus said, "I AM. And you shall see the Son of Man seated at the right hand of the Most High, coming on the clouds of heaven." [63]Then the high priest tore his robes and yelled, "Why do we need any more witnesses? [64]You heard Him blaspheme; what do you think now?" All said that He deserved to die. [65]Then some spat on Him. They blindfolded Him and slapped Him saying, "Prophesy, who hit You?" Even the servants who led Him out slapped Him.
[66]As Peter was in the courtyard below, one of the high priest's maids saw him warming himself, and said, [67]"You were with Jesus, the Nazarene!" [68]But he denied it saying, "I don't know what you're talking about." He went out the gate and a rooster crowed. [69]Then the maid who saw him began saying again to the men standing there, "This man is one of them!" [70]But Peter again denied it. Later the group said to Peter, "You are surely one of them; you're a Galilean!" [71]But Peter started to curse and swear, saying, "I tell you I don't know the man!"

Lord, I'm not bold, but I will not deny You. How could I ever deny You when You died for me, and took away my sins? Amen.

[72]Immediately the rooster crowed for the second time. Peter remembered the words of Jesus, "Before the rooster crows twice, you will deny Me three times." Then Peter broke down and wept.

Mark 15

The Third Trial—Before the Sanhedrin

[1]As soon as the morning came, the chief priests called a meeting of elders, scribes, and the whole council (the Sanhedrin) condemned Jesus.

The Fourth Trial—Before Pilate

They bound Jesus and led Him to Pilate.
[2]Pilate first asked Him, "Well, are You the King of the Jews?" Jesus replied, "You say that I am." [3]The chief priests accused Jesus of many things [4]so Pilate questioned Him again, "Listen to their accusations! Have You nothing to say?" [5]But Jesus did not answer them and Pilate was astonished.
[6]Pilate's custom at the festival was to release a prisoner—anyone they asked. [7]Barabbas was in the prison at the time, with some other violent criminals who had committed murder. [8]The crowd began to demand that Pilate should release Barabbas. [9]So Pilate spoke to them, "Do you want me to release the King of the Jews?" [10]Pilate knew that the chief priests had handed Jesus over to him because of their hatred of Him. [11]But the chief priests agitated the crowd to get Pilate to release Barabbas rather than Jesus. [12]So Pilate spoke to them once more, "What shall I do with the man whom you call the King of the Jews?" [13]They shouted, "Crucify Him!" [14]But Pilate answered, "Why, what crime has He done?" But they yelled even louder. "Crucify Him!" [15]Because Pilate wanted to satisfy the crowd, he released Barabbas, and

after having Jesus flogged, Pilate handed Him over to be crucified.

Jesus Is Mocked

16Then the soldiers marched Jesus away to the courtyard and called for other guards. 17They dressed Jesus in a purple robe, and twisting some thorn-twigs into a crown, thrust it on His head. 18Then they began to mock Him. "Hail, Your majesty, King of the Jews!" 19They struck Him on the head with a stick and spat on Him, and then bowed before Him on bended knee. 20When they had finished mocking Him, they took off the purple cloak and put on His own clothes. Then they led Him away to crucify Him.

Lord, while the world makes fun of Jesus, I worship You. Amen.

21They forced Simon, a man from Cyrene in Africa (the father of Alexander and Rufus), who was coming in from the fields, to carry Jesus' cross. 22They took Jesus to a place called Golgotha (meaning "Skull") and 23there they offered Him some drugged wine, but He would not drink it.

On the Cross

24Then they nailed Him to the cross, and divided His garments, casting lots to see what each would get. 25It was nine o'clock in the morning when they nailed Him to the cross. 26Over His head they posted a placard that read, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." 27They also crucified two thieves at the same time, one on each side of Him. 28And so the Scriptures were fulfilled. 29Those who passed by jeered at Him, shaking their heads in mockery, saying, "You said You could destroy the temple and build it up again in three days. 30Come down from the cross and save Yourself."

Lord, there are many scoffers who don't believe You {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}, but I believe and worship. Amen.

31The chief priests also mocked Him along with the scribes. "He saved others, He cannot save Himself. 32If this Messiah, the King of Israel, would come down now, we would see and believe!" And even the thieves who were crucified with Him mocked Him.

33At noon darkness spread over the countryside and lasted until three o'clock in the afternoon. 34Then Jesus cried out in a loud voice, "My God, My God, why have You forsaken Me?" 35Some of the bystanders heard what Jesus said in Aramaic (Eloi, Eloi, lama sabachthani?), and said, "Listen, He's calling for Elijah!" 36One man ran to soak a sponge in vinegar, put it on a stick, and held it up for Jesus to drink, saying, "Let Him alone! Let's see if Elijah will come to take Him down!" 37Then Jesus let out a loud cry, and breathed His last. 38The curtain of the temple sanctuary was torn from the top to the bottom.

God speaks in symbols (baptism and communion) so He told us we had immediate access to Him at any time and in any location

because the veil was torn down. That means fellowship with God and worship comes first before the things we do for Him. The "torn curtain" means God is saying, "I want you close to Me." The early church was keenly aware that God was approachable. Lord, I will approach You as I think of You, and my thoughts will be on You as I walk in crowds, or wait in line, or meet You in solitude. I will come to You at all times, in all conditions because I hear Jesus say, "Come to Me" (Matt. 11:28). Amen.

39 And then the centurion who stood facing Jesus saw how He died, said, "Truly, this man was the Son of God!" 40 There were some women watching from a distance: Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of the younger James and Joses, and Salome. 41 These were the women who had followed Jesus as He walked in Galilee and ministered to Him. And there were many other women there who had also come up to Jerusalem for the festival.

The Burial of Jesus' Body

42 It was Friday evening of the day of Passover preparation, before the Sabbath. 43 Joseph from Arimathaea, a member of the Sanhedrin, who believed the kingdom of God was about to come, went to Pilate to ask for the body of Jesus. 44 Pilate was surprised that Jesus was dead already and he sent for the centurion to ask whether Jesus had been dead long. 45 On hearing the centurion's report, he gave Joseph the body of Jesus. 46 So Joseph brought a linen sheet, took Jesus down and wrapped Him in it, and then put Jesus in his own tomb which had been hewn out of the solid rock. Then Joseph rolled a stone over the entrance to the tomb. 47 Mary Magdalene and Mary, the mother of Jesus, watched and saw where He was laid.

Lord, there will always be "observers" who believe in You, who will verify the "faith" for us. Amen.

Mark 16

The Visit of the Women to the Tomb

1 Early Sunday morning Mary Magdalene, and Mary the mother of James, and Salome bought spices to anoint the body. 2 Before sunrise they came to the tomb. 3 They were asking, "Who can roll away the stone from the tomb for us?" 4 Then they saw that the stone had been rolled away. 5 They went into the tomb and saw a young man sitting to the right, dressed in white, and they were scared. 6 But he said, "Do not be afraid! You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He is risen; He is not here. Come see the place where He was laid. 7 Then go, tell His disciples and Peter that He will be going before you into Galilee; You will see Him there, just as He said."

Lord, just as the women had to obey to see Jesus, so I will obey so I can see Jesus and worship Him. Amen.

8 Quickly they ran from the tomb, fearful and terrified. They spoke to no one.

[9]After Jesus had risen early that morning, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene from whom He had cast out seven demons. [10]She went and told His disciples who were grieving and weeping. [11]When they heard that He was alive and she had seen Him, they did not believe it. [12]But later on Jesus appeared in a different form to two of them on their way home. [13]They went and told the others; again they did not believe them.

The Upper Room One Week Later

[14]Afterward, Jesus appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table, and He rebuked their unbelief and hardheartedness, because they did not believe the report of those who had seen Him.

Lord, I believe in Your resurrection because of the Scriptures, but I mostly believe because the resurrected Son of God lives in my heart. Amen.

[15]Jesus commanded them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every person. [16]Those who believe and are baptized shall be saved, but he who does not believe shall be lost. [17]And these signs shall follow those who believe. In My name they shall cast out demons; they shall speak with new tongues; [18]they shall pick up serpents and not be harmed, and if they drink anything poison, it shall not kill them. They shall lay hands on the sick and heal them."

Lord, I will do my part to carry out this great commission into all the world. Amen.

[19]After the Lord had talked with them, He was received up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God.

Lord, be my intercessor to the Father; plead my case so my prayers will be answered. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} Amen.

[20]Then His disciples went out and preached everywhere; {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} the Lord was with them, and confirmed their message with signs.

Luke

Ch 1: Introduction to Luke 1447
Ch2: The Birth of Jesus 1451
Ch 3: Ministry of John the Baptizer 1454
Ch 4: Temptation of Jesus 1456
Ch 5: Jesus Calls Disciples 1458
Ch 6: Debate about the Sabbath 1460
Ch 7: The Teachings of Jesus 1464
Ch 8: Various Teachings of Jesus 1466
Ch 9: Jesus Commissions the Twelve 1470
Ch 10: Jesus Sends Out the 70 1474
Ch 11: The Lord's Prayer 1476
Ch 12: Warnings and Encouragement 1480
Ch 13: Current Events in Jerusalem 1483
Ch 14: Jesus Heals Again on the Sabbath 1485
Ch 15: Parable of the Lost Sheep 1487
Ch 16: To the Disciples—the Deceptive Manager 1489
Ch 17: To the Diciples—an Unprofitable Worker 1491
Ch 18: Two Parables on Prayer 1493
Ch 19: Zacchaeus 1495
Ch 20: A Day of Contoversy in the Temple 1498
Ch 21: Teaching in the Temple 1500

Ch 22: Events on Wednesday..... 1502
Ch 23: The Fourth Trial—Before Pilate..... 1506
Ch 24: The Visit of the Women on the Tomb 1508

LUKE

Key Words: *Son of Man* (Luke 19:10)

Key Verse: "For the Son of Man has come to seek and to save that which was lost" (Luke 19:10).

Theme: Luke, called "the beloved physician" by Paul (Col. 4:14), wrote about the human side of Jesus Christ, Who is the God-Man. He emphasized Jesus' mother, His birth, boyhood, and human growth (Luke 2:52). He emphasized the wisdom of Jesus in His parables and of course His death, burial, resurrection, and return to heaven.

Search the Gospel of Luke to see the human characteristics of Jesus, then pray, "What would Jesus do?" (WWJD). Read to find how Jesus lived, served, and gave His life for others; then pray for strength and wisdom to follow His example (1 Peter 2:21). *Lord, I love the man Jesus; help me live as He lived. I submit myself to Jesus, the Son of God, who died for me. Forgive me of my sin and use me. Amen.*

Luke 1

Introduction to Luke

[1]Many have written different aspects of the events of Jesus on the earth, so it seemed good to me to also do it. I researched carefully the reports they wrote {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} and [2]interviewed disciples who followed Him, and eyewitnesses who saw these things, [3]so that I would have perfect understanding to write an accurate account of Jesus, being inspired by God from on high {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}; I have written these things to Theophilus so he can have [4]confidence in the things that have been taught to him.

Lord, I have confidence in the things that have been taught to me from Your Word, and I will study it carefully to know what You said. Amen.

God Promises Zechariah a Son

5During the reign of King Herod Zechariah, a priest of the Abijah corps, had married Elizabeth who was from the priestly family, 6so he had impeccable qualifications to serve God. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} Zechariah and Elizabeth were spiritually minded and they carefully obeyed every aspect of religious law, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 7and because Elizabeth was barren, they had no children. 8When it finally came Zechariah's turn to offer evening prayers in the temple for all Israel, 9he also burned incense, a symbol of prayers ascending up to God. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 10A great multitude was outside praying at the tenth hour, which was 4 p.m. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17}

Lord, may I be as faithful to You as were Zechariah and Elizabeth in all things. Amen.

Angel Announces the Birth of John the Baptizer

11The appearance of an angel {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} standing by the altar of incense {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} 12frightened Zechariah. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} However, the angel said,13"Don't be afraid. God has heard your prayers, {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} and your wife, Elizabeth, will have a son and you must name him John. 14Your son will give you joy and happiness, {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and multitudes will rejoice with you."

Lord, help me receive Your message when You come to speak to me. Amen.

15The angel told Zechariah, "Your son will be a great man for God, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} he must never drink intoxicating liquor, {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} and the Holy Spirit will fill him for service. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 16Your son will convince many to turn to God. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} He will be rugged like Elijah, and will prepare people for the coming Deliverer 17by softening the hearts of fathers to be like children {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} and convincing the disobedient to return to Your wisdom." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Zacharias Unable to Speak

18Zechariah objected, saying he was an old man, and his wife was beyond child-bearing years. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

Lord, I will tarry long in Your presence when You are speaking to me. I will not question what You promise me. Amen.

19The angel Gabriel reminded Zechariah that he heard this good news standing in the presence of God, {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} and that

God sent him to tell it to Zechariah. [20]Because Zechariah didn't believe God {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} would do the things for which he prayed all his life, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} the angel said that Zechariah wouldn't be able to speak until the child was born.

Lord, may I be quick to believe, quick to obey all You tell me to do. Amen.

[21]The waiting crowd got anxious because Zechariah tarried; [22]and he couldn't speak when he appeared, so they realized he saw a vision. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} [23]When his days of service were over, he then returned home. [24]Elizabeth became pregnant and she hid herself from public view. [25]Elizabeth proclaimed, "Lord, You are gracious to take away the embarrassment of having no children." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Gabriel Promises Mary a Son

[26]When Elizabeth was six months pregnant, the angel Gabriel appeared {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} to [27]Mary, a virgin who was engaged to Joseph; they were both in the family line of King David. [28]Gabriel greeted Mary, "Rejoice, Mary, you are highly favored of God, the Lord is with you." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [29]Mary was confused with this greeting and she didn't know what it meant. [30]Gabriel said, "Do not be afraid, God has decided to use you to be a blessing to all the world. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [31]You will conceive and deliver a Son, {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} you must call His name Jesus. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} [32]He will have great influence on the world and He will be the Son of the Most High God. [33]God will give your Son the throne of David and He will rule over Israel forever." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

A Miraculous Conception

[34]Mary replied, "How can this happen, I am a virgin, and have not known a man?" {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [35]Gabriel answered, "The Holy Spirit will come on you, and {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} power from the Most High God will make it happen. You'll have a child who is the Son of God." [36]Gabriel continued, "Your Aunt Elizabeth has become pregnant with a child in her old age. [37]With God, nothing is impossible." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [38]Mary answered. "I will be the Lord's handmaiden. I am willing to be what the Lord wants me to be; let it happen, as you said." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

Lord, I yield my body to You as Mary did. Accomplish Your purpose in my life as You did in Mary's life. Amen.

Mary Visits Elizabeth

[39]Mary left her home and went to Judah to visit Zechariah and Elizabeth. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [40]She greeted Elizabeth [41]as she entered

the house and the baby leaped in Elizabeth's womb because he knew he was in the presence of the Messiah. Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [42]and said, "Blessed are you among women {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and blessed is the child you'll bear. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [43]But why this honor that the mother of our Lord should visit me? {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [44]As soon as I heard your voice, the baby leaped in my womb. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}. [45]You believed the promises of our Lord and that's why you've been given this great privilege." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Lord, may I always be excited when I feel Your presence near, just as John the Baptizer leaped in Elizabeth's womb when You came near. Amen.

Mary's Song—The Magnificat

[46]Mary responded to the Lord, "You are great, my God; {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [47]my spirit rejoices in You, my Savior. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [48]You look on this lowly servant, so now all generations will call me blessed. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [49]For You—the Mighty God—have done great things, Holy is Your name. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [50]Your mercy extends to those who reverence You from one generation to another. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [51]You have done mighty works by Your arm, You have cast down the proud of heart. [52]You have brought down mighty kings from their thrones, and You lift up the lowly. [53]You have filled the hungry with good things, and sent the arrogant away empty. [54]You have come to help Israel, Your people, and You have remembered to be merciful {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [55]to Abraham and his descendants forever." [56]Mary stayed with Elizabeth three months, and then returned to her home.

Lord, may I ever praise You for using me as Mary magnified You in song. Amen.

The Birth of John the Baptizer

[57]Elizabeth gave birth to a son at the appointed time, [58]and the relatives and neighbors rejoiced with the parents. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [59]When they came to circumcise him on the eighth day, the relatives tried to name him after his father. [60]Elizabeth protested saying, "Call him John," {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [61]but the relatives said no one in the family had that name. [62]When they asked the father about the child's name, [63]Zechariah asked for a tablet and wrote, "His name is John." {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [64]Immediately Zechariah was able to speak again. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} He praised God {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4} [65]and all the relatives joined him. [66]Everyone who heard about it wondered, "What will this child be?" And the hand of the Lord was with

the child. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Lord, help me to obey Your instructions just as Zechariah did, and then show Yourself strong when I obey, just as You healed Zechariah. Amen.

Zechariah's Song: The Benedictus

67 Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and he spoke this prophecy, 68 "Blessed is the Lord God of Israel, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} for He visited and rescued His people. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} 69 He has sent a mighty Deliverer to the people of His servant, David, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 70 as promised by the holy prophets. 71 And the Deliverer will save us from our enemies, and from the hand of those who hate the Jews, {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 72 to give mercy promised to our fathers and perform His holy covenant, 73 the promises sworn to our father Abraham, 74 and to grant to us deliverance from the hand of our enemies so that we may serve Him without fear in holiness and righteousness 75 in His presence all the days of our life. 76 And you, my child, John, shall be called the prophet of the Most High God. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} John shall go before the Deliverer to prepare the way for His coming. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 77 John will tell the people about His salvation and preach the forgiveness of sins, {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 78 showing us His tender mercies that will come to us like the daybreak of the sun. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 79 The Deliverer will give light to those living in darkness, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and guide their feet in Your way." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} 80 And the child, John, grew strong physically and spiritually, {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} and lived in the desert until his time to preach publicly to Israel. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}

Luke 2

The Birth of Jesus

1 Caesar Augustus had commanded everyone to return to their hometowns to register for a census for tax purposes. 2 This happened when Quirinius became governor of Syria in 4 B.C. 3 All went to be registered to his own city. {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} 4 Then Joseph left Nazareth to return to Bethlehem because he was in the royal line of David and 5 his wife Mary was also in that line. Mary was pregnant and the birth was imminent {376 Pregnancy-Prayer, Gen. 25:22} 6 so she gave birth while in Bethlehem. 7 The baby was born in a stable because there was no room in any of the inns. Mary wrapped the baby in strips of cloths, swaddling clothes, and laid Him in a feed trough.

Shepherds Visit the Baby Jesus

8 The same evening the baby Jesus was born, shepherds were in an open field watching over their sheep. {536 Worker's-Prayer,

2 Tim. 2:15} [9]Suddenly the sky lit up with an overwhelming light, {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} and a shining angel appeared to them. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} The shepherds were scared out of their wits. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [10]The angel announced to them, "Don't be frightened. I have a wonderful message for you, and for everyone else in the world. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [11]Tonight, the Deliverer—even the Lord—was born in Bethlehem. [12]You will recognize Him because He will be wrapped in swathes of cloths, and will be lying in a feed trough." [13]Suddenly, the angel was joined by a gigantic angelic choir praising God saying, {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [14]"Glory to God in the highest, peace to those who enjoy God's good will." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

Lord, I join the angels in praising You for the birth of Jesus Christ. Amen.

[15]When the angelic choir returned to heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let's go see this baby God told us about." {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [16]When they ran to Bethlehem, they found Mary, His mother, and the baby lying in a manger. [17]After they saw Him, they went and told others the story that was told them about the child. [18]Those who heard it were astounded by what was told them by the shepherds, [19]but Mary kept all these things to herself and pondered them in her heart. [20]Then the shepherds told everyone about the baby, and people were astonished at what they heard.

Lord, may I embrace the story of the Baby and worship Him with all my heart. May I tell everyone about the Baby and how Jesus came to forgive their sins. Amen.

Dedication of the Baby Jesus

[21]Jesus was circumcised eight days after He was born, and they called His name Jesus, {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} just as the angels instructed them.

Jesus, I love Your name for it means Savior; You are my personal Savior. Amen.

[22]Later they returned to the temple for the ritual cleansing of the mother [23]as required by Moses in the law, {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} "Every male that opened the womb shall be dedicated to the Lord." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [24]They did this with the offering of the poor, two young turtledoves and two pigeons. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}

[25]In the temple was an elderly man named Simeon who looked for the restoration of the kingdom. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} Simeon lived blamelessly, and served God continually, and he was filled with the Holy Spirit. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [26]The Lord had revealed to Simeon that he would see the Deliverer before he died. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [27]Simeon was led by the Spirit into the temple {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer,

Eph. 5:18} on the day the baby was to be dedicated. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [28]Simeon took Jesus into his arms and blessed Him, saying, {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} [29]"Lord, I have seen what You promised, and now I am ready to die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [30]For my eyes have seen Your salvation, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [31]which all people will see one day. [32]The Deliverer will be a light to the Gentiles, and will bring glory to Your people Israel." {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

Lord Jesus, You are my salvation, just as Simeon testified You were his salvation. Amen.

[33]Joseph and Mary marveled at Simeon's words. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [34]Then Simeon said to Mary, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} "This child will be rejected by many in Israel, and God will judge their unbelief. [35]But the child will also be received by many in Israel, {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} and they will be saved and rewarded by God."

[36]There was also a prophetess named Anna who was very old {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} and had lived with her husband only seven years after they were married. [37]She lived in the temple, worshiping God, praying, and very often fasting. {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [38]She came along as Simeon finished his blessing, and she gave thanks to God for the child, {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} telling everyone the Deliverer had come. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7}

[39]Joseph and Mary then returned to their home, [40]and the child became physically strong {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} and was filled with wisdom. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

Twelve-Year-Old Jesus in Jerusalem

[41]Jesus went with His parents to Jerusalem for the annual Passover Festival [42]when He was 12 years old. {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} [43]As the parents left Jerusalem for home, Jesus stayed in Jerusalem, but His parents didn't know it. [44]After a day's journey they went looking for Him, thinking Jesus was walking toward home with relatives. [45]When they failed to find Jesus, they returned to Jerusalem to search for Him. [46]After three days they found Jesus sitting among the teachers, listening to them and asking questions. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [47]All who heard Jesus were greatly impressed {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} at His level of comprehension and the difficult questions He asked them. [48]Joseph and Mary were astonished when they saw Him, and Mary asked Him, "Son, why have You treated us like this? Your father and I have been worried to death." [49]Jesus answered, "Why were you searching for Me? Didn't you know that I had to be about My heavenly Father's business?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [50]He spoke to them but they did not understand.

Lord Jesus, just as You naturally went to the temple, so I naturally go to church. I will go to the place where You dwell. Amen.

51Jesus returned to Nazareth with them and was under authority to them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} His mother didn't forget any of these incidents and meditated on them often. {302 Meditation-Prayer, Josh. 1:9} 52Jesus grew in mental ability and physical strength and was respected by God and men. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

Lord Jesus, help me to grow in every realm physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually—just as You grew. Amen.

Luke 3

Ministry of John the Baptizer

1In the fifteenth year of the reign of the Emperor Tiberius, Pontius Pilate was governor of Judea, Herod was governor of Galilee, his brother Philip was governor of the territory of Iturea and Trachonitis, Lysanias was governor of Abilene, 2Annas and Caiaphas were in the high priesthood; the Word of God came to John, son of Zechariah, in the desert. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} 3And he preached all over the Jordan valley the need for baptism of repentance {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} to obtain the forgiveness of sins. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 4He fulfilled what is written in the book of the prophet Isaiah, "The voice of one crying in the desert, prepare the road for the Messiah. Make the paths straight for Him. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 5Every valley must be filled up, and every mountain and hill leveled. The crooked places must become straight, and the rough roads must be made smooth, 6and all people must know about the salvation of God." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

7So John the Baptizer said to the crowds that were coming to be baptized by him, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} "You den of snakes! Who warned you to hide from the judgment that is coming? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 8Produce fruit that shows your repentance, {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} and do not justify yourselves saying, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor,' {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} for I say to you that God can raise up children of Abraham out of these stones. 9Now the axe is already cutting at the roots of the trees. Every tree, then, that will not bring forth good fruit, will be cut down and cast into the fire." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 10So the crowds asked John, "What must we do?" 11He answered, "The one who has two coats must give to him who has none, and the one who has food must do the same thing." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 12Even tax collectors came to be baptized by John and said to him, "What must we do?" 13So he answered, "Stop collecting more money than is required of you." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 14Some

soldiers asked him, "What must we do?" So he answered them, "Don't extort money from anyone, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} don't make false accusations, and be satisfied with your wages." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [15]The people were excited {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} and were arguing whether John was the Messiah. [16]John answered them, "I am only baptizing you in water, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} but there is coming One after me who is stronger than I am. I am not fit to untie His shoe strings. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire; {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [17]His pitchfork is in His hand, and He will gather His wheat and store it in His barn; and He will burn up the chaff with eternal fire." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [18]John continued to proclaim the good news with many explanations. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [19]But Herod the governor was repeatedly reproved by John because he married Herodias his brother's wife. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [20]So Herod later put John the Baptizer in prison. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Lord, thank You for the bold announcement by John the Baptizer in the face of danger. Make me bold like John. Amen.

The Baptism of Christ

[21]On a particular day when all the people had been baptized, Jesus also was baptized {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} and as He was praying, heaven opened [22]and the Holy Spirit came down on Him in bodily form as a dove. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} Everyone heard a voice out of heaven. "You are My Beloved Son. In You I am well pleased!" {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

Father in heaven, be pleased with me as You were pleased with Jesus. Amen.

Genealogy of Christ through Mary

[23]Jesus was about thirty years old when He began His ministry; {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} He was the son legally of Joseph, the son of Eli, [24]the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, the son of Melki, the son of Jannai, the son of Joseph, [25]the son of Mattathias, the son of Amos, the son of Nahum, the son of Esli, the son of Naggai, [26]the son of Maath, the son of Mattathias, the son of Semein, the son of Josech, the son of Joda, [27]the son of Johanan, the son of Rhesa, the son of Zerubbabel, the son of Salathiel, the son of Neri, [28]the son of Melki, the son of Addi, the son of Cosam, the son of Elmadam, the son of Er, [29]the son of Joshua, the son of Eliezer, the son of Jorim, the son of Matthat, the son of Levi, [30]the son of Simeon, the son of Judah, the son of Joseph, the son of Jonam, the son of Eliakim, [31]the son of Melea, the son

of Menna, the son of Mattatha, the son of Nathan, the son of David, [32]the son of Jesse, the son of Obed, the son of Boaz, the son of Sala, the son of Nahshon, [33]the son of Amminadab, the son of Arni, the son of Hezron, the son of Perez, the son of Judah, [34]the son of Jacob, the son of Isaac, the son of Abraham, the son of Terah, the son of Nahor, [35]the son of Serug, the son of Reu, the son of Peleg, the son of Eber, the son of Shelah, [36]the son of Cainan, the son of Arphaxad, the son of Shem, the son of Noah, the son of Lamech, [37]the son of Methuselah, the son of Enoch, the son of Jared, the son of Mahalalel, the son of Cainan, [38]the son of Enosh, the son of Seth, the son of Adam, the son of God.

Luke 4

Temptation of Jesus

[1]Jesus was filled with the Holy Spirit, and returned from the Jordan. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} He was led by the Spirit into the desert {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [2]where He was tempted by the devil for 40 days. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

Lord, fill me with the Holy Spirit and lead me by the Holy Spirit just as You led Jesus. Amen.

Jesus fasted for 40 days, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and when the fast was over, He was hungry. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} [3]So the devil said to Him, "If You are God's Son, turn these stones to bread." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [4]Jesus answered, "It is written, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but by every word of God.'" {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [5]The devil then leading Him up to a high mountain, showed Him in an instant all of the world kingdoms [6]and told Him, "I will give all the power and splendor of these because it has been given over to me and I bestow it on whomever I please. [7]If You will kneel to me and worship me, it will all be Yours." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [8]Jesus answered, "Get behind Me, satan, for it is written, 'You shall worship the Lord your God and worship Him only.'" {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [9]Then the devil brought Jesus to Jerusalem to the summit of the temple, and told Him, "If You are God's Son, throw Yourself down, [10]for it is written, 'The Lord will command His angels to protect You,' [11]and 'they shall carry You in their hands so that You will not dash Your foot against a stone.'" {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [12]Jesus answered him. It has been written, 'You shall not tempt the Lord your God.' {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [13]So the devil, after fully tempting Jesus, {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18} left Him until another opportunity came about.

Lord Jesus, I want to be victorious over sin, just as You were. Amen.

Jesus Facing Unbelief in Nazareth

14 Jesus came back to minister in His home
region, Galilee, and the power of the Holy
Spirit was on Him. {167 Filling of the
Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} Everyone in the
region heard about Jesus and 15 when He
preached in the synagogues, {358 Pow-
erful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} everyone
was glad to hear Him. {538 Worship-Jesus
Prayer, Rev. 1:6}
16 Then Jesus went to Nazareth, His boy-
hood home, and because it was His cus-
tom {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} on the
Sabbath, He went to the synagogue. 17 An
elder handed Jesus the scroll of Isaiah. He
unrolled it to a certain place and read,
{425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 18 "The
Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, {167 Filling
of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} because
the Lord has anointed Me to preach the
gospel to the poor. {145 Evangelistic-Pray-
ing, Acts 4:31} The Lord has sent Me to
preach that prisoners shall be free, and the
blind shall see, and the oppressed shall be
released, 19 and to proclaim that God will
bless those who come to Him. {416 Salva-
tion-Prayer, Luke 18:13} Amen." 20 Then
Jesus rolled up the scroll and returned it to
its place and took His seat. Every person
in the synagogue stared at Him, 21 then
Jesus said, "This Scripture was fulfilled
today." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}
22 And everyone was amazed at what He
said. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11,
12} They said, "Is not this Joseph's son?"
23 Jesus told them, "You will probably want
Me to prove Myself, like the proverb, 'Phy-
sician, heal yourself.' You want Me to do
miracles here in Nazareth as I have done
in Capernaum, {159 False-Prayer, Matt.
7:21-23} but I know your unbelief. You
have not accepted Me, but rather you
have rejected Me. 24 I say that no prophet
is accepted in His hometown. 25 Remem-
ber how Elijah did a miracle to help the
widow of Zarephath, even though she was
a foreigner? There were many needy wid-
ows in Israel because there was a famine.
It hadn't rained for three and a half years,
26 yet Elijah was not sent to them. 27 Eli-
jah also healed Naaman of leprosy even
though there were many lepers in Israel."
28 The people in the synagogue were furi-
ous when they heard what Jesus said. {504
Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}
29 The people mobbed Jesus and pushed
Him outside toward the edge of the cliff
near town. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer,
Acts 12:5} 30 But He walked through the
midst of the mob and returned to Caper-
naum. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job
1:10}

Lord, give me the boldness of Jesus to face unbelief, and give me the wisdom of Jesus to do what is right. Amen.

31 Jesus came down to Capernaum, a city
of Galilee, and taught them on the Sab-
bath. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts
2:4} 32 The people were enthusiastic at His
teaching, for He spoke with authority.
{27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 33 There
was a man in the synagogue who was
demon-possessed, 34 who cried out loudly,
"What do You want with me, Jesus of

Nazareth? Have You come to destroy me? I know who You are: The Holy One of God." [35]But Jesus rebuked him: {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} "Be quiet and come out of him!" {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} Then the demon threw the man down. The demon came out of him without hurting him. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} [36]They were amazed {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} and said to one another, "What word is this? For with authority and power He commands unclean spirits and they come out." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [37]And reports of Him went everywhere in the surrounding country.

Lord Jesus, I believe everything written about You, and I praise You for Your power. Amen.

[38]Jesus then arose and left the synagogue and went to Simon's home where his mother-in-law was suffering from a high fever {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} and they asked Him about her. [39]Jesus stood over her, and rebuked the fever and it left her. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} Immediately she arose and waited on them.

[40]At sunset all who had any who were sick brought them to Jesus, and He laid hands on each one of them and healed them. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [41]Even demons came out of many people, shouting, "You are Christ, the Son of God." But He stopped them and did not allow them to speak, because they knew that He was the Christ. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [42]At daybreak Jesus went out to an isolated spot to pray, {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} but the people were looking for Him {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} and found where He was. They tried to keep Him from leaving; [43]but He told them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to other cities {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} because this is the reason I was sent." {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} [44]And He preached in the synagogues of Galilee.

Luke 5

Jesus Calls Disciples

[1]The multitude crowded around Jesus to hear the word of God as He stood by the Lake of Gennesaret. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [2]He saw two boats on the shore that the fishermen had left while they cleaned their nets. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [3]Jesus got into one of the boats that belonged to Simon, and asked him to push out a little from the shore. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} Jesus seated Himself and began to teach the crowd from the boat. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [4]When Jesus had finished teaching, He told Simon, "Push out into deep water and lower your nets for a catch." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [5]Simon answered, "Master, we worked hard all night without catching anything; however, at Your request I will lower the net." {327

Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]And when they did so, they caught a great catch of fish, so that their nets began to break. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [7]They signaled their partners in the other boat to come and help them. They filled both boats until they almost sank. [8]Seeing this, Simon Peter fell at Jesus' knees saying, "Depart from me, Lord, for I am a sinful man." [9]He was astonished at the catch of fish {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [10]and so were his partners—James and John, the sons of Zebedee. Jesus said to Simon: "Fear not, from now on you will catch men!" {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [11]They brought their boats to shore, left everything, and followed Him.

Lord, I want to be a "fisher of men"; I want to influence people for You. Amen.

[12]In one of their towns, a man with leprosy saw Jesus {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} and begged Him, "Lord, if You will, You can cleanse me!" {379 Prevailing-Prayer, Jer. 12:1} [13]Reaching out His hand, Jesus touched him saying, "I will. Be cleansed!" {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} And the leprosy was gone. [14]Jesus told him to tell no one, but "Show yourself to the priest, and make offerings for cleansing as Moses commanded." {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [15]But more people heard about Him and large crowds gathered to hear Him and be healed. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [16]Jesus withdrew often into the desert {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} for prayer. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21}

Lord, I will often seek quiet places of solitude so I can pray. Amen.

Getting a Friend to Jesus

[17]As Jesus was teaching, Pharisees and scribes from the villages of Galilee, Judea, and Jerusalem were sitting there. The power of the Lord was present for Him to heal the sick. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [18]Some men brought a paralytic on a bed {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} to lay him before Jesus. [19]But there was no way to get him to Jesus because of the crowd. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} So they went up on the roof and let him down through the tiles in front of Jesus. [20]Seeing their faith, {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} Jesus said, "Your sins are forgiven." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [21]The scribes and the Pharisees reasoned, "He is speaking blasphemies. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} Who is able to forgive sins except God only?" {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [22]Jesus, aware of their thoughts, said, [23]"Which is easier to say: 'Your sins are forgiven,' or to say, 'Arise and walk?' [24]But so you may know the Son of Man has power to forgive sins," He said to the paralytic, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} "Rise, pick up your mat, and walk." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}

Lord Jesus, You have the authority to forgive sins. I confess that I am a sinner; forgive me and cleanse me. Amen.

25Immediately he stood up in their presence, picked up his mat, praised God, and went home. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15} 26Everyone praised God {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and said, "We have seen astonishing things today!" {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

The Call to Matthew

27Going outdoors, Jesus saw Levi a tax collector sitting at the collection table and said to him, "Follow Me!" {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 28Rising up, he left everything and followed Jesus. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord Jesus, I will follow You as did Levi. Amen.

29Then Levi prepared a great banquet at his home for Jesus. A large group of tax collectors and others reclined at the table. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 30But the Pharisees and scribes complained to His disciples, "Why does Your Master eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 31Jesus answered, "Healthy people do not need a physician; but those who are sick. 32I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

33They also said to Him, "John's disciples fast and pray frequently, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and the Pharisees do so as well, but Your disciples eat and drink." 34Jesus said, "Can the wedding guests fast while the bridegroom is with them? {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 35But the time will come, when the bridegroom will be taken from them; then they will fast." {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19}

36Jesus gave this parable to them: "No one patches an old coat with new cloth or else it will tear the new. Also, the patch from the new does not look like the old. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 37And no one pours new wine into old wine skins, else the new wine will burst the skins and the wine is lost and the skins are ruined. 38But new wine is poured into new wine skins. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} 39And no one wants new wine after drinking the old, for he says, 'The old is preferable!'" {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6}

Luke 6

Debate about the Sabbath

1As Jesus journeyed home from the Passover at Jerusalem, He went past the corn fields on the Sabbath and His disciples picked the grain and ate it. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 2The Pharisees criticized them because they broke the Sabbath law. 3Jesus answered, "Have you not read that David when he was hungry and those with him, {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 4how he went into

the tabernacle and ate the showbread, and gave some to those with him. They were not allowed to eat the bread; only the priest could eat it." [5]Then Jesus said, "The Son of Man is Lord of the Sabbath." {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21}

Lord, help me properly observe Your Lord's Day, not as the religious leaders legalistically observed it. Lord, I will worship You properly on Sunday. Amen.

The Shriveled Hand Healed

[6]When Jesus got to Capernaum, He entered the synagogue, {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} and a man was there with a shriveled-up right hand. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4}

Lord Jesus, I will go to church on the Lord's Day. I will sing, learn, pray, and worship. Amen.

[7]The Jewish leaders watched Jesus closely to see whether He would heal on the Sabbath day so they could charge Him with breaking the law. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [8]Jesus said to the man with the shriveled-up hand, "Stand in front of the people." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [9]Then Jesus asked, "Is it right to help or hurt on the Sabbath day? To kill or save lives?" {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [10]He looked at them with anger, then said to the man, "Stretch out your hand." The man did as commanded, and it was completely restored. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [11]The Jewish leaders were angry and discussed how they might get rid of Jesus. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, I don't want to be critical of anyone who comes to You for help or healing like the Jewish leaders who criticized You. Lord, I marvel at Your compassion on those who hurt or need Your help. I marvel at Your patience with those who reject You. Amen.

Choosing the Twelve

[12]Jesus went up into the hill country and He continued all night in prayer to God. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16}

Lord, I will spend long times in prayer, just as You did. Amen.

[13]The next day He called His disciples to Himself and from them He chose twelve whom He named apostles. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [14]Simon, whom He called Peter, was the leader of the first group of four. That included his brother Andrew, and James and John. The second group of four apostles was led by Philip, and included Bartholomew, [15]Matthew, and Thomas. [16]The third group of four was led by James, the son of Alphaeus, also called the short one, and included Simon, the former terrorist fighter, Judas, later called Jude, also the son of James, and Judas Iscariot, the one who betrayed Jesus. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, teach me to pray about important decisions as You prayed before choosing the twelve disciples. Amen.

Multitudes Healed

17With them Jesus came down and stood with His disciples on level ground with a large crowd of people from all over Judea, Jerusalem, and from the Tyre and Sidon coast who came to hear Him teach and to be healed of their diseases. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} 18Those who were demon possessed {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} were also healed. 19Everyone tried to touch Him because power flowed from Him to heal the sick. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4}

The Beatitudes

20Then Jesus looked on His disciples, and began to speak. "Blessed are you who are poor, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} for the kingdom of God is yours! 21Blessed are you who are spiritually hungry, for you will be completely filled. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} Blessed are you who are weeping over sin, for you will rejoice!" {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

There are many reasons why we cry when praying: (1) in joy, (2) deeply burdened, (3) failure, (4) sins in our life, (5) loss, (6) problems, (7) thankfulness for salvation. Lord, my tears show my extreme emotions. Look on my tears and be glorified for what You've done in my life. Or see my tears as evidence of my extreme sincerity that I want my prayers answered. Amen.

22"Blessed are you when people hate you and despise you and attack you, and call you evil for the sake of the Son of Man. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 23Rejoice and leap for joy {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} for great is your reward in heaven; for this is the way the prophets were treated. 24How terrible it will be for all who are rich, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} for they now receive comforts in full. 25How terrible it will be for all who now live in luxury, for they will be hungry. How terrible it will be for all who now laugh, for they will mourn and weep. {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 26How terrible it will be for all those who are well spoken of for this is the way false prophets were treated.

27"But I say to you, love your enemies, do good to those who hate you, {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} 28bless those who curse you, {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} and pray for those who abuse you. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} 29When a man strikes you on one cheek, offer him the other; 30and when a man takes away your coat, offer him your shirt also. Give to everyone who asks, {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} and do not demand your goods back from him who takes them away. 31Deal with others as you would have them deal with you. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 32If you love only those who love you, what credit do you get for that? {291 Love

One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} Even big sinners love those who love them. 33And if you do good only to those who do good to you, what credit is that? Even big sinners do that. 34And if you lend to people expecting to get it back, what credit is that? Even big sinners lend to one another, expecting to get back a full payment. 35But you must practice loving your enemies. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} That way your reward will be great, and you will be sons of the Most High. Remember, He is kind to the unlikable and evil person. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 36Be merciful, just as your Father in heaven is merciful. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 37Stop criticizing others, so you will not be criticized. Stop judging others, so you will not be judged. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} Forgive others, so you will be forgiven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 38Give to others, so you will receive good measure, pressed down, shaken together, and running over, and poured into your lap. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} For the measuring cup you use with others will be used with you."

39Then He told them a parable. "One blind man cannot lead another. They will both fall into the ditch. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 40A pupil is like his teacher. Will not everyone when fully trained be like his teacher? 41Why do you look for a tiny speck in your brother's eye when there is a heavy timber in your own eye? {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 42Can you say, 'Brother, let me get that tiny speck out of your eye,' when you have a timber in your own eye? You hypocrite! First get the timber out of your own eye, and then you may get a tiny speck out of your brother's eye." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 43A good tree does not bear bad fruit, nor will a bad tree bear good fruit. 44For every tree is known by its fruit. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} People do not pick figs from thistles, or gather grapes from a weed. 45A good man, out of his good character, bears good fruit {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} and a bad man, out of his bad character, produces bad fruit. Out of a man's mouth speaks the things that are in his heart." {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

Lord, transform me to be like You. May good fruit come out of my life and may good words come out of my mouth. Amen.

46"So why call Me 'Lord, Lord,' but do not practice the things I tell you? {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 47Everyone who follows Me and does the things I teach is like 48a man who is building a house. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} He digs deep and lays a foundation on bedrock. When the floods come to burst on that house, it will stand because it was built on a rock. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} 49But the man who merely hears My words, and does not do them, is like a man who builds a house on the sand. When the floods burst upon it, it will collapse because it has no foundation." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Luke 7

The Teachings of Jesus

[1]When Jesus had finished His sermon in the hearing of the people, He entered Capernaum. [2]There He met a Roman centurion whose servant was very dear to him. The servant was sick at the point of death. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [3]When the centurion heard about Jesus, he asked the Jewish elders to go see Jesus and ask Him to come and heal his servant of his illness. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [4]So they went to Jesus and urged Jesus saying, [5]"The centurion deserves this for he loves our nation, and has built our synagogue." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [6]Then Jesus walked with them, but when He approached the house, the centurion sent friends to tell Jesus, "My Lord, do not trouble yourself about this because I am not worthy for You to come into my house. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [7]I do not think myself worthy to even ask You for anything. But simply speak the word, and my servant will be cured. [8]For I too understand authority. I have soldiers under me, and when I order one to go, he goes; another to come, he comes. My servants do what I command." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [9]Jesus was astounded when He heard this and turning to the crowd that was following Him said, "I tell you, I have not found faith this great among the Jews." {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [10]The messengers returned to the house and found the servant well.

Lord, give me faith like this army officer; may I act on Your words instantly. Amen.

[11]Afterwards Jesus went to the town called Nain. His disciples and a great multitude went with Him. [12]As He approached the gate of the town, He saw a dead man being carried out, a widow's only son. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} A large crowd from the town was following her. [13]When the Lord saw this, He was moved with compassion for her, and He said, "Stop weeping." {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} [14]Then Jesus went and touched the coffin, and said, "Young man, I tell you, arise."{466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [15]Then the dead boy sat up and began to speak. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} Jesus gave him back to his mother. [16]The crowd began to praise God, {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} saying, "A great prophet has come to us!" and "God has visited us!" [17]News about Jesus spread over Judea and the surroundings areas.

The Doubts of John the Baptizer

[18]Now John the Baptizer's disciples told him about what Jesus was doing. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [19]So John sent two disciples to the Lord to ask, "Are you the One who was to come, or should we look for another?" {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}
[20]So the disciples went to Jesus and said, "John the Baptizer sent us to ask You, 'Are you the One who is to come, or should

we continue looking for another?'" {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24}

Lord, even John the Baptizer had doubts, {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} so don't punish me when I have doubts. Forgive me and strengthen my faith to believe You for greater things. Amen.

21 At that time, Jesus cured many people of diseases and cast out evil spirits, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} and gave sight to many blind people. 22 And so Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you have seen and heard. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} The blind are seeing, the crippled are walking, the lepers are being cleansed, the deaf are hearing, the dead are being raised and the poor are having the gospel preached to them. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 23 And blessed is the one who does not stumble over Me."

24 After John's messengers left, Jesus spoke to the crowd about John: "What did you go out into the desert to see? A reed blown about by the wind? 25 Really, what did you go to see? A man dressed in fancy clothes? No. Those who dress in fancy clothes and live easy lives are found in the palaces. 26 Really, what did you go to see? A prophet? 27 Yes, I tell you John is far more than a prophet. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} John is the one the Scriptures predicted: 'Listen, I will send My messenger before You; he will prepare the road for You.' 28 I tell you, of all men born of women, no one is greater than John. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} Yet anyone who becomes least in the kingdom of God will be greater than John." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

Lord, You said John the Baptizer was the greatest in Your kingdom, yet I can be greater if I'm humble. It's hard to humble myself, yet I want to be used. Make me humble. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} Amen.

29 Many people, even tax collectors, when they heard John, did what he commanded. They submitted to John's baptism. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 30 But the Pharisees rejected God's purpose when they refused to be baptized by him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

31 "So, what are the people of this age like? 32 They are like little children sitting in the marketplace playing games, {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} and singing, 'We played the wedding song, but you did not dance; we sang the funeral song, but you did not mourn.' 33 John the Baptizer came fasting {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and many said, 'He has a demon!' 34 The Son of Man has come eating and drinking, and many say, 'He is a glutton and a wine drinker, and a friend of tax collectors and sinners!' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 35 But true wisdom is recognized by her children." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

A Sinful Woman Anoints Jesus' Feet

36A Pharisee invited Jesus to dinner. So
Jesus came to the Pharisee's house and
took His place at the table. {388 Provision
of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 37There was a
woman in the town with a sinful reputa-
tion. When she heard that Jesus was eat-
ing at the Pharisee's house, she brought a
bottle of perfume {16 Anointed-Praying,
Zech. 12:10} 38and stood behind Him
at His feet, continually weeping. Then
her tears began to fall on His feet. So she
wiped them with the hair of her head, and
she kissed His feet. Then she anointed
them with the perfume from her bottle.
39When the Pharisee who invited Jesus saw
it, he said to himself, "If He were really a
prophet, He would know that the woman
who is anointing His feet has a sinful rep-
utation." {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John
19:2-3}
40Then Jesus spoke to him, "Simon, I have
something to say to you." {90 Correct-
ing Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} So Simon
said, "Teacher, go ahead and say it." 41Jesus
told this parable: "Two men were in debt
to a rich man. One owed him a hundred
dollars, the other ten dollars. 42Neither
could pay him, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2
Cor. 2:10} so he generously canceled the
debts for both. Now which one of them
will love the rich man more?" {198 Grat-
itude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
43Simon answered, "I suppose the one
who had the largest debt canceled." Then
Jesus said, "You are right." 44And turning
to the woman He said to Simon, "Do you
see what this woman has done? I came to
your house but you did not give Me water
to wash My feet, but she has washed My
feet with tears and wiped them with her
hair. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}
45You did not give Me a kiss of greet-
ings, but from the time I arrived, she has
not stopped kissing My feet. 46You did
not anoint My head with oil, but she
anointed My feet with her sacrifice. {16
Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} 47There-
fore her sins which are many are forgiven
{173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}
because she has loved much. But the one
who was forgiven little, loves little." {292
Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 48And
He said to the woman, "Your sins are for-
given!" {174 Forgiveness-Transformation
Prayer, Luke 11:4} 49The guests at the table
began to ask themselves, "Who is this man
who forgives sins?" {504 Unbelief-Hin-
drance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 50But Jesus
said to the woman, "Your faith has saved
you; go on in peace." {347 Peaceful-Living
Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord Jesus, I believe You just as did this woman. Forgive my sins. Amen.

Luke 8

Various Teachings of Jesus

1Then Jesus went through Galilee from
town to town and village to village,
preaching the good news of the kingdom
of God. {199 Great Commission-Prayer,
Luke 24:49} The twelve disciples were
with Him 2and also some women who had

been cured of diseases and had evil spirits cast out of them. Among these were Mary, who was called Mary Magdalene, out of whom He cast seven demons, {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [3]and Joanna, the wife of Cleophas, Herod's household manager, Susanna, and many other women. They were contributing to the needs of the group out of their personal resources. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Parable of the Sower

[4]A great crowd came together from several towns. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} He spoke a parable to them, [5]"A sower went out to sow his seed. As he was sowing, a handful of seeds fell along the path at the edge of the field and the seed was trampled on, and wild birds ate them up. [6]Another handful of seeds fell into the rocks and as soon as they sprang up, they withered because they had no roots in fertile ground. [7]Still more seeds fell into the thorns that grew up with them and choked the seeds. [8]Finally some seeds fell into rich ground and grew and yielded a hundredfold harvest." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} Jesus said, "Let him who has ears to understand, hear and learn." {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

[9]His disciples asked Him what the parable meant. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [10]He said to them, "You have the privilege of knowing the secrets of the kingdom of God, but I speak in parables because they look and do not see; {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} they hear and do not understand. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [11]This is what the parable means: The seed is God's Word. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} The seed on the path illustrates those who hear God's Word, [12]but the devil comes and steals the message from their hearts, so that they will not believe it and be saved. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [13]The seed sown on the rock illustrates those who accept the message with joy but the seed takes no real root. They believe for a while, but when persecution comes, they fall away. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [14]And the seed that falls into the thorns illustrates those who hear it, but they are choked by sin, money, and pleasures, so that it yields no fruit. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [15]But the seed sown in rich soil illustrates those who listen to the message, do it honestly, and yield fruit." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, find good soil in my heart and let the seed of the gospel grow into a harvest that will glorify You. Amen.

Parable of the Lamp

[16]"No one lights a candle and then covers it up or hides it under a bed, but they put it on a candlestick, so that others may have light. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [17]For there is nothing hidden that shall not be revealed, and nothing kept secret that shall not be manifested by the light. [18]So take care that you hear and believe, for whoever receives more will have more given to him,

and whoever does not receive more will even have that taken away from him." {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.}
19Jesus' mother and brothers came to see Him, but they could not get to Him because of the crowd. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 20So someone told Him, "Your mother and brothers are standing outside waiting to see You." 21Then Jesus said to them, "My mother and My brothers are those who hear God's Word and do it." {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

Jesus Calms the Storm

22Jesus got into a boat with His disciples, and said to them, "Let us go over to the other side of the lake." 23As they were crossing the sea, Jesus fell asleep. A furious storm swept over the lake, {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} and the boat filled with water and they were threatened. 24So they went to Jesus and awakened Him and said, "Master, Master, we are in danger!" {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} Then He got up and rebuked the wind and waves, and immediately the winds and waves were calm. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 25Then Jesus said to them, "Where is your faith?" But they were both scared and amazed and said to one another, "Who is He? For He commands even the winds and waves, and they obey Him." {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

Lord Jesus, come calm the storms of my life so I can serve You. Amen.

Demons Cast into Swine

26They landed in the neighborhood of Gadera, which is across the lake from Galilee. 27As soon as He stepped on shore, a man met Him who was demon-possessed. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} He had worn no clothes for a long time and lived among the tombs. 28When he saw Jesus, he screamed and threw himself down before Him, and cried out in a loud voice, "What do You want from me, Jesus, Son of the Most High God? I beg You, do not torture me!" {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 29On many occasions the demon had seized him. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} When he had been bound with chains and fetters, he would break his bonds, and the demon drove him into the wilderness. 30Jesus asked him, "What is your name?" The man answered, "Legion!" for many demons had possessed him. 31The demons begged Jesus not to send them into the bottomless pit. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 32There was a field full of hogs feeding there. So the demons begged Jesus to let them enter into those hogs. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} And Jesus let them do it. 33Then the demons came out of the man and entered the hogs, and they rushed over the cliff into the lake and were drowned. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
34When the men who fed the hogs saw what happened, they ran to tell the news in town and the surrounding country. 35So the people went out to see what had happened. They found the man who had previously had demons now sitting at the

feet of Jesus, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} fully dressed, and in his right mind. They became frightened {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} when they saw what happened. [36]Those who saw what happened, told how the demon-possessed man had been healed. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [37]Then all the people of that country asked Jesus to leave because they were afraid. So He entered the boat and returned to Capernaum. [38]The man who was cleansed of the demons begged Jesus to let him go with Him, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} but Jesus sent him away saying, [39]"Go back to your home, and tell what great things God has done for you." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} The man then went off to tell throughout the city what great things Jesus had done for him. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [40]Now when Jesus returned to Capernaum, a crowd welcomed Him, {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} for they were all waiting for Him.

A Woman Is Healed

[41]Jairus, who was the leader of the synagogue, came and fell down at Jesus' feet, begging Him to come to his house {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [42]because his only daughter, about 12 years old, was dying. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} As Jesus was going, crowds of people continued to press in on Him. [43]Then a woman who had a hemorrhage for 12 years, {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} and had spent all her money on physicians and was not healed, [44]came up behind Him and touched the hem of His tunic. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} Her hemorrhage stopped immediately. [45]Then Jesus asked, "Who touched Me?" Everyone denied touching Him. Then Peter said, "Master, the crowds are pressing on You and thronging You." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Lord, may I approach You with a touch of faith as did this woman. Amen.

[46]Jesus said again, "Someone touched Me because I felt power go out from Me." [47]The woman knew her actions were uncovered, so she came forward trembling, {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} and falling down before Jesus to tell why she had touched Him. [48]So Jesus said to her, "My daughter, your faith has cured you. Go in peace." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Lord, her touch didn't heal her, it was her faith. Give me that kind of faith. Amen.

Jairus' Daughter Is Raised

[49]While Jesus was still speaking, someone came from Jairus' house to tell him, "Your daughter is dead; don't trouble the Teacher any longer." {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [50]But Jesus heard what was said, and told Jairus, "Do not be afraid; have faith, and she will be healed." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [51]When Jesus reached the house, He did not allow anyone to go in with Him except Peter, James, and John, and the child's father and mother.

{153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [52]Professional mourners were weeping and wailing over her. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} But Jesus said, "Stop weeping! For she is not dead but asleep." {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} [53]Then they laughed, for they knew that she was dead. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [54]Then Jesus held her hand and said, "My child, get up!" {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [55]Her life returned and she immediately got up, and He directed that some food be given her to eat. [56]And her parents were amazed, but He ordered them not to tell anyone what had happened. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

Lord, thank You for healing all: a young girl and an older woman, an immediate problem and a lingering one, the rich and the poor. Lord, I know Your healing will reach me. Amen.

Luke 9

Jesus Commissions the Twelve

[1]He called the twelve together and gave them power and authority over demons and to cure diseases. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [2]Then He sent them out to preach the kingdom of God {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} and to heal. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [3]He said to them, "Take nothing for the journey: neither staff, nor purse, nor bread, nor money; and don't take a spare tunic. [4]When you enter a house, stay there until you leave to go on your way. [5]If they don't welcome you, when you leave their town shake the dust from your feet as a testimony against them." {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} [6]So they set out and went from village to village, preaching the good news and healing everywhere. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

The Murder of John the Baptizer

[7]Meanwhile Herod the tetrarch had heard about all the things Jesus was doing, and he was puzzled, because some were saying that John had risen from the dead. {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [8]Others were saying that Elijah had reappeared. Still others said that one of the Old Testament prophets had risen from the dead. [9]But Herod said, "I beheaded John. Who is this that is responsible for these reports?" And he wanted to see Jesus. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

Miracle of the Loaves

[10]When the apostles returned, they gave Jesus an account of all they had done. [11]Then He took them with Him and went privately to a town called Bethsaida. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} But the crowds found out and followed Him. He welcomed them and talked to them about the kingdom of God. Then He cured those who needed healing. [12]It was late afternoon, so the twelve said, "Send the people away so they can go find lodging and food, {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} for we are in an isolated place." [13]Jesus replied, "You give them something to eat." But they said, "We have

only five loaves and two fish. We need to go buy food to feed this many people."

Lord, help me share the bread of life with hungry people, just as Your disciples did. Amen.

14For there were about five thousand men. But Jesus said to them, "Make them sit down in groups of fifty." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 15After they did so, 16Jesus took the five loaves and two fish, and raised His eyes to heaven, and blessed them; {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} then He broke them and handed them to His disciples to distribute among the people. 17Everyone ate as much as they wanted. What was not eaten was collected, and the disciples filled twelve baskets.

Jesus Visits Caesarea Philippi

18Once when Jesus was praying alone with His disciples, He questioned them, "Who do the people say I am?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 19And they answered, "John the Baptizer; or Elijah; or another Old Testament prophet raised from the dead." 20But Jesus asked, "But who do you say I am?" {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Peter spoke up and said, "The Christ of God." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 21Then Jesus gave them strict orders not to tell this to anyone.

Lord Jesus, I agree with Peter that You are the Messiah, the Son of God. Amen.

22Then Jesus said to all, "The Son of Man must suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, chief priests, and scribes and be put to death. But on the third day He will be raised to life." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 23Then Jesus said, "If anyone wants to be My follower, he must deny himself and take up his cross daily {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} and follow Me. 24For those who hang on to this earthly life for Me will lose it. And anyone who loses his life for My sake, will save it. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 25Is it any profit to gain the whole world, yet his soul is destroyed and lost? 26Those who are ashamed of Me and My words, I will be ashamed of him when he comes into glory before the holy angels and My Father. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 27I tell you the truth, some who are standing here will not taste death before they see the kingdom of God." {289 Lordship Salvation-Prayer, Acts 9:6}

The Transfiguration of Jesus

28About eight days later Jesus took Peter and John and James up a mountain to pray. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16}

Lord Jesus, I will set aside times to pray, just as You did. Amen.

29As He was praying, the appearance of His face was changed and His clothing became brilliant as lightning. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 30Suddenly two men appeared to talk with Him, Moses and

Elijah. [31]They were speaking of His death which was to happen in Jerusalem. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [32]Peter and his companions were sleeping soundly. When they woke up they saw His glory and the two men standing with Jesus. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [33]As they were leaving, Peter said to Jesus, "Master, it is wonderful to be here. Let's make three tents, one for You, one for Moses, and one for Elijah." He did not know what he was saying. {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3} [34]As he spoke, a cloud covered them, and the disciples were afraid. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [35]But a voice came from the cloud saying, "This is My Son, whom I have chosen. Listen to Him." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

Lord Jesus, I'm focused on You and I'm listening. Speak to me. I will do what You tell me to do. Amen.

[36]And after the voice had spoken, they saw Jesus only. The disciples kept this incident to themselves and told no one what they had seen. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7}

The Disciples Can't Heal

[37]The next day when they came down from the mountain a large crowd came to meet Him. [38]A man in the crowd yelled out, "Master, I beg You, help my son; he is my only child. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [39]Without warning, a demon will take hold of him, and he will cry out and become convulsive and foam at the mouth. This has been happening for a long time but when it is over it leaves the boy worn out. [40]I begged Your disciples to cast the demon out, but they couldn't." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord Jesus, I don't want to be like these powerless disciples. I want to help those who come to me for help. Give me power to serve You and help people. Amen.

[41]Jesus said, "Faithless and stubborn generation! How much longer must I be among you and put up with you? {237 Inadequate-Prayer, James 5:17-18} Bring him here." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [42]The boy was still walking toward Jesus when the demon threw him to the ground {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} in convulsions. But Jesus ordered the demon out of him, cured the boy, {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} and gave him back to his father. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

[43]They were all amazed at the greatness of God. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} While everyone was marveling at what He did, Jesus said to His disciples, [44]"Listen to Me and remember what I say, for the Son of Man is going to be handed over into the hands of the enemy." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [45]But they did not understand Him when He said this because they were spiritually blinded so that they could not understand the meaning of what would happen, and they were afraid to ask Him about what

He had just said. {221 Hidden Answers-Prayer, Rom. 11:33-36}

Childlike Faith

46An argument started among the disciples about which of them would be the greatest. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 47Jesus knew their thoughts and He took a little child and had him stand by His side. {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} 48Then Jesus said to them, "Those who welcome this little child in My name welcomes Me: and anyone who welcomes Me welcomes the One who sent Me. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} For the least among you is the one who is greatest."

Mistaken Zeal of John the Apostle

49John spoke up. "Master, we saw a man casting out demons in Your name. We told him to stop because he is not with us. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 50But Jesus said, "You shouldn't have done that, for anyone who is not against you is for you." {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 51Now as the time drew near for His return to heaven, Jesus set His face on a flint to go to Jerusalem. {183 Geographical-Renewal Praying, Ps. 121:1, 2} 52Then He sent messengers ahead of Him. They went into a Samaritan village to make preparations for Jesus, 53but the people would not receive Him because He was going to Jerusalem. 54When the word came back to them, James and John said, "Lord, do You want us to call down fire from heaven to burn them up?" {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

Lord, keep me from making wrong requests of You, such as these apostles who wanted to burn up unresponsive people. Give me compassion for unbelievers and save them through my ministry. Amen.

55But Jesus turned and rebuked them, "You do not know the spirit that is in you! {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 56The Son of Man did not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." And they went to another village.

Giving Up Everything

57As they were walking, they met a man on the road who said to Jesus, "I will follow You wherever you go." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 58Jesus answered, "Foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of Man has no place to lay His head." {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} 59Jesus said to another, "Follow Me." {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} The man replied, "Let me go and bury my father first." {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 60But Jesus answered, "Leave the dead to bury their dead, but you go spread the gospel of the kingdom of God." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 61Another said, "I will follow You, but first let me go and get permission from my family at home." {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 62Jesus said to him, "No one who puts his hand to the plow, and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62}

Lord, I will be Your disciple. I will not look back or turn back. I will follow You. Amen.

Luke 10

Jesus Sends Out the 70

[1]After this the Lord appointed seventy disciples {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} and sent them ahead of Him, in pairs, to all the towns and places where He was to visit. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [2]He commanded them, "The harvest is great and plentiful but there are few laborers, so pray the Lord of the harvest to send laborers to His harvest. {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} [3]Start off now, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} but remember, I am sending you like lambs among wolves. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [4]Do not take a purse, or suitcase, or shoes. Don't waste your time on the road. [5]Whatever house you enter let your first words be a blessing on those who live there. [6]And if a man of peace lives there, your blessing will rest on him; {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} if not, it will return to you. [7]Stay in that house and eat and drink what they give you because the workman deserves his pay. Do not move around from one house to another. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14}. [8]When you are entertained, eat what is set before you. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [9]Cure those who are sick. Preach 'the kingdom of God is coming.' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [10]But if you enter a town that does not make you welcome, go out into the streets and [11]shake the dust of that town off your feet and know that 'the kingdom of God is very near.' {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14} [12]I tell you, Sodom will not be judged as severe as that town." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24}

Lord, teach me how to react to people who are both responsive and nonresponsive. Use my ministry. Amen.

[13]"How terrible it will be for you, Chorazin! How terrible it will be for you, Bethsaida! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [14]For if the miracles done in you had been done in Tyre and Sidon, they would have repented long ago in burlap clothing and ashes. And still, it will not be as severe for Tyre and Sidon at the judgment as with those towns. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} [15]And as for Capernaum, you want to be exalted high as heaven? No! You shall be thrown down to hell. [16]Anyone who listens to the lessons you illustrate, listens to Me; {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} anyone who rejects your lessons, rejects Me, and those who reject Me reject the One who sent Me."

[17]The seventy disciples came back rejoicing, {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} saying, "Even the demons submit to us when we use Your name." Jesus said to them, {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}

18"I saw satan fall like lightning from heaven. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 19Yes, I have given you power to walk over the enemy and nothing shall hurt you. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 20Yet do not rejoice that the demons obey you, rather rejoice that your names are written in heaven." {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} 21At that time Jesus was filled with joy by the Holy Spirit, and said, "I bless You, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, for hiding these things from the intellectuals and the worldly, but You reveal them to Your children. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} Yes, Father, for that is Your pleasure. {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} 22Everything has been given to Me by My Father; and no one understands the Son, except the Father, {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} and no one understands the Father except the Son and those to whom the Son chooses to reveal to them." 23Then turning to His disciples, He said privately, "Blessed are the eyes that see what you see, 24for I tell you that many prophets and kings wanted to see what you see, but they were never able to see it, or to hear what you hear." {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8}

Jesus was the ultimate example of praise to God the Father. I will praise You, Lord, for (1) answers to prayer and unanswered prayer, (2) deliverance and trials, (3) spiritual insight and when God conceals, (4) intimacy and alienation, (5) abundance and lack. No matter what happens in my life, I will praise God for "all things work together for good" (Rom. 8:28). Lord, just as Jesus praised You, so I too praise You for all things. Amen.

The Good Samaritan

25A lawyer stood up to test Jesus with questions, asking, {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} "What must I do to inherit eternal life?" {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} 26Jesus said, "What is written in the law and how do you read it?" {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} 27The man responded, "You must love the Lord your God, with all your heart, soul, strength and might;" then he added, "and love your neighbor as yourself." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} 28Then Jesus concluded, "Do this, and you will live." 29But the lawyer tried to justify himself asking, "And who is my neighbor?" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 30Jesus answered with a parable, "A Jewish man went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. He was attacked by bandits who beat him, and stripped him of his clothes and money, and left him half dead in the road. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 31A Jewish priest came down the road and passed by the wounded man. 32Next a temple assistant passed by on the other side of the road, looked at the man and did nothing. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 33When a despised Samaritan saw the man, he knelt beside him, 34cleansed the wounds with oil, and bandaged them up. Then the Samaritan put the man on his donkey, took him to an inn and took care

of him. [35]The next day the Samaritan gave the innkeeper money to take care of the man, and promised, 'If you need more, I'll pay next time I'm here.'" [36]Then Jesus asked the lawyer, "Which of these three was a neighbor to the one who was attacked by the thieves?" {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [37]The lawyer answered, "The one who showed mercy." Jesus said, "Yes, now go do the same thing."{327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, make me sensitive to the needs of people, then give me initiative to do something about it. Amen.

Mary and Martha

[38]When Jesus entered a village near Ephraim, Martha received Him into her house. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [39]Her sister Mary sat at Jesus' feet to listen to the things Jesus said. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} [40]But Martha was busy working in the kitchen, so she complained to Jesus, "It's unfair for Mary to listen to You when I'm doing all the work." Martha said, "Tell her to help me in the kitchen." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [41]But Jesus answered, "Martha, Martha, you are upset over these trivial things. {325 Non-Anxiety Prayer, Phil. 4:6, 7} [42]There is only one thing to be concerned with. Mary has found the main thing and it can't be taken from her." {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4}

Lord, may I know when to work with my hands and when to sit at Your feet to learn from You. I will come sit at Your feet. Teach me what I need to know. Build character in me that I need to serve You. Amen.

Luke 11

The Lord's Prayer

[1]After a few days Jesus prayed all night and when He finished, the disciples said, "Lord, teach us to pray!" Jesus gave them this prayer as their example, as He had previously given it in the sermon on the mount. {288 Lord's-Prayer, Matt. 6:9-13} [2]He said, "When you pray say, 'Our Father, who is in heaven, Holy be Your name. {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15} Your kingdom come. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} Your will be done in heaven as on earth. [3]Give us day by day our daily bread, {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} and forgive us our sins {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [4]as we forgive everyone who is indebted to us; {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} and don't allow us to be overcome by temptation.'" {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

The act of forgiving someone who has offended us means we give that person "God's grace" because now God can work in our life and theirs. Our forgiveness means their offense can no longer dominate our life. We treat their offense as nothing, and we are

no longer separated from them. But also, it redeems the offender; he is no longer bound to us, and their offense no longer binds us. Forgiveness frees us. We don't forgive for their sake, we forgive for our sake; we forgive others for our freedom, health, and victory. If you won't forgive, it means you are still in bondage to them. Lord, I want to be free to love You, serve You, and be used by You. I forgive _____ because I want to be free from my bondage to them. I forgive their offense to me so it won't control my spiritual health or relationship to You. Amen.

5The Lord did not finish the prayer as He did on the previous occasion. Jesus said, "What if you went to a neighbor's house in the middle of the night to borrow bread. You would yell to wake up your neighbor, saying, 6"A friend has just arrived for a visit, and I don't have any bread to give him.' {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 7Suppose your neighbor yelled back, 'I am in bed. My family is asleep and I can't help you.'" {123 Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Mark 10:38} 8Jesus said, "Though he won't do it as a friend, if the man kept begging and knocking, his neighbor would get up and give him bread, because of the man's persistence. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} 9So you can do the same with prayer, keep on asking, and you will receive. Keep on seeking, and you will find, keep on knocking and the door will open. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 10For everyone who keeps on asking—receives; everyone who keeps on seeking—finds; everyone who keeps on knocking—the door opens. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10}

11"If your son asks for bread, will you give him a stone? No! If he asks you for a fish, will you give him a serpent? No! {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 12If he asks for an egg, will you give him a scorpion? No! 13If fallen people like yourselves give good gifts to your children, how much more will your heavenly Father give you good gifts?" {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14}

Lord, give me faith to believe You for the things I need; so teach me to pray. Amen.

The Long Day

14Jesus was casting a demon out of a man who couldn't speak. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} When the demon had gone out, the dumb man spoke and the people were amazed. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 15But some of them said, "Jesus does these miracles by Beelzebub, the prince of demons." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 16Others asked Him for a sign from heaven to prove who He is. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 17But Jesus knew their unbelief and what they were thinking, so He said, "Any kingdom divided against itself will collapse, and a household divided against itself will also collapse. {85 Consensus-Prayer, Acts 15:18} 18The same thing will happen with satan: if he is divided against himself, he will be defeated. Since you claim that I cast out demons by Beelzebub, let's test that

idea. [19]If it is through Beelzebub that I cast out demons, through whom do your own leaders cast them out? Does this prove they are filled with demons? [20]But if the power is of the finger of God, then realize that the kingdom of God has come to you." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Lord Jesus, You are stronger than all the might of everyone who has ever lived. Use me in my ministry to people. Amen.

[21]"When a strong man has armed guards in his palace, his goods are undisturbed. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [22]But when someone stronger attacks and defeats the strong man, he takes away all his weapons and his goods. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} [23]He who is not for Me is against Me; and he who does not help Me, hurts My cause. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [24]When a demon goes out of a man, it wanders through dry places looking for a home, and not finding one it returns to the home from which it came. [25]But when he returns, he finds it swept and clean. [26]It then goes and brings seven other demons more wicked than himself. They set up housekeeping, so that the man ends up being worse than he was at first." {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [27]Now as Jesus was speaking, a woman in the crowd yelled out, "Blessed is the womb that bore You and the breasts that nourished You." {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} [28]But Jesus replied, "Far happier are those who hear the Word of God and obey it!" {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

[29]The crowds got even bigger {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} and he spoke to them, "This is an evil generation that is asking for a sign. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} The only sign I will give them is the sign of Jonah. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [30]For just as Jonah was a sign to the Ninevites, so the Son of Man will be a sign to this generation. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [31]On judgment day the Queen of Sheba will rise up to condemn this generation because she came on a long journey to hear the wisdom of Solomon. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} But there is something greater than Solomon here. [32]On judgment day the men of Nineveh will stand up to condemn this generation because when Jonah preached they repented. There is something greater than Jonah here today." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Parable of the Lighted Lamp

[33]"No one lights a lamp and hides it under a tub, but they put it on the candle holder so that people may have light when they enter a room. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [34]Your eye is the lamp of your body. When your eye is healthy, your whole body has light. But when the eye is diseased, your body can't see to walk. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [35]See to it then that the light inside you is not darkness. [36]Therefore, if your whole body is filled with light, you can walk confidently because the lamp shines on you

with its rays." {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19}

Lord Jesus, I'm going to let shine this little light of mine. Give me light, then help me to shine Your light on those who are lost in darkness. Amen.

Woe to the Pharisees

37When Jesus finished speaking, a Pharisee invited Him to eat at his house. Jesus went in and sat down at the table. 38The Pharisee was surprised that Jesus had not washed His hands before the meal. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 39But the Lord said to him, "You Pharisees clean the outside of your cup and plate, while inside you are filled with extortion and greed. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 40You are foolish, did not He who made the outside also make the inside? 41Instead, give to the poor from your inner heart {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} and then indeed everything will be clean for you. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 42Woe to you Pharisees! You who pay your tithe of mint and rue and all sorts of garden herbs and overlook justice and your love of God! {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} You should have practiced these tithes without leaving out your love for God. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} 43Woe to you Pharisees who take the good seats in the synagogues and love to be greeted in the market squares. 44Woe to you, because you are like tombs that men walk on without knowing it!" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

45A lawyer asked, "Why are You insulting us?" Jesus said, "How terrible it will be for you, lawyers; you strangle people with religious demands but you don't do what you require of others. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 46How terrible it will be for you lawyers because you load people down with burdens they can't carry, and then you don't do anything to help them. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 47How terrible it will be for you because you build monuments to the prophets but it was your ancestors—men like you—who killed them. 48You honor your ancestors, but they killed the prophets and you built monuments to them. 49God said, 'I will save prophets and apostles but you will kill and persecute them.' {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 50And this generation will kill God's servants, just as your fathers killed them in the past, 51from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zechariah. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 52How terrible it will be for lawyers who hide God's truth from the people. You won't believe it yourself and you prevent others from believing it." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 53The Pharisees and lawyers tried to trip Jesus up with questions and did everything they could to oppose Him. 54They wanted some way to destroy Him.

Lord, open my spiritual eyes. I don't want to be blinded like these religious leaders. Amen.

Luke 12

Warnings and Encouragement

[1]Meanwhile a crowd so large it couldn't be counted, gathered so that they were stepping on one another. Jesus began to preach, first to His disciples, "Be on your guard against the yeast of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [2]Their hypocrisy is not covered. Everyone knows they are filled with pride but their true motives will be uncovered. At the same time, godly people you don't know about, will be seen by all. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [3]Whatever you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered behind closed doors will be proclaimed on the housetops. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [4]To My followers I say: "Do not be afraid of those who kill the body; {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} that is all they can do. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [5]I will show you who to fear: fear Him who can kill the body but also has the power to cast you into hell."

Lord, I don't fear those who can kill the body, I fear You who will cast unbelievers and rebels into hell. Amen.

"Yes, I tell you, fear Him. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [6]Are not five sparrows bought for two pennies? And yet not one is forgotten in God's sight. [7]Also, every hair on your head has been numbered. Don't be afraid because you are worth more than many sparrows. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [8]I tell you, whoever declares himself for Me in the presence of people, the Son of Man will acknowledge him in the presence of God's angels. [9]But the one who disowns Me in the presence of men will be disowned in the presence of God's angels. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [10]Everyone who speaks a word against the Son of Man will be forgiven, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} but he who blasphemes the Holy Spirit will not be forgiven. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [11]When you are brought before synagogues and authorities, do not worry about how to defend yourselves or what you will say, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [12]because when the time comes, the Holy Spirit will teach you what you must say."

Parable of the Rich Fool

[13]Someone in the crowd said to Jesus, "Master, tell my brother to give me a share of our inheritance." {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [14]"My friend," He replied, "who appointed Me a judge, or the arbitrator of your claims?" [15]Then He said to them, "Watch, and be on your guard against greed, {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} for a man's life does not consist of what he owns." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

Lord, I yield all my belongings to You. May my belongings not possess me; rather, may You be my possessor. Amen.

16Then He told them a parable: "There was once a rich man who had a good harvest from his land. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 17He thought to himself, 'What am I going to do?' I do not have enough room to store my crops.' 18Then he said, 'This is what I will do, I will tear down my barns and build bigger ones. Then I will store all my grain and my goods in the new barns. 19I will say to my soul: Soul, you have plenty of good things laid by for many years to come. Take it easy, eat, drink, and enjoy life.'" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 20But God said to him, 'You fool! This night your soul will be demanded; {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} and your riches, whose will they be then?' {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 21This is how it will be for the man who stores up treasure for himself in place of making himself rich in the sight of God." {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}

22Then He said to His disciples: "Stop worrying about your life, what you will eat, {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} or what you will wear. 23Your life is more than food, and your body is more than clothes. 24Think about the ravens. For they neither sow grain nor reap a harvest, they have no storehouses nor barns, and yet God continually feeds them. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} You are worth more than the birds! 25Which of you by worrying can add a single thing to his life? 26So if you cannot add a very little thing, why should you worry about anything else? 27Watch the lilies grow. They do not work hard nor try to grow. I tell you that not even Solomon in all his glory was ever dressed as elegantly as one of them. 28Now if God wonderfully dresses the fields with wild grass, {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4} which today is green but tomorrow is thrown into the furnace, how much more will He clothe you who have so little faith? {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} 29So stop worrying about what to eat and what to drink. 30These are the things the Gentiles seek. Surely your Father knows what you need. 31Seek continually His will, {380 Priority-Faith Praying, Matt. 6:33} and these things will be added to you." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42}

Lord, I will live for today; yesterday has passed, I will learn from it. Tomorrow is not here, so all I can do is prepare for it. I will not live in the past with its failures and successes. I will not live in the future with its hopes and fears. I will live for today. NOW is all the time I have. Amen.

32"Stop being fearful, My little flock, for your Father has gladly chosen to give you the kingdom. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 33Sell your property and give to the poor. Get a wallet that will never be empty. Your riches will never fail in heaven where a thief cannot steal nor a moth destroy. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 34For where your treasure is, there will your heart be." {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4}

Parable of the Expectant Steward

35"You must remain ready for service by keeping your lamps burning, {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} 36like the servants waiting for their master to come home. When he comes and knocks, they will open the door for him. Those servants will be happy when the master comes. 37Will he find you watching for him? {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} I say to you, he will prepare to serve them and have them sit at a table, and he will wait on them. 38Whether he comes before or after midnight, they will be happy when he gets there. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} 39But be prepared because if the master of the house knew when the thief was coming, he would not have allowed his house to be broken into. 40So you must always be ready, for at an hour you are not expecting Him, the Son of Man will come." {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

Parable of the Faithful Steward

41Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, do You mean this parable for us, or for the multitude?" {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} 42Then Jesus answered, "The master will put in charge a faithful manager and give him the task of giving out supplies at the proper time. 43Happy is that slave who has done what he was supposed to do when his master comes. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 44I tell you the master will put him in charge of all his property. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 45But if that servant says to himself, 'My master will not be coming back for a long time,' and he begins to beat the slaves, and eats and gets drunk; 46his master will come back when he is not expected, {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} and at an hour that the servant didn't know about. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 47He will judge him severely, and give his share to a faithful worker. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 48That slave who knows his master's wishes and is not ready will be severely punished. But the one who does wrong without knowing it will be lightly punished. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} Much will be demanded from those to whom much has been given." {407 Revival of Our Nation-Prayer, 2 Chron. 7:14}

Lord, I will act on the information You've given me. Amen.

49"I come to bring fire on the earth, and I wish it were already burning! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 50I have a baptism to administer, and I am in anguish until it comes. 51Do you think that I came to give peace on earth? No! But rather strife. 52Five in a family will be divided, three against two, and two against three. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 53Father will be against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
54Then He said to the crowd, "When you see a cloud rising in the west, you think,

'It's going to rain,' and it does. [55]And when you feel the south wind blowing, you say, 'It is going to be hot' and it is. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [56]Hypocrites! You know how to interpret the weather, the earth, and sky. Why can you not interpret the times? {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [57]Why can you not decide what is right? [58]When you are being sued in court, do everything you can to satisfy the one suing you. Don't let him crush you before the judge, or the judge will turn you over to the sheriff, and the sheriff will put you in prison. [59]I tell you, you will never get out until you have paid the last cent you owe!" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Lord, give me common sense to know when trouble is coming; then help me make good practical decisions to keep me out of trouble. Amen.

Luke 13

Current Events in Jerusalem

Lord, help me see Your hand in the current events that influence my life and service for You. Amen.

[1]Some in the crowd told Jesus about the rebellious Galileans who were executed by Pilate and mixed their blood with the sacrificial blood that was offered in the temple. [2]Jesus answered, "Were these men the greatest sinners among all the Galileans because of their crimes?" [3]Then He explained, "No, they were not! All men are sinners, and all must repent or they will likewise perish." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [4]Then Jesus referred to the tower in Siloam that fell and killed 18 people. "Were they greater sinners than these who live in Jerusalem?" [5]Again Jesus answered, "No, they were not! All men are sinners, so all must repent or they will likewise perish." [6]Then Jesus told a parable, "A man planted a fig tree in his garden, then came looking for fruit, but he found none. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} [7]The man said to his gardener, 'I have been looking for figs on this tree for three years, but haven't found any. Cut it down; why should it take up valuable space?' [8]The gardener answered, 'Leave it alone for a year. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} I will dig around its roots and use fertilizer. [9]If it bears figs next year, fine! If not, then we will cut it down.'" {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}

Lord, in the same way You give people an opportunity to get saved; the Holy Spirit "digs" away at their hardened sin, and He adds the nourishment of the Word of God and Christian witness, but each person must eventually trust You for salvation or suffer the consequences. Lord, I will pray for the salvation of my hardened friends. Amen.

Jesus Heals a Cripple on the Sabbath

[10]As Jesus was teaching in the synagogue on the Sabbath, [11]there was a severely crippled woman present who had been

bent over double for 18 years. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 12When Jesus saw her, He called out, "Woman, you are healed!" {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 13Then Jesus laid His hands on her and she immediately stood up straight and began glorifying God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 14The leader of the synagogue got mad because it was the Sabbath, {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} and said to the crowd, "There are six days for work, and men ought to work during the week. People ought to come get healing during the week, but not on the Sabbath day." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 15Jesus answered, "You are a hypocrite! Everyone on the Sabbath loosens his ox from the stall and leads the animal to water. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 16Ought not this Jewish woman who has been bound for 18 years be loosed from her bondage on the Sabbath?" 17The leader and his fellow Jewish officials were put to shame, {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} and the crowd shouted for joy. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, help me keep my eyes on Your ministry to people, and help me overlook religious traditions that don't matter. Amen.

Parable of the Mustard Seed

18So Jesus continued speaking, "What does the kingdom of God look like? How can I compare it? 19It is like a mustard seed which a man planted in his garden, and it grew until it became a tree, and wild birds roosted in its branches." {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

Parable of the Leaven

20Again Jesus said, "To what can the kingdom of God be compared? 21It is like yeast that a cook put in a bushel of flour until it had risen." {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

Lord, I pray for minutia; give me an appreciation for little things in life because they have large ramifications. Amen.

22As Jesus was traveling and teaching through the towns and villages, 23someone asked, "Will only a few be saved?" {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} Jesus answered, 24"You must strive to enter through the narrow door; many will try to enter, but will not make it. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 25Once the owner of the house arises and shuts the door, you will find you're standing on the outside and knocking continually and saying, 'Lord, open up for us,' but He will answer, 'I do not know you.' {289 Lordship Salvation-Prayer, Acts 9:6} 26Then you will say, 'We ate and drank with You, as You taught us.' 27But He will say, 'I do not know you. Depart from Me, all you evildoers!' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 28You will weep and grind your teeth, when you see Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, but you're locked outside. 29People will come from the east and west, from the north and

south, to take their seats at the banquet in the kingdom of God. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 30Those who are last will be first, and those who are first will be last." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

31Just then, some Pharisees came warning Him, "Run away quickly, for Herod wants to kill You!" {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 32But Jesus said, "Go tell that fox I am here, casting out demons and healing the sick, today and tomorrow, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} and on the third day I will finish this ministry. 33I will continue on my way to Jerusalem, for it is not possible that a prophet will be killed outside that city. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 34O Jerusalem! Jerusalem! {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} You who continue to martyr the prophets, and stone those who are sent to you, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} how often I have desired to gather your children around Me, as a hen gathers her chicks under her wings. But you said, 'No!'"{145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, give me a love for Jerusalem, as You love that city. I pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6). Amen.

35"Now you are abandoned to your fate! I say to you, you will never see Me again until you say, 'Blessed is the One who comes in the Lord's name.'" {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Luke 14

Jesus Heals Again on the Sabbath

1Later Jesus went to the house of a religious leader for a meal and 2there was a man there with greatly swollen arms and legs. The leaders watched Jesus closely to see what He would do. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 3Jesus said to a lawyer, "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath?" 4But the lawyer and the leaders refused to answer Jesus. So Jesus took the man by the hand and healed him, then sent him away. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 5Then Jesus asked, "If your ox falls into a well on the Sabbath, will you not get him out immediately?" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 6The religious leaders had no answer for Jesus. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15}

7Jesus noticed that some guests were trying to get the best seats at a banquet. So He told them this parable. 8"When you are invited to a wedding banquet, don't sit in the best seats, 9lest someone who is more important be given those seats and you are moved lower; you will be embarrassed because you must take a lower seat. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 10But when you go to the banquet, take the lower seat, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} then your host will see you and move you to a higher seat. As a result, you will be honored in front of the guests. 11Those who try to honor themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be honored." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}

Lord, I will take the humble seat in life because I want to be in the center of Your will. Amen.

12Jesus told a second parable of a man planning a banquet. "Don't invite your friends, relatives, or rich neighbors, thinking they will invite you to their banquet. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 13But invite the poor, the sick, the lame, and blind {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 14and God will bless you because these people can't return the favor, and God will remember you when He passes out rewards." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

15A Jewish leader thought Jesus had a good point, so he said, "I would consider it an honor to eat in the kingdom of God." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 16But Jesus answered him with a parable. "A man prepared a great banquet and sent out many invitations. 17When the banquet was ready, he sent a servant to get the guests, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 18but everyone began making excuses. {140 Ephesians' Church-Prayer, Rev. 2:4-6} One man said he bought a field and had to go inspect it. 19Another man said he just bought a pair of oxen, and had to go try them out. 20Still a third man said he just got married, so he explained, 'I'm sure you'll understand.' {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 21The host was extremely angry and said to his servant, 'Go quickly into the streets and back roads and invite the poor, the sick, the blind and the lame.' {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} 22Even then there was more room, 23so the host said, 'Go into the rural roads and look in the woods and urge as many as you can find to come to the banquet.' I want my house full. {68 Church-Multiplication Prayer, Acts 19:10} 24None of those I first invited came, so they won't even taste the meal I prepared for them." {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

Lord, I will work hard to get people saved. I want Your house full. Amen.

Count the Cost

Lord, I will follow You no matter how hard. I will not turn back when the way gets difficult. Amen.

25A great crowd was traveling with Jesus, so He challenged them to follow Him even though it is difficult and tiring. 26"Those who follow Me must love Me more than he loves his father, mother, sister, or brothers, even his own life. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 27You cannot be My disciples unless you pick up your own cross and follow Me."

Lord, I will pick up my cross for today and I will follow You. I will deny myself. Amen.

28"Don't begin following Me until you have counted the cost. No one begins building a house without first determining the cost of materials and labor and if

he has enough to complete the project. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 29Otherwise, when you lay the foundation, you find out you don't have enough money to complete the project. Then you are embarrassed 30because you can't complete the house. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 31Any General planning a battle will first determine if his 10,000 soldiers can win a battle against 20,000 soldiers. 32If a General doesn't plan well, he will have to send a delegation to arrange conditions of peace or surrender. 33So following Me is a struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil; so you must renounce all that you have to be My disciple. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 34Salt is good, but when it loses its taste, how can it season? 35When it is not good for anything else, it will be thrown away. Let him who has ears, listen and do it." {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}

Lord, I renounce all. Amen.

Luke 15

Parable of the Lost Sheep

1The tax collectors and sinners gathered around Jesus to hear what He had to say. 2But the religious leaders were complaining about Jesus because He received sinners and ate with them. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 3Jesus answered them with a parable, 4"If you had 100 sheep, and one of them were lost, wouldn't you leave the 99 and go search for the one lost sheep {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} till you found it?"

Lord, I will count people as you counted sheep. I will count them because people count. Amen.

5"When you found it, wouldn't you carry it home in your arms, {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} 6and tell everyone to celebrate with you because you found the one lost sheep? {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} 7Even so, there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who repents, than over 99 self-righteous people who think they don't need to repent."

Lord, I will rejoice with You over every ONE who comes to salvation. Amen.

Parable of the Lost Coin

8Jesus told a second parable of a woman who had 10 pieces of silver that were part of her marriage vow. "If she loses one piece of silver, doesn't she search for it with a lamp and sweep the house till she finds it? {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 9Then she calls her friends to rejoice with her because she finds it. 10There is joy in the presence of the angels over one sinner who repents." {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11}

Parable of the Lost Prodigal

11Jesus told a third parable of a man who had two sons 12and the younger son demanded

his portion of the inheritance, so the father divided the inheritance between the two sons. [13]The younger son took his money and went to a distant country. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} There he wasted his money on sinful and luxuriant living, spending everything he had. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [14]When a famine came, the boy was hungry, {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} [15]so he took a job feeding pigs. [16]No one gave him anything to eat, so he decided to eat the pig's husks because he was starving. [17]The young man came to his senses {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} when he realized his father's servants had more to eat than he had. {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} [18]He decided, "I will go to my father and tell him, 'I have sinned against heaven and against you. [19]I am no longer worthy of being called your son. Will you hire me as a servant?'" [20]The young man returned home to his father. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} While he was a great distance away, his father saw him coming. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} He loved him, so he ran to hug and kiss him. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Lord, I love this picture of You, the heavenly Father, who welcomes every prodigal son who returns home. Thank You for Your loving-kindness and patience. Amen.

[21]The son said, "Father, I have sinned against heaven and you, I am no longer worthy to be called your son!" [22]But the father told the servants, "Bring the family robe and put it on him, {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} put the signet ring on his finger, and shoes on his feet. [23]Kill the fatted calf, and let's have a feast. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [24]My son was dead, but now he is alive; he was lost, but now is found," and they began a family banquet celebration. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [25]The older son was working in the field. When he approached the house, he heard music, laughter, and rejoicing, [26]so he called one of the servants to ask, "What's happening?" [27]The servant answered, "Your brother has come home and your father has killed the fatted calf because he returned safe and sound." [28]The older son was angry and would not go into the banquet, so his father came out to invite him in. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [29]The older son said angrily, "I have served you many years, I have never disobeyed you, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} yet you never killed a fatted calf for me or had a celebration for me. [30]Yet, my younger brother squandered his inheritance in sinful living and you throw him a big celebration." [31]The father said, "You are always with me, and everything I have is yours. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [32]It is right to celebrate because he is your brother, for he was dead, but now is alive; he was lost, but now he is found." {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4}

Lord, help me never leave You as did the younger son; help me never be bitter over

Your forgiveness of anyone; help me rejoice with You over the salvation of all. Amen.

Luke 16

To the Disciples—the Deceptive Manager

1 Jesus told the disciples a story of a rich man and his deceptive manager who was stealing from him. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 2 The rich man told his deceptive manager that he learned what he was doing, so he fired him. So the manager had to get the books in order. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 3 The manager thought about where he would work next. He said, "I am not strong enough to dig, and I'm too ashamed to beg." 4 The manager then planned to adjust the books of those who owed money to the rich man so they would take care of him. 5 The manager called the first, "How much do you owe?" 6 He answered, "One hundred barrels of oil." The manager said, "Write down 50 barrels." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 7 The manager asked the second, "How much do you owe?" He answered, "One thousand bushels of wheat." The manager said, "Write down 800 bushels." 8 The rich man commended the fired manager for such a shrewd act. The people of the world work harder at their dishonesty, than the people of the light work to be honest. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} 9 Jesus said, "Shall I teach you to act that way—to buy friendship dishonestly? No! 10 If you are not honest in small things, {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} you won't be honest in larger matters. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 11 If you have not been faithful in handling the money of others, you will not be entrusted with your own. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 12 And if you are unfaithful in handling worldly wealth, who would trust you with the eternal wealth of heaven?" {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}

Lord, give me a desire to be absolutely honest about money, even to the smallest amount. Amen.

13 "No one can serve two masters. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} Either you will love the first, and hate the second, or you will love the second and hate the first. You cannot serve God and money." {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Lord, help me manage everything honestly that You've entrusted to me. Help me serve You with financial integrity. Amen.

14 The Pharisees who loved to make money laughed at Jesus when they heard the Lord's principles about finances. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 15 Jesus answered, "You make people think you are honest, but God knows your greedy hearts. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} You pretend to be honest and humble before others, but you are despicable in God's sight. {381 Priority-Praying, Acts

6:4} [16]The law of Moses and the messages of the prophets have been your guides in the former ages. Now your guide is the good news preached by John the Baptizer that the kingdom of God is ushering in a new era. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [17]That doesn't mean the force of the law has changed, for it is easier for heaven and earth to pass away than for one dot of an 'i' of the law to change. {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}

[18]"That means the marriage law remains the same. Anyone who divorces and marries another commits adultery, and anyone who marries a divorced woman commits adultery." {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}

To the Pharisees—the Rich Man and Lazarus

[19]Jesus then told of a rich man who wore expensive clothes and lived in great luxury every day. [20]"A poor man named Lazarus was lying in the street outside his gate covered with sores and the dogs came to lick them. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [21]He even yearned to eat the leftovers from the rich man's table. [22]The beggar died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and the angels carried him to be with Abraham {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} where those who died in faith were located. The rich man also died, and was buried [23]but went to hell. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} As he was in torment he saw Lazarus far off in the company of Abraham. [24]The rich man shouted, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me, and send Lazarus to come dip his finger in water and cool my tongue, for I am tormented by these flames.' {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [25]But Abraham said, 'Son, remember on earth you had everything, and Lazarus had nothing. Now he is comforted, and you are in pain. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [26]Besides, there is a great divide between us so that those who want to come here from your side can't cross over, and those on this side can't come to you.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [27]The rich man begged Abraham, 'Send Lazarus to my home on earth to warn [28]my five brothers so they don't come here.' {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [29]Abraham answered, 'Your brothers have Moses and the prophets to warn them; let them listen to the Scriptures.' {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [30]The rich man answered, 'That is not enough. If someone were to rise from the dead and tell them, they would turn from their sins.' {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [31]Then Abraham replied, 'If they will not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not repent, even though one returns from the dead to tell them.'" {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

Lord, there is a place called Hades (hell) where unbelievers will go after death. Help me stop my friends and family from going there. Amen.

Luke 17

To the Disciples—an Unprofitable Worker

[1]Then Jesus said to the disciples, "It is impossible to keep from being tempted to sin, but how terrible it will be for those who tempt others to sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [2]He would be better off if a huge stone were tied around his neck and he were thrown into the sea than to face punishment for tempting a little one to sin! {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [3]Rebuke your brother when he sins and forgive him when he repents. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [4]If he sins seven times in a day, you must forgive him each time he repents." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} [5]The disciples asked, "Lord, help us have more faith." [6]The Lord answered, "If you had the smallest amount of faith, the size of a mustard seed, which is the smallest of seeds, then you could say to a mulberry tree, {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} 'Be uprooted and be cast into the sea,' and it would happen." {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} [7]Jesus told His disciples another parable, "Suppose you were a servant who plowed in the field or shepherded the sheep. Would you just return home, sit down, and eat? {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [8]No! First you would prepare your master's meal and then serve it to him before you eat your own meal. [9]The servant does not deserve thanks for doing what he is supposed to do. No! He is supposed to do those things, and those who follow the Lord should have the same response. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [10]You do not consider yourself worthy of praise; you simply do what you are supposed to do." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, help me do exactly what You tell me to do, and then some. Amen.

Healing Ten Lepers

[11]As Jesus was heading back toward Jerusalem, He came to the boundary between Samaria and Galilee. [12]Ten lepers stood off at a distance. As Jesus approached a village, {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [13]they shouted out to Him, "Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [14]Jesus answered, "Go show yourself to the priest, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} just as it is commanded in the Scriptures." They were healed as they obeyed Jesus and began the journey. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [15]One came back shouting, "Glory to God for healing me." {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [16]He threw himself at Jesus' feet and thanked Him. The healed man was a despised Samaritan. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}

Lord, I don't want to be unthankful as were the nine lepers. I come to bow at Your feet as did the one Samaritan, "Thank You for salvation." Amen.

[17]Jesus asked, "Did I not heal ten lepers? Where are the other nine?" {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [18]The only one who has come back to praise God is this foreigner." [19]Then Jesus said to the man, "Stand up, and go home; your faith has healed you." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Christ Teaches about the Second Coming

[20]One day a religious leader asked Jesus, "When will the kingdom of God begin?" Jesus answered, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [21]"The kingdom of God won't come with outward signs, so you can't say it began here or there; the kingdom of God stands among you"; Jesus was referring to Himself as the King. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17}

Lord, I don't just live for the day of the rapture; rather, I live today for You—Lord Jesus—the coming One. Amen.

[22]Later Jesus talked about this with His disciples, "There is coming a time when you will look for Me to be with you, but I won't come to you physically. [23]Some will proclaim I have returned either here or there, {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} but don't believe the report, nor go out looking for Me. [24]Everyone will see Me when I return. It will be as bright as lightning flashing across the heavens, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [25]but first I must suffer grievously and be rejected. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [26]When I return, the people will be just like those in Noah's days. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [27]They ate, got drunk, married, and ignored Noah's warning right up to the day when Noah entered the ark. Then the flood came to destroy them. [28]My coming will be the same as it was in Lot's day. People were eating, getting drunk, buying, selling, planting and building [29]right up until Lot left Sodom. Then God rained fire and brimstone from heaven to destroy them all. [30]The same will happen when the Son of Man is revealed from heaven to those on earth who reject Him. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [31]When the day of judgment comes, those on the housetops must not go in the house for their belongings, {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} neither should those in the field try to retrieve their things. [32]Remember Lot's wife! {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [33]anyone who holds on to the things of this life will lose his life and those who give up their life for Me, will save their life. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} [34]At that hour two will be sleeping in the bed, one will be taken and the other left behind. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [35]Two women will be grinding corn; one will be taken and the other one will be left behind. [36]Two men will be in the field; one will be taken, the other left behind." [37]The disciples asked, "What will happen to them?" Jesus didn't fully answer them, but said, "Wherever there are dead bodies, the buzzards gather." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

Luke 18

Two Parables on Prayer

Lord, I know that prayer makes a difference in my life; forgive me for spending so little time praying. Amen.

[1]Jesus used a parable to teach that we should always pray and not give up. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8}

When we are told to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17), and "always pray" (Luke 18:1), does it mean we become monks in a monastery who do nothing but pray all the time? Probably not! It probably doesn't even mean remaining in a spirit of prayer, that is, being reverent continually. There's so much we do that involves a number of emotional responses. Just as the new invention, "intermittent windshield wipers," only are activated when it is raining, {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} so we should pray intermittently as needed. Lord, I breathe a prayer at every need in my life, no matter how small the need, or how often. Amen.

[2]"There was a judge who was godless, and despised those who came before him for judgments. [3]A widow kept coming to the judge demanding justice against her enemy. [4]The judge kept refusing her. Finally he reasoned, 'I don't fear God or people, [5]but this woman is pestering me to death {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} with her continual begging for me to do something. I will give her justice because she continually asks for it.'" {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} [6]Jesus said, "Here is what the godless judge said, [7]'God will see that justice is done to those who continually pray to Him, {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} just as the widow got justice, even when God seems to delay. God will answer persistent prayer {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [8]and avenge them speedily. And when the Son of Man returns, will He find people of faith on earth who continually pray?'"

[9]Then Jesus gave the following parable to those who considered themselves righteous, {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} but who hated others. [10]"Two men went into the temple to pray, one a self-righteous Pharisee, and the other one an obvious sinner. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} [11]The Pharisee boasted in his prayer {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} that he was not a cheater, or an adulterous lawbreaker, [12]he fasted twice a week, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} and gave a tenth to God of all he possessed. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [13]The obvious sinner did not lift his eyes to heaven, {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} but beat on his chest to express his sorrow for his sin. Then he prayed, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner.'" {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

One of the most famous prayers throughout Christian history is this "Jesus Prayer." Note it is: (1) short, (2) a request, (3) personal, (4) intimate, (5) self-focused because we ask for something to be done for us or to us,

and (6) Jesus-centered and not self-centered. This prayer has been repeated over and over. "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me a sinner." Amen.

14 Jesus said, "This obvious sinner—not the Pharisee—was forgiven; those who exalt themselves will be humbled and those who humble themselves will be exalted." {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
15 Then people brought their babies to Jesus to be touched by Him. {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19} But when the disciples saw it, they discouraged them.
16 But Jesus called to the children and said, "Let the little children come to me, {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} and do not stop them, for the kingdom of God belongs to children. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} 17 I say to you, whoever does not accept the kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it." {43 Blessing Children-Prayer, Lam. 2:19}

Lord, I come as a child; accept my childish praise and worship. Amen.

The Rich Young Ruler

18 A rich young ruler asked, "Good Master, what must I do to get eternal life?" {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 19 Jesus answered, "Why are you calling Me good, only God is good, {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} 20 but if you wish eternal life, keep the commands." The young man answered, "Which should I keep?" Jesus said, "Do not kill, and do not commit adultery, do not steal, do not bear false witness, honor your father and mother, and love your neighbor as yourself." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}
21 The young man said, "I have kept all these." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
22 Jesus said, "If you would be perfect, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} go sell all you have and give it to the poor; {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} you will have treasure in heaven, and then follow Me." 23 The young man was sad when he heard this, for he had great wealth. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 24 Then Jesus told His disciples, "I say to you it is hard for a rich man to enter heaven. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 25 It is easier for a camel to go through a needle's eye than a rich man to enter heaven." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 26 The amazed disciples said, "Who then can be saved?" {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 27 Jesus answered, "No one from a human perspective, but all things are possible with God." {356 Possibility-Praying, Mark 9:23}

Lord, give me a vision of a great powerful God who can do great powerful things for me. Forgive me for my puny faith. Amen.

28 Then Peter added, "We have left all to follow You. What will be our reward?" Jesus answered, {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} 29 "In the next world when I sit on My throne, you My disciples will sit on twelve thrones, ruling the twelve tribes of Israel. Everyone who has left housing, brothers, sisters, father, mother, children,

or land for My sake, [30]will receive 100 times more when he receives eternal life."

Lord, I will be last in this life to be rewarded in heaven. Amen.

The Selfish Ambition of James and John

[31]As Jesus was heading toward Jerusalem, He said to His disciples privately, "Behold, we are going up to Jerusalem. The petitions by the prophets concerning the Son of Man will be fulfilled there. [32]He will be delivered to the Gentiles, mocked, insulted, and spat on. [33]They will whip Him and kill Him, but He will rise again on the third day." [34]But they could not understand because it was a riddle to them, and they could not grasp what He meant. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3}

Jesus Heals Blind Bartimaeus

[35]As Jesus came near Jericho, a blind man sat by the road begging. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [36]When he heard the crowd passing by, he asked what was happening. [37]They told him, "Jesus of Nazareth was passing by." [38]He yelled loudly, "Jesus, Son of David, have mercy on me." {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [39]Then they tried to keep him quiet, but he yelled even louder, "Son of David, have mercy on me." {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13} [40]So Jesus stopped and told them to bring the blind man to Him. When he got near, [41]Jesus asked, "What do you want Me to do for you?" {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} The blind man said, "Lord, I want to see." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [42]Then Jesus said, "Receive your sight; {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} your faith has made you well." {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [43]Immediately the man could see and he followed Jesus, praising God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} When the people saw the miracle, they also praised God.

Lord, give me spiritual sight so I can see kingdom things; help me to praise You in all I do. Amen.

Luke 19

Zacchaeus

[1]As Jesus was walking through Jericho, [2]Zacchaeus, an extremely rich and influential tax collector, [3]tried to get a look at Jesus, but he couldn't see over the crowds on the road side. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} [4]Zacchaeus ran ahead and climbed up into a sycamore tree to see Jesus when He passed that way. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [5]Jesus looked at him and said, "Zacchaeus, come down, I'm going to eat at your home." [6]Zacchaeus hurriedly came down and prepared a banquet for Jesus, {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [7]but the crowd disapproved because Zacchaeus was a backslidden Jewish tax collector.

Lord, give me a passion to see Jesus as Zacchaeus had that passion. Amen.

[8]Zacchaeus told Jesus, "I will give half my wealth to the poor, and those I've cheated; I will restore four times what I took from them." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [9]Jesus said, "Today salvation has come to this house because he is a son of Abraham. [10]The Son of Man has come to seek and save those who are lost, such as Zacchaeus." {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10}

[11]Some thought the kingdom would come immediately, so Jesus told a parable to correct that wrong impression. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [12]"A noble man was called to a distant place to be crowned king of that province. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [13]Before he left, he called his ten workers and gave them each $2,000 to invest while he was gone. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [14]But some of the workers rebelled and sent the nobleman word that he was no longer their lord. [15]When the nobleman returned, he called the workers to whom he had given money to find out their profit. [16]The first man reported his $2,000 had made a profit of $20,000, ten times the original amount. [17]'Wonderful,' responded the nobleman, 'you have been faithful; you will be ruler of 10 cities.' {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [18]The second worker reported he had turned his $2,000 into $10,000, five times the original amount; [19]the nobleman made him ruler of five cities. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [20]The third man had only the original $2,000, so he explained, [21]'Because you are an exacting man, reaping where you don't sow, I was afraid. I hid it safely in linen cloth.' {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [22]The nobleman called him a 'wicked worker,' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} saying, 'You are condemned by your own words. You knew I reaped where I didn't sow, therefore [23]why didn't you deposit my money in a bank so I could have drawn interest from it?' {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [24]The nobleman said to those standing near, 'Take the $2,000 from him and give it to the man with $20,000.' [25]They answered the nobleman, 'He already has $20,000.' [26]Jesus answered, "Those who do more with more will get even more, and those who do little with little, it shall be taken from him. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [27]But bring my enemies here who did not want me as their king and slay them in my presence!" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, help me serve faithfully with the spiritual gifts You've given me. I will not hide my "talent" in the ground. Use me as I desire to be used. Amen.

The Triumphant Entry

Lord, I gladly receive the presence of Jesus into my life just as the crowds received Jesus on Palm Sunday. Amen.

[28]The next day—Sunday—news that Jesus was coming to Jerusalem swept through the crowds of Passover pilgrims. [29]As Jesus

came to Bethpage, He sent two disciples into the village [30]telling them they would find a donkey with her young colt tied there. [31]"If anyone asks why you are taking the donkey, tell them the Master needs it to ride into Jerusalem." This act fulfilled Scripture, "Tell the people of Zion, your King is coming to you, humbly riding on a donkey, even on a young colt." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [32]The disciples did as instructed and found the donkey as Jesus said. [33]As they were loosing the animal, the owners asked why they were untying the colt. [34]They answered, "The Lord needs it." [35]So they put their coats on the donkey and Jesus rode on a colt that had never been ridden by anyone. [36]Great crowds spread their coats on the road, others waved their palm branches as they went to meet Him. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [37]The crowds who marched in front of Jesus shouted, "HOSANNA to the Son of David, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [38]blessing on Him who comes in the Lord's name, HOSANNA in the highest heaven." {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [39]The religious ruler said to Jesus, "Rebuke Your followers for they are blaspheming God and the Scriptures." [40]Jesus answered them, "If they stopped praising God, the rocks would immediately cry out praise to God." {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21}

Lord, I will praise and magnify Your name for all You've done in saving me. I will worship You for the greatness of who You are. Amen.

[41]Jesus approached Jerusalem, and as soon as He saw the city, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} He wept tears over it, [42]and said, "If you had only known how to have peace! {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} But now peace is hidden from you. [43]For a time is coming when your enemies will build siege towers against you and surround you on all sides. [44]They will kill you and your children. They will not leave one stone upon another, because you did not know your God had visited you." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Cleansing the Temple

[45]When Jesus got to the temple, He began cleansing it; He forced the merchants and their customers to leave. Then He upset the tables of those selling pigeons, and stopped workers from bringing in their merchandise. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [46]Jesus said, "Do not the Scriptures teach, 'My house shall be called a house of prayer {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} for all people, but it's become a den of thieves?'" [47]Jesus was teaching daily in the temple. The leaders heard what Jesus said and wanted to destroy Him, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [48]but they were afraid to do anything against Jesus because the people were listening intently to His teaching. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10}

Luke 20

A Day of Controversy in the Temple

[1]While Jesus was teaching the people in the temple and preaching the good news, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} the high priests and the scribes, with the elders, debated openly with Him before the people, [2]and said to Him, "Tell us where You get authority to do as You do? Who gave You Your authority?" {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [3]Then Jesus answered, "I will ask you a question. [4]Tell Me, did John get his baptism from heaven or from men?" {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [5]They discussed with one another, and said, "If we say, 'From heaven,' He will say, 'Why did you not believe John?' {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [6]But if we say, 'From men,' all the people will stone us, for they are convinced that John was a prophet from God." [7]So they answered, "We do not know where it was from." {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [8]Then Jesus said, "Neither will I tell you where I got My authority for doing what I do." {221 Hidden Answers-Prayer, Rom. 11:33-36}

Parable of the Vineyard Owner

[9]Then He told the people the following parable: "A man planted a vineyard and rented it to tenant farmers, and went on a long journey. [10]At harvest time he sent a servant to the tenants to collect his part of the grape crop, {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} but the tenants beat him and sent him away empty-handed. [11]Again the owner sent another servant and they beat him and insulted him, and sent him back empty-handed. [12]Again he sent a third servant, and they wounded him and kicked him out of the vineyard. [13]Then the owner said, 'I will send my dearly loved son. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} They will respect him.' [14]But when the tenants saw the son, they said, 'This is the heir. Let us kill him so that what he inherits will be ours.' [15]So they threw him out of the vineyard and murdered him. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} What will the owner of the vineyard do to those tenant farmers? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]He will come and kill those tenants and lease the vineyard to others." When they heard this, they said, "No!" [17]But Jesus glanced at them and said, "What does this Scripture mean, {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 'That stone which the builders rejected has now become the cornerstone'? [18]Everyone who falls on that stone will be saved, and the one on whom the stone falls will be crushed to death." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, You are the Cornerstone; I bow on this "stone" to worship the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

The Pharisees' and Herodians' Question

[19]Then the scribes and the high priests wanted to arrest Jesus at that time, but they were afraid of the people. They knew

Jesus meant the parable for them. [20]So they watched closely and sent spies to catch Him in His conversation {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} so they could turn Him over to the governor. [21]So they asked Jesus, "Teacher, we know that You speak and teach what is right, and show no preference to anyone, but You teach the way of God no matter who is listening. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [22]Is it right for us to pay taxes to Caesar, or not?" [23]But He detected their trick {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} and said to them, [24]"Show Me a coin. Whose picture and title is inscribed there?" They answered, "Caesar's." [25]Jesus said to them, "Then give to Caesar what belongs to Caesar, and give to God what belongs to God!" {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [26]They could not twist what He said, and they were astonished at His answer. They said no more. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, I will do in this life, what needs to be done; and I will do for You what needs to be done. Amen.

The Sadducees' Question

[27]Next, some of the Sadducees who claimed there is no resurrection, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [28]asked Jesus, "Teacher, Moses wrote that if a man's brother dies and leaves a wife but no child, the man should take the widow and raise up a family for his brother. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [29]Now there were seven brothers. The first brother married a wife and died childless. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [30]Then the second, [31]third, up to the seventh who died but left no child. [32]Then the woman died. [33]In the resurrection, whose wife will she be?" {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [34]Jesus answered, "The people of this world marry and are married, {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [35]but those who are worthy of the resurrection from the dead, neither marry nor are married. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [36]For they are like the angels of God; they neither marry nor are they given in marriage. [37]Moses at the burning bush demonstrated this when he called the Lord 'the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.' {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [38]The Lord is not the God of dead people but of living people, for all live in Him." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [39]Then some of the scribes answered Jesus, "Teacher, You have given an insightful answer." [40]They were afraid to ask Him any more questions.

Now Jesus Asks a Question

[41]Then Jesus said to them, "How can anyone say that the Christ is David's Son? [42]In the book of Psalms, David said, 'The Lord has said to my Lord, "Sit at My right hand, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [43]until I make Your enemies the footstool of Your feet."' [44]Since David called Messiah Lord, then how can the Messiah

be David's son?" {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Jesus Denounces Scribes and Pharisees

45Then Jesus spoke openly so everyone could hear, but directed His words to His disciples, 46"Beware of the scribes who walk about in long robes and love to be greeted with praise in public places, and love to be seated in the best seats in the synagogues, and to be recognized with honors at a banquet. 47These men take widows' houses and cover up their greed with long prayers! {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} They will receive a much greater sentence." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Luke 21

Teaching in the Temple

1Jesus looked to see rich people dropping money into the treasury. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 2Then He saw a poor widow drop two small coins into the treasury. 3And He said, "Verily, this poor widow has dropped in more than all of the rich, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 4for they gave out of their abundance, but she gave out of her poverty all that she had." {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}

Lord, I will sacrifice my money to You. Amen.

The Mount of Olives Discourse

5Some were talking about how beautiful the temple was decorated with stones. Jesus said, {182 Geographical-Praying, Matt. 6:6} 6"You may admire it, but the time is coming when one stone will not be left on another. Everything will be torn down." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 7Then His disciples asked Jesus, "Teacher, when will these things happen and what is the sign that will predict it?" {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 8So Jesus said, "Be careful and do not be misled! Many will come claiming to be Messiah, and saying, 'I am He,' and 'The time is near.' Do not follow them. 9You will hear of wars and rumors of wars, but don't be panic-stricken. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} These things must happen first, then the end will come." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 10Then Jesus said to them, "One nation will go to war against another, and one kingdom against another. 11There will be earthquakes, pestilences, famines, and dreadful events, and threatening signs in the sky. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 12But before these things take place, they will arrest you, persecute you, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} and turn you over to synagogues to be put in prison. You will be brought before presidents and governors for My name's sake. 13This will be your opportunity to testify for Me, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 14so you must determine in your hearts how to make your defense. 15I will tell you what to say,

{478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} then your opponents will not be able to resist you and refute you. [16]You will be betrayed by parents, brothers, relatives, and friends. They will kill some of you, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [17]and you will be continuously hated by everyone because you bear My name. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [18]And yet not a single hair on your head will perish in hell. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} [19]If you stand firm, you will establish your souls."

Jerusalem Is Destroyed

[20]"When you see Jerusalem surrounded by armies, then understand that tribulation is near. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [21]Let those in Judea flee to the mountains, and those within the city flee from it. [22]These are the days of tribulation when its predictions in the Scriptures will be fulfilled. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [23]Woe to pregnant women and those with nursing babies. There will be great tribulation in the land and persecution on this people. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [24]They will be killed by the edge of the sword, or carried off as captives among the nations. Jerusalem will be trampled under the feet of the pagan, until the times of the Gentiles come to completion." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9}

The Second Coming

[25]"And there will be signs in the sun, moon, and stars. On earth the nations will give up hope with no direction like the roaring of the sea and its waves. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [26]Men will faint with fear because of the things that will come on the world. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [27]Then they will see the Son of Man coming on a cloud with great power and glory. [28]When these events begin to happen, look up and lift your heads, for your deliverance is near." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Parable of the Fig Tree

[29]Then He told them a parable. "Look carefully at the fig tree. [30]When you see new branches shooting from their buds, you know that summer is near. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} [31]So when you see these signs taking place, know that the Kingdom of God is near. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [32]Verily I say to you, this generation will not pass away before these things take place. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [33]Heaven and earth will pass away, but My words will never pass away." {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14}

Lord, You have told me of all the destruction in the future. I trust You to hold me in Your hand in the future. Amen.

[34]"Be on your guard, {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} so that you are not loaded down with self-pleasures, drunkenness, and worldly concerns. That day can catch you unawares like a trap. [35]It will come on

all who are living anywhere on the earth. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} [36]So watch and pray that you will have strength to escape all these things that will take place. Make sure you take your stand in the presence of the Son of Man." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [37]During the days He taught in the temple, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} but He spent the nights on the Mount of Olives. [38]The people rose early in the morning to come listen to Him in the temple. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Luke 22

Events on Wednesday

[1]The Festival of Bread without Yeast, also called the Passover, was drawing near. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [2]So the high priests and scribes sought how they could put Jesus to death, but they were afraid of how the people would respond. {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} [3]Satan entered into Judas Iscariot, one of Jesus' apostles. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [4]Judas went to discuss with the high priests and temple police how he could deliver Jesus to them. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [5]They were thrilled and agreed to pay him for it. [6]Judas in turn accepted the deal and began to look for ways to deliver Jesus to them without getting the people involved.

Events on Thursday

[7]Then the day of the Festival came, the day when the Passover lamb was sacrificed. [8]So Jesus sent Peter and John on a mission with these directions, "Go and prepare a place for us to eat the Passover meal." {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [9]They asked Jesus, "Where should we prepare it?" {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [10]Jesus answered, "When you enter the city you will see a man carrying a pitcher of water; follow him to a house. [11]Then say to the owner of the house, 'Our Teacher says to you, "Show us the room where He can eat the Passover supper with His disciples."' {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [12]Then the owner will show you a large room upstairs. Make preparations there." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Lord, You know about small things like a man carrying a jar of water, so You know about the small things that will happen to me. {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} I commit the small things of my life to You. Amen.

[13]So they went and it happened as Jesus had said, and they prepared the Passover meal. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Celebrating the Passover

[14]When it was time, Jesus took His place at the table with the apostles about Him. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [15]He said, "I have a great passion to eat this Passover meal with you before I suffer. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [16]I will never again eat this meal with you until we are in the kingdom of God." [17]Then Jesus received a cup, gave thanks, {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer,

John 6:11} and said, "Take this and taste
18because I will not again drink from the
vine until we are in the kingdom of God."
{74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67;
Matt. 6:9}
19Then He took bread, gave thanks, {300
Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer,
John 6:11} and broke it, and gave it to them
saying, "This is My body which is broken
for you. This is a memorial to Me." {77
Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} 20After
supper He took a cup and said, "This cup
represents the new covenant to be estab-
lished by My blood, which is poured out
for you." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev.
5:12}

Lord Jesus, I will remember You when I take communion, {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} making sure that nothing breaks the communion we have together. Amen.

Betrayer Is Predicted

21"The hand of the one who betrays Me
is on the table! {29 Backslider's-Denied
Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 22Because the Son
of Man is going away, as it has been pre-
determined, {533 Will of God-Prayer,
Eph. 5:17} how terrible it will be for that
man who is His betrayer." {267 Judgment
Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 23Then the apostles
began to discuss among themselves which
one was going to betray Him.
24Then there arose a contention as to
who should rank as greatest. {238 Inap-
propriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3}
25But Jesus said to them, "The kings of the
Gentiles rule over people and those who
exercise authority are given the title of
'Benefactor.' 26But don't do that. Rather,
the greatest among you must be like the
youngest and must lead by serving peo-
ple. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34}
27Who is the greater, the one sitting at the
table or the servant who waits on him? Is
it not those who sit at the table? I come
to you as a servant who waits on you {432
Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 28and you have
continued to support Me in my trials.
{465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}
29Therefore as My Father has given Me
a kingdom, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev.
11:6} 30so I give you the privilege of eating
and drinking at My table in My kingdom.
{74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67;
Matt. 6:9} You will sit on thrones to rule
the twelve tribes of Israel."

Peter's Denial Is Predicted

31"Simon, Simon, satan has asked for your
soul to sift you like wheat, {476 Tempta-
tion-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 32but I
have prayed that your own faith should
not fail. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom.
8:34} And Peter, after you have returned to
Me, you must strengthen your brothers."
But 33Peter protested, "Lord, I am ready to
go to prison or death for You!" 34But Jesus
said, "I tell you, Peter, the rooster will not
crow before you deny three times that you
know Me!" {440 Sin-Realization Prayer,
Eph. 4:22}
35Then Jesus said to them, "When I sent you
out without money or suitcase, or shoes,
did you need anything?" They answered,
"We didn't need anything." 36Then Jesus

said to them, "But now the man who has money must take it with him and a suitcase too. {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14} And the man who does not have a sword must sell his coat and buy one. [37]For I tell you, what has been written about Me must be accomplished: 'He was numbered with the transgressors.' That prediction has to be accomplished." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [38]So they said, "Lord, we have two swords!" And He answered them, "That is enough!"

Jesus' Prayer in Gethsemane

[39]Then Jesus left to go up the Mount of Olives, {73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2} as it was His habit of praying there. His disciples followed Him. [40]When He reached the place, He said, "Pray that you may not be tempted." {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

The Bible teaches us to be victorious over temptations (1 Cor. 10:13), and that we should pray to overcome temptation (Matt. 6:13). Jesus gave the command that we should "Pray for strength against temptation." So what is our prayer? That: (1) we understand its nature; (2) we know our strengths and weaknesses; (3) we remember Bible verses that strengthen us; (4) we apply the principles of victory; (5) our thoughts remain on God, and (6) God takes away our fears, and any desire to sin. Lord, I have given in to temptation in the past, and I don't want to go there again. Strengthen my will, fill my mind with Scripture, and capture my emotions in my hour of weakness. Amen.

[41]Jesus withdrew about a stone's throw from them to kneel down and pray, {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} [42]"Father, if You are willing, take this cup from Me. Yet not My will but Yours be done!" {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

There comes a time when we must say with Jesus, "Not my will, but Yours be done." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Jesus knew the terrible suffering that lay ahead, but there was no other way to save humans; so He submitted to the inevitable. We too come to situations where we must submit our will to God's will. Lord, You know best and You have a perfect will for my life; I abandon my will and submit to do Your will. May Your will always be done in my life. Amen.

[43]An angel came to Him from heaven to strengthen Him. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [44]But Jesus being in agony, prayed earnestly {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} so that His sweat became like drops of blood that dripped on the ground. [45]He rose from prayer {332 One-Hour Prayer, Mark 14:37} to go to the disciples but found them sleeping. [46]He asked them, "Why are you sleeping? Rise and pray that you enter not into temptation." {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken

[47]While He was still speaking, a crowd came with Judas, one of the twelve, as their guide. He approached Jesus to kiss

Him, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [48]but Jesus replied, "Judas, do you betray the Son of Man with a kiss?" [49]The apostles saw what was about to take place, and asked, "Lord, shall we defend You with our swords now?" [50]Then one of the apostles slashed the high priest's servant and cut off his right ear. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [51]But Jesus intervened, "Permit Me to be arrested!" So Jesus touched his ear and healed him. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [52]Then Jesus said to the high priests, temple guards, and elders, who had come to arrest Him, "Have you come out with swords and clubs and treated Me as if I were a robber? [53]When I was with you daily in the temple, you never tried to arrest Me! But in this darkness is your chance to do it." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

The Second Trial—Before Caiaphas

[54]After they arrested Jesus and led Him away, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} they brought Him to the house of the high priest. Peter followed at a distance. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [55]A fire was kindled in the middle of the courtyard. Peter was sitting among those gathered for warmth. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [56]A servant girl saw Peter sitting by the fire and said, "This fellow was with Jesus." [57]But he denied it and said, "Woman, I do not know Him." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [58]On another occasion a man recognized Peter and said, "You are one of them too." But Peter said, "Man, I am not." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} [59]About an hour later another man confidently said, "He certainly was with Jesus, for he is a Galilean!" [60]But Peter said, "Man, you don't know what you are saying." {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} While he was speaking, a rooster crowed. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [61]Then the Lord turned and looked at Peter. Peter remembered what the Lord had said to him, "Before a rooster crows, you will deny Me three times." [62]So Peter went out and wept bitterly. {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12}

Lord, I will not deny You as Peter did. Give me strength and courage to keep this pledge. Amen.

[63]Then the soldiers who had Jesus in custody whipped Him and mocked Him. [64]They blindfolded Jesus and then said to Him, "Prophesy! Who struck You?" [65]And they continued to abuse Him. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

The Third Trial—Before the Sanhedrin

[66]As soon as light came, the elders, high priests, and scribes assembled to bring Him before the Sanhedrin. They demanded, [67]"Tell us if You are the Messiah." {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} But Jesus answered, "If I tell you, you will not believe Me, [68]and if I ask you a question, you will not answer Me. [69]But after this the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of God." {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [70]Then they yelled at Him, "Are You the Son of God?" And He answered,

"Yes, I am." [71]Then they concluded, "What further evidence do we need? We have heard blasphemy ourselves from His own mouth!"

Luke 23

The Fourth Trial—Before Pilate

[1]Then all the Jewish leaders led Jesus to Pilate and [2]brought the following charges against Him: {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} "We have found this man destroying our nation and stopping people from paying taxes to Caesar and He claims to be a king Himself." {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [3]Then Pilate asked Jesus, "Are You the King of the Jews?" And Jesus answered him, "I am." [4]Then Pilate said to the Jewish leaders and the crowd, "I find nothing worthy of a trial for this man." {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [5]But they insisted, "He is starting a rebellion all over Judea. He began in Galilee and now He is teaching here." [6]Hearing this, Pilate asked if Jesus were a Galilean. [7]When he learned that Jesus was under Herod's jurisdiction, he sent Jesus to Herod because Herod was in Jerusalem at that time.

The Fifth Trial—Before Herod

[8]Now Herod was anxious to see Jesus because of what he had heard about Him. Herod was hoping to see some miracle done by Him. {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Lord, You don't do miracles for the curious, or to entertain people. You do the miraculous for those who believe. Give me faith to believe. Amen.

[9]So Herod continued to question Jesus for a long time, but Jesus did not answer him at all. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} [10]Meanwhile the high priests and the scribes were waiting to accuse Jesus. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [11]Then Herod and his soldiers tried to embarrass Jesus and made fun of Him and put a royal robe on Him and sent Him back to Pilate. [12]That day, Herod and Pilate became friends; they had previously been enemies.

[13]Then Pilate called to himself the high priests, the leaders of the council, and the crowd, and [14]said, "You brought this man to me on a charge of religious rebellion against the temple. I have examined Him in your presence and find Him not guilty of your charges. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [15]Nor does Herod, for he sent Him back to me. Indeed, Jesus has done nothing to deserve the death penalty. [16]I will beat Him {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} and let Him go." [17]It was the custom for him to release one prisoner at the festival. [18]But the crowd began to shout, "Away with this fellow; give us Barabbas!" [19]He was a man who had been put in prison for starting a riot and for murder. [20]Again Pilate appealed to them to let Jesus go. [21]But they continued shouting, "Crucify Him, crucify Him!" {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [22]So Pilate spoke to them a third time, "Why? What is His crime? I find nothing that

deserves the death penalty. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} I will beat Him and let Him go." [23]But the crowd and religious leaders continued to demand with loud voices that Jesus be crucified. [24]Then Pilate allowed their demands to be carried out. [25]Pilate released Barabbas who had been put in prison for riot and murder, but turned Jesus over to be crucified. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

Lord Jesus, You were crucified instead of Barabbas, so You died instead of me. How can I ever say thanks for Your love for me? Amen.

Christ Is Crucified

[26]As they were leading Jesus away, they grabbed a man named Simon from Cyrene, as he was entering the city from the rural area, and made him carry Jesus' cross on his shoulders. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [27]A vast crowd of people followed Him and women were mourning and weeping. [28]Jesus turned and said to the women, "Women of Jerusalem, stop weeping for Me, but weep for yourselves and for your children. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [29]A time is coming when it will be said, 'Happy are the childless women and women who have never given birth and nursed babies!' [30]Then people will cry out to the mountains, 'Fall upon us, and cover us up!' {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [31]If they do this evil when the wood is green, what will they do when it is dry?" {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4}

[32]Two others, criminals, were also led out to be crucified with Jesus. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [33]When they came to the place called Golgotha, "The Skull," they crucified Jesus and the criminals, one on His right hand and the other on His left hand. [34]They cast lots to divide His clothes among them, [35]all the while people stood around looking on. The members of the Sanhedrin scoffed at Him and said, "He saved others, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} now let's see if He can save Himself. Let's see if He really is God's Messiah, His Chosen One!" {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [36]The soldiers also made fun of Him offering Him vinegar, [37]and saying, "Save Yourself if You are the King of the Jews!" {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [38]A shingle was nailed above His head with these words, "THE KING OF THE JEWS." [39]One of the criminals on his cross kept abusing Jesus saying, "If You are the Christ, then save us and Yourself." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [40]But the other criminal rebuked him, "You should fear God because you are suffering the same penalty as He. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [41]We suffer justly because we are getting what we deserve. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} But this man has done nothing wrong." [42]Then the criminal asked, "Jesus, remember me when You come in Your kingdom!" {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [43]Jesus answered him, "This day you will be with Me in paradise." {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14}

Lord, I'm so glad that all the thief had to do was believe in Jesus to be saved. That means I'm saved because I believe in Jesus. Amen.

44It was about noon when darkness covered the area and it stayed dark until three o'clock. 45The sun failed to shine. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} At that time the curtain before the Most Holy Place in the temple was torn in two. {488 Torn-Veil Prayer, Mark 15:38} 46Then Jesus cried with a loud shout, "Father, I commit My spirit to You." {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} Then Jesus breathed His last. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 47The captain of the soldiers saw what had happened and prayed to God, "Certainly He was innocent!" {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 48When the crowds who had come to view the crucifixion had seen what took place, they returned to the city. {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} 49All His friends, and the women who also followed Him from Galilee, stood at a distance. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7}

Christ Is Buried

50A man named Joseph, a good and upright man, a member of the Sanhedrin 51who had voted not to condemn Jesus, was there. He came from the Jewish town, Arimathea, and he was waiting for the kingdom of God. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 52Joseph went to Pilate to ask for Jesus' body. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 53Then he took the body down from the cross and wrapped it in a linen sheet and laid it in a tomb carved out of rock, where no one had yet been laid. 54It was the preparation day, and the Sabbath was just beginning. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 55So the women, who had followed Jesus from Galilee, watched Joseph closely to see where the tomb was located and where His body was laid.

In the Grave

56Then they went home to prepare spices {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} and perfumes. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} They rested on the Sabbath according to the Old Testament commandment.

Luke 24

The Visit of the Women to the Tomb

1On the first day of the week before the sun came up, women went to the tomb with spices to prepare the body of Jesus. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 2They found the stone rolled back from the entrance to the tomb. 3When they went inside, they did not find the body. 4And as they were looking around, two men in glistening robes suddenly stood beside them. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} 5The women were afraid, {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36} and turned their faces to the ground. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} The two men said to them, "Why are you looking for Jesus among the dead? He is alive. 6He is not here but has risen. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Remember He told you while He was still in Galilee 7that the Son of Man

was going to be turned over to evil men to be crucified, but that He would rise again on the third day." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [8]Then the women remembered His words {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [9]and returned to Jerusalem from the tomb and told all those things to the eleven and then told the others. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [10]The women were Mary Magdalene, Joanna, and Mary, James' mother. [11]Because their report seemed to be nonsense to the disciples, they didn't believe the women. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [12]Peter ran to the tomb, and stooped down to see the linen clothes lying there, but nothing else. Then Peter went home, wondering what happened. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

Christ Appears on the Road to Emmaus

[13]That afternoon, two followers of Jesus were on their way home to their village called Emmaus, about seven miles from Jerusalem. [14]They were talking together about all those things that had taken place that day. [15]As they were discussing the events of the day, Jesus Himself joined them as they continued their journey. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [16]But their eyes were blinded to Him and kept them from recognizing Jesus. {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22}

Lord, how many times have You come alongside me, and I didn't recognize Your presence? {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} Open my blind spiritual eyes to see Your presence. Amen.

[17]Then Jesus said to them, "What is this news that you are talking about as you walk?" {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [18]The one named Cleopas answered, "Are You the only visitor to Jerusalem who did not know about the things that have happened these past few days?" {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [19]And Jesus said to them, "What things?" They answered, "The talk of the town is about Jesus of Nazareth. All the people believe He is a prophet, mighty in deed and word. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [20]The high priests and religious leaders turned Him over to be sentenced to death to be crucified. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [21]But we kept hoping Jesus is the Messiah who was coming to set Israel free. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} Today is the third day since His death occurred. [22]But this morning some women who follow Him have astounded us! {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [23]They went to the tomb early and could not find His body. They came and told us that they had seen a vision of angels who told them He was alive. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [24]Then some followers went to the tomb and found it exactly as the women described, but they didn't see Him." [25]Then Jesus said to them, "O slow of mind and heart to believe all that the prophets have said! {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22} [26]Did they not teach that the Messiah

had to suffer and then enter His glory?" {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [27]Then Jesus began with Moses and taught His way through the prophets and explained to them all the passages in the Scriptures about Himself. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} [28]As they approached their village, Jesus made as though He were going farther, [29]but they urged Him, "Come and stay with us, {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} for it is getting toward evening and the day is almost over." So Jesus entered in to stay with them. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} [30]Then He took His place at the table. He received the loaf and blessed it and broke it and handed it to them. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} [31]Then their spiritual eyes were opened and they recognized Jesus. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Then He vanished from them. {124 Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen. 32:30} [32]They said to each other, "Did not our hearts burn as He talked to us on the road, as He explained the Scriptures to us?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Lord, thank You for the many times You've lit a fire in my heart with Your presence. May I share with others what You've taught me. Amen.

[33]Immediately they got up and returned to Jerusalem and found the eleven and other followers all together. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

[34]They told the couple that the Lord had risen from the dead and had been seen by Simon. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [35]Then the two told what had occurred on the road, and how they recognized Jesus when He broke the loaf. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13}

The Upper Room on Sunday Evening

[36]While they were discussing these things, Jesus stood among them and said, "Peace to you!" {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [37]They were startled and fearful; {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} some even thought they saw a ghost. [38]But Jesus said, "Why are you so upset, and why do you have doubts in your hearts? {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [39]Examine My hands and My feet, for it is I, Myself. Touch Me to see for yourselves, for a ghost does not have flesh and bones, as you see I have." {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [40]After this, Jesus showed them His hands and His feet. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [41]So while they were still doubting and wondering, Jesus asked, "Have you anything to eat?" [42]They gave Him a piece of broiled fish. [43]They saw Him take it and eat it. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18}

Jesus' Ascension Back to Heaven

[44]Then He said to them, "Let Me tell you again what I said while I was with you; that everything that is written about Me in the law of Moses, in the prophets, and in the Psalms, had to be fulfilled." {425

Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} [45]Then Jesus opened their spiritual eyes so they might understand the Scriptures. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord Jesus, continue that ministry today. Teach me the things written in Scripture about Yourself. Amen.

[46]Then He said to them, "The Scriptures say the Christ would suffer for sins, rise from the dead on the third day, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [47]and that repentance in His name as the condition for the forgiveness of sins {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} should be preached to all nations. [48]You are to begin at Jerusalem as witnesses to these things. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

[49]"I will send on You the promise of My Father. But you must stay right here in the city {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} and pray until you are anointed with power from on high."{359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [50]Then Jesus led them out of the city as far as Bethany, and He lifted up His hands and blessed them. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [51]While He was blessing them, He was lifted up from them, and was taken up to heaven. [52]And with joy, they went back to Jerusalem, {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [53]and continued in the temple praying and praising God. {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5}

Lord Jesus, just as the apostles worshiped You at the ascension, so I worship You today. Amen.

John

Ch 1: The Preincarnate Word 1514
Ch 2: Jesus' First Miracle 1517
Ch 3: A Night Interview with Nicodemus 1519
Ch 4: The Story of the Samaritan Woman 1520
Ch 5: The Lame Man at Bethesda 1523
Ch 6: Feeding the Five Thousand 1525
Ch 7: Jesus and His Unbelieving Brothers 1529
Ch 8: The Woman Taken in Adultery 1531
Ch 9: The Man Born Blind 1534
Ch 10: The Good Shepherd 1536
Ch 11: The Story of Raising Lazarus 1538
Ch 12: Mary Serves Christ 1541
Ch 13: Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet 1543
Ch 14: The Upper Room Discourse 1545
Ch 15: This Intimate Chapter is turned into a prayer for you to pray Scripture 1548
Ch 16 1549
Ch 17: A Prayer to Be Glorified 1551
Ch 18: Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken 1553
Ch 19: The Death of the Son of God 1555
Ch 20: Peter and John Visit the Tomb 1558
Ch 21: Jesus Appears on the Lake Shore 1560

JOHN

Key Word: *Believe* (occurs 96 times)

Key Verse: "But these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31, NKJV).

Theme: John writes to demonstrate Jesus' deity, that He is the Son of God, and that those who believe in Jesus for salvation will have eternal life. Then John exhorts his readers to be transformed by the indwelling power of Jesus Christ (John 14:20; 15:1-7). John doesn't tell of Jesus' earthly genealogy, birth or growth years. He begins in eternity past. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God" (John 1:1). John writes only of eight miracles in Jesus' earthly ministry that are "signs" pointing to His deity.

The supernatural promise of Jesus to believers is, "I in them, and You in Me" (John 17:23). Thus in salvation Jesus comes to dwell in us on this earth so we can live for Him. But we are "in Christ," a term that occurs 172 times in Scripture. That means we are in Jesus as He intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father. Negatively Jesus intercedes for forgiveness of our sins (Heb. 7:25), and positively Jesus presents our prayers to the Father so they will be answered. *Lord, I come to You because Jesus lives in my heart. He motivates me to pray to You. But also, I come "in Christ" as He is at Your right hand. Hear my prayers in Jesus' name. Amen.*

John 1

The Preincarnate Word

[1]I worship Jesus the Word, who is from the beginning; Jesus the Word tells me all about You, my heavenly Father. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [2]The Word was face to face with You throughout eternity because Jesus is God.
[3]And without Jesus nothing was created. Jesus does all the things that You, my heavenly Father, will do. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [4]Jesus has all life in Himself and gives life to all His creation. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [5]Jesus is the life of God who is the Light to all who are lost in a dark, forbidding world. Jesus shines in the

hostile darkness, but the darkness doesn't even know He exists. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

Lord, I am committed to Your message which is written in the Word of God. It is eternal and perfect. I will learn Your message, believe Your message, and share it with others. Amen.

John's Witness of Jesus

6John the Baptizer was a prophet sent by You who came to tell all about the shining Light, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} 7that through the Light, all might be saved. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 8John the Baptizer was not the saving light, but was the human sent to point everyone to the Light.

9Jesus is the true saving Light who offers spiritual light to everyone in the world. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 10Jesus came to the world that He created, but those living in the world did not recognize Jesus as their Creator Savior. {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} 11Jesus came to His own people—the Jews—and they refused to recognize Him.

12But as many as recognize Jesus and receive Him, He will make them children of God simply because they believe in the authority of Jesus' name. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 13They will be born again by Your power which is not a birth of blood, or the choice of people, or of flesh. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1}

14Jesus had all the celestial glory of heaven but He clothed His heavenly glory with human flesh. God living in flesh was the greatest glory of all. Jesus is the uniquely begotten Son, and has all the grace and truth of God. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 15John the Baptizer said of Jesus, "This is the Messiah whom I introduced to the world, and Jesus comes after me, but is preeminently before me." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Jesus is the Word; (1) who is eternal, (2) who created the universe; (3) who had eternal fellowship with the Father; and (4) who became flesh when He was born of the Virgin Mary. We should worship and praise Him for all He is and does. Lord Jesus, You are the eternal Word of God; I praise You for creating me and everything in this universe. I worship You for Your unlimited power and greatness. Amen.

16His grace was offered and my need of grace was fulfilled. {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 17The law of Moses condemned me to death, but grace and truth by Jesus gave me life. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} 18I could never have seen You, the eternal Father, but Jesus Christ came from Your bosom to show me what You, our Father, is like. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

Lord, I am committed to the Lord Jesus Christ who became flesh and lived among

men. He is the truth and spoke the truth to us. I have eternal life because of Him. Amen.

Religious Leaders Question John the Baptizer

19The religious establishment sent delegates to ask John the Baptizer, "Who are you?" {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 20John told them he was not the Messiah. 21Then they asked, "Are you Elijah or the prophet who will come at the end of the age?" John said, "No." 22They said, "Give us an answer to report to our authorities." 23John quoted Isaiah, answering, "I am a voice crying in the wilderness; prepare the way for the Messiah." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 24They were Pharisees who questioned him. 25The religious delegates asked why John was baptizing with water. 26He answered, "I baptize with water, but there is One standing among us who will baptize with the Spirit of God. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 27He who is coming after me is preferred before me, because He lived before me. 28These things happened on the banks of the Jordan River, but I came baptizing so Jesus might be revealed to Israel."

Christ's Baptism

29The next day John saw Jesus coming to Him and told the crowd, "See that man. He is the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world." 30He said this to let everyone know Jesus was the One coming after him. 31John said, "I didn't know who He was." 32John the Baptizer added, "I didn't know Jesus was to be the Messiah until I saw the Spirit come upon Him like a dove. 33But the Lord who sent me to baptize with water told me, 'The One on whom the Spirit comes, and stops there, this is the One who is the Messiah. He will baptize with the Holy Spirit.'" 34Then John, the apostle, said, "I then noted and believed He is the Son of God."

Jesus Meets Six Disciples

35The next day John the Baptizer stood with two of his disciples, 36and as they saw Jesus walking, he said, "Behold the Lamb of God." 37As Andrew and John were following Jesus, {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} 38He turned to ask, "What do you want?" {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 39That evening Andrew and John talked at length to Jesus. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} 40The next day Andrew told his brother Simon, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} 41"We have found the Messiah," {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 42and Andrew brought his brother to Jesus. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} Jesus changed Simon's name to Peter, which means he was firm and solid as a stone.

Lord, may I be zealous to tell family and friends about Jesus and may I bring them to know Jesus. Amen.

43The next day when Jesus saw Philip, He said, "Follow Me." 44Philip was from the same hometown as Andrew and Peter.

45Philip told his friend Nathaniel, "We have found the Messiah." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, may I find answers to all my questions in Jesus. Amen.

46Nathaniel was skeptical, "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" Philip just said, "Come and see."{504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord, help me always focus my sight on Jesus and see the greatness of His character. Amen.

47When Jesus saw Nathaniel He said, "You are a sincere Israelite, you are an honest seeker." {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} 48Nathaniel asked, "How do You know me?" Jesus revealed His divine omnipresence by saying, "I saw you talking under the fig tree to Philip when he told you about Me." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 49Nathaniel responded, "Jesus, You are the Son of God; You are the King of Israel." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, may I worship You as I learn of Your divine Sonship; I yield myself to Your kingly rule. Amen.

Nathaniel believed in Jesus because of what Philip told him, 50but Jesus said, "You'll see much greater things than this. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 51You'll see heaven opened and the angels of God going up and down upon Me, the Son of Man." {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

There are more names of Jesus in this chapter than perhaps any other chapter in Scripture. Why so many names? Because Jesus is so much, and He does so much. Jesus is called Word, God, Life, Light, the Light of Men, the True Light, the Only Begotten of the Father, Jesus Christ, Only Begotten Son, the Lord, the Lamb of God, the Son of God, Rabbi, Master, the Messiah, Jesus of Nazareth, Son of Joseph, King of Israel, and Son of Man. Lord Jesus, I come to You as the Lord of the universe, but I worship You as my personal Master and Savior. Amen.

John 2

Jesus' First Miracle

1On the seventh day after His baptism, Jesus was in Cana where a marriage ceremony was held. His mother was also there. 2Jesus and His six disciples were invited to the meal. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} 3When the wine ran out, the mother of Jesus said to Him, "There is no more wine." {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 4Jesus answered, "Why do you turn to Me for help? It is not the time to reveal who I am." 5Jesus' mother told the servants, "Do whatever He tells you." {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 6There were six stone water pots available to them, each one holding 20 to 30 gallons. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer,

Phil. 3:1-3} 7Jesus said to the servants, "Fill them to the brim with water." 8Then He said, "Take them to the master of ceremonies." The servants carried the water to the one in charge. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9When they had arrived, the water had turned to wine, and then the master of ceremonies toasted the wine. The servants who carried the water pots knew what happened. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 10"Why have you kept back the best wine until now? People usually serve their best wine first. When the guests have drunk a lot, then a poorer quality is served." {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 11This was the first miracle Jesus did that manifested His glory, and His disciples believed in Him.

12After this Jesus changed His base of operation from Nazareth to Capernaum, which is located by the Sea of Galilee.

Jesus Cleanses the Temple

13When the Passover came in the spring of A.D. 26, Jesus went up to Jerusalem with His disciples. {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} 14Jesus found people in the temple selling animals and birds for sacrifice—cattle, sheep, and pigeons. Money changers had set up tables to exchange foreign coins into Jewish money because the foreign coins had images of false gods. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 15Jesus made a whip out of some rope and drove the animals out of the temple and overturned the tables of the money changers. 16Jesus commanded, "Stop turning My Father's house into a market to sell your sacrifices." {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 17The disciples were amazed at His anger and said, "His devotion to the Lord's house burns in Him like a fire." {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} 18The Jewish leaders challenged Jesus, "What miracle can You show us that gives You authority to do this?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 19Jesus replied, "Destroy this temple, and I will raise it up in three days." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 20They said, "It has taken 46 years to build this temple. Do You think You can rebuild it in three days?" {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} 21But He was speaking about the temple of His body. 22After the resurrection His disciples remembered He spoke about this event earlier, and that it was not about rebuilding the temple. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 23While Jesus was in Jerusalem for the Passover, many believed in Him because they saw the miracles He did. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} 24But Jesus did not entrust Himself to them {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 25because He knew what was in their hearts.

There comes a time when we must no longer tolerate heresy and evil, but we must confront evil by prayer and action. That's what Jesus did when He cleansed the temple at the beginning of His ministry (John 2:13-22) and the end of His ministry (Matt. 21:12-17). He did it for prayer, "My house shall be called a house of prayer, but you have made it a den of thieves" (Matt. 21:13). Lord,

I will pray to You continually and I will oppose anything that comes between me and prayer. Amen.

John 3

A Night Interview with Nicodemus

[1]Nicodemus was a Jewish leader who observed the law, [2]and he came to Jesus at night to compliment Him, saying, "Jesus, You are a Teacher who comes from God because You perform miracles that couldn't be done without God's help." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [3]Jesus told him, "I say to you, you must be born again to see the kingdom of God." {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} [4]Nicodemus replied, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he go back into his mother's womb to be born again?" {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [5]Jesus answered, "I say to you, unless you are born again of water and the Spirit, you will not enter the kingdom of God. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [6]What is born of flesh is flesh, and what is born of Spirit is Spirit. {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} [7]Do not be surprised when I say you must be born again. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [8]The wind blows anywhere it pleases. You can hear its sound, but you can't tell where it comes from or goes. That describes those who are born of the Spirit, and how the Spirit bestows life on them." {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [9]Nicodemus asked, "How can this happen?" {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} [10]Jesus answered, "You are a respected teacher, yet you do not understand these things." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [11]Jesus continued, "I say to you, I am telling you what I know, but you will not believe Me. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [12]If you do not believe what I say about this world, how can you believe heavenly things? {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [13]Since I have come to earth from heaven, I can explain heavenly things to you. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [14]As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so people could repent by looking to the serpent. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [15]In the same way the Son of Man will be lifted up so that everyone who looks to him in belief will be saved. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [16]The Father loved everyone in the world so much that He gave His only begotten Son to die for each of them. Now everyone who believes in the Son will not perish, but will have eternal life. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [17]For the Father did not send His Son to condemn the people of the world but that they might be saved through Him. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [18]No one who believes in the Son will be condemned, but those who refuse to believe in the name of God's only Son are condemned already. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]The verdict of death is handed down because light has shined on the people of the world, but people love darkness more than light because of their love of evil things. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [20]Everyone

who continually does evil things hates the light and rejects it because it exposes their motives and actions. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 21 Those who believe the truth and come to the light will be saved. Their deeds verify their faith that they are of God."

Lord, I want everyone to know that You offer eternal life just as You said to Nicodemus, "You must be born again." Lord, I want to live by Your truth so everyone can see what I do for You. Amen.

Jesus and John the Baptizer

22 Jesus and His disciples left Jerusalem for the countryside where many people were baptized by His disciples. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} 23 John the Baptizer was baptizing near Salim, at Aenon 24 for he had not yet been thrown into prison; many also came there for baptism. The Jewish leaders tried to tell the disciples of John the Baptizer that the baptism of Jesus was better than their baptism {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 25 and there rose a dispute. 26 John's disciples came to tell John, "The man you baptized—the One you called Messiah—He is baptizing more than you are." {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} 27 John the Baptizer answered, "God in heaven gives each man the work he is to do. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 28 I told you I am not the Messiah, I am sent to prepare the way for Messiah. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 29 The crowds—the Bride of Christ—will naturally go where Christ the Bridegroom is located. I am a friend of the Bridegroom, I rejoiced when I answered His voice calling to me. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 30 He, Jesus, must increase, I, John the Baptizer, must decrease. He comes from heaven, and He is greater than all. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 31 We who are born on this earth only understand the things of earth. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 32 He testifies what He has seen and heard, and no one receives His testimony. 33 Those who believe in Jesus have discovered the truth of God that has come from heaven. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 34 He speaks the words of God because He has the Spirit of God on Him. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} 35 The Father loves Jesus, the Son, and has given everything to Him 36 Those who believe in the Son already have eternal life and those who have not believed in the Son do not have eternal life but the punishment of God rests on them." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, it's not enough to ask for humility, for the flesh loves preeminence and the old nature dies hard. So I pray for Christ to be increased in my life, and He will take care of my ego problem. Amen.

John 4

The Story of the Samaritan Woman

1 Jesus learned that the Pharisees were told that He was winning and baptizing more followers than John the Baptizer 2 (although

Jesus didn't actually baptize, His disciples did it), [3]so He left Judea to go home. [4]When Jesus left Jerusalem, He surprisingly went home through Samaria because the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans. [5]When He came near Sychar, {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} [6]He sat on Jacob's well because He was worn out from the hot journey and it was noon. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [7]A Samaritan woman came to draw water from the well. Jesus was sitting there and said, "Give Me a drink." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [8]The disciples had gone into the town to get food. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [9]She was surprised that a Jew would ask because the Jews despised the Samaritans. She said, "Why would You, a Jew, ask water from me, a Samaritan?" {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [10]Jesus said, "If you only knew God's gift and who it is that offers you water, you would have asked Me for a drink, and I would have given you living water." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [11]The woman replied, "You don't have a bucket, so how could You get water from this deep well?" {531 Well-Digging Prayer, Ps. 84:6} [12]She continued, "Are You greater than Jacob who drank from it with his family and cattle?" {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

Lord, I'm thirsty; come fill my cup. I drink of Your presence. Ah! That water satisfies and refreshes my spirit. Amen.

[13]Jesus answered, "Whoever drinks this water will get thirsty again, {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [14]but those who drink of the water that I give will never be thirsty again. The water I give will be an artesian well inside them that gushes up into eternal life." {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [15]The woman said, "Give me some of that water so I will never get thirsty again, and have to come to this well for water." {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [16]Jesus abruptly said, "Go call your husband!" {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [17]She answered, "I have no husband." Jesus replied, "You have correctly answered {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [18]because you have had five husbands, and now you're not married to the one you're living with." {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} [19]She exclaimed, "You must be a prophet to know this." Then she argued, {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [20]"Our fathers worshiped here. The Jews say Jerusalem is the place to worship." {540 Worshiping God in the Backyard, Ps. 134} [21]Jesus interrupted to say, "The hour is coming when no one will worship on this mountain or in Jerusalem. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [22]You don't know whom you worship, but the Jews know whom they worship. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [23]In fact the hour is already here when true worshipers will worship the Father in Spirit and truth. {502 Two-Way Worship Prayer, John 4:23} [24]God is Spirit, and those who worship Him must worship in their hearts and truthfully." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [25]The woman said, "I know that Messiah is coming; He will tell us everything when He comes." {167

Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}
[26]Jesus answered, "I am He." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
[27]Then His disciples came and saw that He talked with a woman. "Why are You talking with her?" [28]The woman left her water pot and hurried off to tell the men in the village, [29]"Come see a man who told me everything I've ever done." She asked, "Could this man be the Messiah?" {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [30]They left the town to go meet Jesus. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17}

Lord, make me thirsty for a drink from You. Then give me a passion to share my testimony with needy people like the Samaritan woman. I will tell my non-Christian friends, "Come see a Man who knows everything about me." Amen.

[31]Meanwhile the disciples told Jesus to eat, {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [32]but He said, "I have food to eat that you don't know about." {229 Hunger-Prayer, Ps. 34:8} [33]The disciples thought someone else had brought Him food. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [34]Jesus said, "My food is doing the will of the Father and completing His work. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [35]People say, 'Harvest comes four months after planting.' But I say, 'Look around at the fields. They are already ripe for harvest.' {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [36]Everything is ready for the reaper to go to work to bring in the 'grain' of eternal life. The sower and reaper will rejoice together." {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [37]Then Jesus explained, "One sows, another reaps; [38]I send you to reap where you didn't sow, and you get rewards for their effort." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8}
[39]Many Samaritans believed in Jesus because the woman said, "Come see a man who told me everything I've ever done." {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [40]The Samaritans begged Jesus to stay with them and He stayed two days, [41]and many were saved. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [42]The Samaritan men told the woman, "Now we believe because of what we have heard for ourselves, and not just because of what you said." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

Lord, thank You for saving the woman at the well, and thank You for saving me. Amen.

[43]After two days Jesus left and continued to Galilee. [44]But that was His home area, so He said, "A prophet is not respected in his home country." [45]But when He got to Galilee, the crowds welcomed Jesus.

Healing the Nobleman's Son

[46]Jesus returned to Cana where He had turned water to wine. An official from Herod's court came begging Jesus to heal his son. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [47]The official had sought to find Jesus in the area because his son was very, very sick. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [48]Jesus said, "Why is it that none will believe in Me unless they see miracles?" {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [49]The official answered, "Come down to Capernaum and heal my son before

he dies." {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} [50]Jesus answered, "Go home. Your son will live." The official believed the words of Jesus and turned to start his journey home. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} [51]While he was on the road, his servants met him to say his son had recovered. [52]The official asked what time the fever broke, and the servant told him, "4 p.m." [53]The father realized that was the same hour when Jesus said, "Your son will live." {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} [54]This was the second sign-miracle Jesus did in Cana, and the official and his family believed in Jesus. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}

Lord, You are the Bread of Life (John 6:37). I'm hungry for fellowship with You. I will study the Word to find Your presence. I will memorize the Word to bring Your presence into my life. I will meditate on Your Word to know You more intimately. I'm empty; fill me. Amen.

John 5

The Lame Man at Bethesda

[1]Jesus obeyed the Old Testament command to attend the Festival of Passover at Jerusalem at the end of His first full year of ministry. [2]Jesus went by the pool of Bethesda, a name that means "House of Mercy." There were five porches where [3]a great number of sick invalids {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} were waiting for an angel to come stir the waters in the pool. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [4]The sick believed that the first one into the water would automatically get healed. [5]There was a man who had waited unsuccessfully for 38 years. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [6]Jesus went only to him because he had been there a long time. Jesus asked, "Would you like to be healed?" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [7]The lame man answered, "I don't have anyone to put me in the waters after it is stirred up. When I am going to the water, someone jumps in before me." {240 Injustice-Prayer, Isa. 1:17} [8]Jesus said, "Take up your bedroll and walk." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [9]Immediately, the man was healed and he picked up his bedroll {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and walked. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

[10]The healed man walked through the crowd to the temple, because the Jews told him it was wrong to carry any burden—even a bedroll—on the Sabbath. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [11]The man told them, "The One who healed me said, 'Take up your bedroll and walk.'" [12]The Jews asked, "Who healed you and told you to break the Sabbath law?" [13]But the healed man did not know who healed him because Jesus left him to walk through the crowds. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [14]Later Jesus found the healed man in the temple and told him, "Go and don't do the sin any more that was responsible for this lame condition, because a worse thing will happen if you do." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [15]The healed man went and told the Jews that it was Jesus

who healed him. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 16The Jews confronted Jesus because He told the healed man to carry his bedroll on the Sabbath. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Lord, help me not to give excuses as the lame man did. See me in the middle of a crowd as You saw the lame man and come help me today. Take away any hardness of my heart as the Jewish leaders rejected You. Help me respond positively to Your direction for my life. Amen.

17Jesus answered the Jewish leaders, "My Father, who is just like Me, has worked up until now; now I work." {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} 18The Jewish leaders sought to kill Jesus {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} because Jesus said He was just like the Father, and because He had broken their law, and He said the Father and Son are equal in nature. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Equal in Nature, Power, and Authority

19Jesus answered the Jewish leaders, "I say to you, the Son does nothing by Himself. But when the Son sees the things the Father does, He does the same things. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} 20The Father and Son are equal in power." Then Jesus said, "The Father loves the Son and shows the Son everything He does. The Father will do greater miracles than healing the lame, so you'll marvel. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 21As the Father raises the dead and gives them life, so the Son will also raise the dead. The Father and Son are equal in authority. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

22"The Father does not judge the sins of everyone. All judgment is given to the Son. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23He who honors not the Son, honors not the Father." {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

24Jesus said, "He who receives My Word, and believes on Me, has eternal life {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} and will not be judged for his sins but has passed from death unto eternal life. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

25"I tell you, an hour has been coming but now it has arrived when spiritually dead people will hear the words of the Son of God and receive eternal life. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 26The Father has this life in Himself and the Son also has it and gives it to those who believe in Him. 27The Father has given Me the authority to execute judgment. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 28Therefore the time is coming when all in their graves will hear My voice and be raised. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 29They who have obeyed the Father will be raised to the resurrection of life. They who have disobeyed the Father will be raised to the resurrection of the damned." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 30Jesus told them, "I can do nothing by Myself, but I do the will of the Father who sent Me." {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1}

Four Witnesses:
John the Baptizer, Jesus' Miracles,
the Father's Voice, and the Scriptures

31Jesus said, "No one can bear witness of
himself and have other people believe him.
32If I only tell how great I am, don't listen
to Me. 33John the Baptizer told you about
Me, and he told the truth. 34The Old Tes-
tament said at the mouth of two witnesses
shall every testimony be established. {416
Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 35The testi-
mony of John the Baptizer was a light that
shined, so people believed what he said
about Me. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}
36"But the testimony of My miracles was
even greater; they proved that the Father
sent Me into the world. {195 Good-Works
Praying, John 6:28, 29}
37"A third testimony is the voice of the
Father that thundered at My baptism. {24
Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}
No one has seen God, but you heard His
voice but didn't believe it 38because you do
not have the Word of God dwelling in you,
{504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb.
3:12} so you do not believe the words the
Father said."
39Jesus told them, "Search the Scriptures.
{425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} These
words testify of Me that I am from the
Father, 40but you will not come to Me to
have eternal life. 41You think you have eter-
nal life but you don't because you refuse
to believe in Me, {259 Jesus' Response-
Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 42and you do not have
the love of God in you." {189 God-Haters'
Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 43Jesus said, "I have come
in the Father's name, and you will not
receive Me, yet you receive others coming
in their own name. {504 Unbelief-Hin-
drance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 44You seek
glory from other Jewish leaders and do not
seek the glory that comes from the heav-
enly Father. 45I will not accuse you in the
final judgment. Moses, whom you revere,
will accuse you in the judgment. 46If you
believe Moses, and you don't, then you
would believe Me {34 Believing-Prayer,
Mark 11:24} 47because Moses predicted
My coming." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to
Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Lord Jesus, You told us to "search the Scriptures" to know You in salvation and to know You to grow in grace. Open my spiritual eyes as I study the Bible; may I find Your presence concealed in the written Word. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} May I know You more intimately as I go deeper into Your Word. Amen.

John 6

Feeding the Five Thousand

1There was a great multitude following
Jesus so He went up into a mountain near
Tiberias. 2The multitude followed Him
because of His miracles and because He
healed the sick. {301 Medical Answer-
Prayer, James 5:15} 3Jesus then went up
into the mount to sit with His disciples.
4They were on their way to Jerusalem to
celebrate the springtime festival of Pass-
over. 5Jesus surveyed the multitude, and
then said to Philip, "Where can we buy

food for them?" {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [6]Jesus knew He would feed them with a miracle but He was testing Philip's faith in Him.

Lord, may I be faithful when tested. Amen.

[7]Philip answered, "If we had the day's wages of 200 servants there would only be a little bit for each one." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [8]Andrew heard the conversation {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [9]and found a young boy with five loaves of bread and two small fish, but Andrew said, "This isn't enough for all the crowd." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [10]Jesus said, "Make the men sit down in groups of 50 and 100 to make distribution easy," so they sat on grass in the area. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [11]Jesus looked to heaven to bless the food, then He gave it to the disciples and they distributed it to the multitude. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} [12]Everyone had as much as they could eat. Then Jesus said to His disciples, "Gather the food that is left over"; [13]so they gathered up 12 full baskets. [14]After the people saw the miracle, they said, "This is the One whom the prophet Jeremiah predicted was coming into the world to feed us bread." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Lord, feed me when I'm spiritually hungry just as You fed the 5,000 by the sea. Amen.

Jesus Walks on the Water

[15]The multitude rushed toward Jesus, because they wanted to make Him King, but He went into the hills to pray. [16]When evening came, the disciples went down to the lakeside [17]and got into a boat heading toward the other side toward Capernaum. It was dark and Jesus was not with them. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [18]A storm came up and the winds blew threateningly. They rowed three or four miles but were not making headway. [19]Then they saw Jesus walking on the sea towards them. [20]He said, "It is I. Do not be afraid." [21]They received Jesus into their boat and immediately they were at land.

Sermon on the Bread of Life

[22]The next day the crowd walked around the sea toward Capernaum and they saw only one boat the disciples used. [23]However, there were other boats that came from the place where Jesus fed the multitude. [24]People had gotten into these boats to follow Jesus. [25]So they asked Him, "Rabbi, how did You get here?" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [26]Jesus answered and said, "You seek Me because you saw the miracles; yesterday you ate of the bread and fish." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [27]Jesus told them, "Don't work for food that perishes, but work for the bread of eternal life which the Son of Man offers you." {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [28]The crowd asked, "What must we do to perform the works of God which You do?" {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [29]Jesus answered, "The work of God is to

believe on the Son whom the Father has sent." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

After Jesus fed 5,000 with five loaves of bread and two fish, the multitude asked Jesus the next day, "What must we do to perform the works of God?" (John 6:28). The world always wants to do something to approach God or get their prayers answered. But we can't come to God through good works (Eph. 2:8, 9); we can please God only by faith. The Bible says, "He who comes to God must believe that He is" (Heb. 11:6). Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe" (John 6:29). Lord, I believe You exist and that I can come to You only through Jesus Christ who died for my sins. "I believe; help my unbelief!" (Mark 9:24). Amen.

30 The crowd answered, "Do a miracle for us so we can believe in You and follow You. {79 Conditional-Prayer Promise, 2 Chron. 7:14} 31 Our fathers ate the manna in the wilderness that Moses gave to them during the 40 years of wilderness wanderings." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 32 Then Jesus said to them, "I say to you, it was not Moses who gave you bread from heaven. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} 33 My Father gives true bread out of heaven; the bread of God is He who comes from heaven to give life to the world." {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} 34 The crowd said, "Please give us this bread"; {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 35 Jesus said, "I am the Bread of Life. He who comes to Me will never hunger, and he who believes in Me will never thirst, {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 36 but you don't believe in Me. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 37 All the Father gives Me shall come to Me, and I will not turn them away {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} 38 because I come from heaven to do the will of the Father, and not My will. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 39 It is My Father's will that I should lose no one who believes in Me, and I should raise them up in the resurrection. 40 And this is the will of the Father that everyone who believes in the Father will have eternal life {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} and that I will raise Him up in the last day."

41 The Jewish leaders complained because Jesus said, "I am the bread who comes from heaven." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 42 They argued, "Is not this Jesus the son of Joseph? We know His father and mother, so how can He say, 'I come from heaven?'" 43 Jesus answered, "Don't complain! {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 44 No one comes to Me except the Father draws him, and I will raise him up in the last day. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 45 It is written in Isaiah, 'All will be taught by God, everyone who believes what I say will come to Me.' {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} 46 No one has seen the Father except the One who comes to you from the Father; He has seen the Father. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} 47 I say to you, the one who believes has eternal life. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 48 I am the Bread of Life. I am the bread which comes from

heaven that you may eat and not die. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [49]The Jewish forefathers ate manna in the wilderness, and they died. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [50]If you eat of My bread, you will live forever {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [51]and the bread I give you is Myself, which is for the world." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [52]The Jewish leaders argued among themselves saying, "How can this man give us Himself to eat?" {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [53]Jesus answered them, "I say to you, except you eat the Son of Man, you will not have eternal life. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [54]He who eats and drinks has eternal life and I will raise Him up in the last day {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [55]for I am meat to eat and water to drink. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [56]The one who eats Me will abide in Me and I will abide in him. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} [57]I live because the living Father sent Me, and the one who eats Me will live because of Me. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [58]This is the bread which comes from heaven, not like the bread the forefathers ate and died. He who eats this bread will live forever." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [59]Jesus ended these things He taught in Capernaum. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8}

[60]Many of Jesus' disciples said this sermon was too difficult to believe. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [61]But Jesus knew they were complaining, so He said, "If this sermon causes you problems, {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} [62]what will you think when you see Me ascending back to heaven where I was previously? {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [63]The words I spoke are Spirit and life. The Spirit will give you eternal life, but the flesh cannot help you. {446 Spirit-Helped Prayer, Rom. 8:26-27} [64]Some of you have not put your faith in Me." Jesus knew from the beginning those who believed in Him, and who would betray Him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [65]So Jesus said, "No one can come to Me except the Father draws him." {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [66]Therefore many disciples stopped following Jesus. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

[67]Then Jesus said to the twelve, "Will you also stop following Me?" {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [68]Peter answered, "Who else can we follow? You have the words of eternal life; {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [69]we believe and know You are the Messiah." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [70]Jesus answered them, "I chose all twelve of you; yet one of you is a devil." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [71]Jesus was referring to Judas Iscariot, the one who would betray Him. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Lord, I will eat the Bread of Life to satisfy my spiritual hunger. Amen.

John 7

Jesus and His Unbelieving Brothers

Lord, help me know when to take advice from my unsaved relatives. Amen.

[1]After this Jesus stayed in Galilee because the Jewish leaders sought to kill Him in Judea. [2]The Festival of Shelters was approaching and every Jewish male was to attend once. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} [3]Jesus' unsaved brothers counseled Him to go to the Festival of Shelters in Jerusalem. They said, "Go do miracles so the multitude will believe You and follow You. {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} [4]A person who wants to be known doesn't do things in secret, but he manifests himself to the world." [5]His brothers did not believe in Him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [6]Jesus told them, "This is not the hour for Me to manifest Myself. {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [7]The world does not hate you, but it hates Me because I tell them their works are evil. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [8]It's not time for Me to manifest Myself"; {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [9]so He didn't do what they suggested. {525 Waiting in Prayer, Acts 1:14} [10]After Jesus' brethren went to the festival in Jerusalem, Jesus privately went on an out-of-the-way road arriving in the middle of the week. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16}

Lord, protect me when I'm in danger as You protected Jesus from danger in Jerusalem. Amen.

Jesus at the Festival of Shelters

[11]The Jewish leaders were looking everywhere saying, "Where is Jesus?" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [12]The confused crowd said, "Jesus was a good man." Others said, "He leads the multitude astray." {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3} [13]Yet no one supported Jesus publicly because they were afraid of the Jewish leaders. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3}

[14]Jesus went into the temple on Wednesday and taught. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [15]Everyone marveled at His knowledge because Jesus hadn't graduated from the best schools. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [16]Jesus answered, "I don't think up the things I teach. This doctrine comes from My heavenly Father. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [17]If anyone is yielded to do the Father's will, he shall understand this doctrine whether this is My idea or the Father's. {453 Spiritual-Stability Prayer, Eph. 5:6} [18]He who does his own will seeks his own glory, but he who seeks to glorify the Father, there is no unrighteousness in Him. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [19]Moses gave you the law, but none of you keeps it, and none of you is righteous before God." Jesus said, "Why do you want to kill Me?" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [20]The Jewish

leaders said, "You have a demon because You think someone is trying to kill You." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [21]Jesus said, "I healed a lame man on the Sabbath eighteen months ago, and you hate Me for it. [22]Moses gave you the law to circumcise a boy and you circumcise on the Sabbath, yet you are angry with Me because I healed on the Sabbath day. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [23]Aren't healing and circumcision both a work of God? {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [24]Let's judge according to God's perfect judgment: did we not both do right on the Sabbath?" {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

[25]The crowd began talking among themselves, "Isn't this the man the leaders want to kill and [26]they say nothing when He speaks openly? {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [27]Maybe they think He is our messianic Deliverer so they don't do anything to Him." {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [28]Jesus preached loudly to the crowd, "You think you know Me, and you think you know where I come from, but you don't really know Me. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [29]The Father who sent Me, knows Me and I know Him, because I come from Him." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [30]The crowd wanted to take Jesus to the Jewish leaders, but no one laid a hand on Him because His hour had not come. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [31]Yet many in the crowd believed on Jesus saying, "The Messiah won't do more miracles than this man has done." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Christ Goes to the Father

[32]When the Jewish leaders heard Jesus was preaching to the multitude, they sent officers to arrest Him. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [33]Jesus responded, "I will be with you for only a little while, then I'll go to the One who sent Me. [34]You will look for Me, but not find Me because I'm going where You can't come." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [35]The crowd talked among themselves asking, "Where is He going that we can't find Him? Is He going to the Jews in the dispersion or is He going to teach Gentiles?" {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [36]Also they asked, "What does He mean when He says we can't go where He is going?"

The Holy Spirit

[37]On Sunday, the last day of the Festival of Shelters when thousands of priests were parading with pots of water to pour out as a drink offering to God, Jesus shouted to the crowd, "If anyone is thirsty, come to Me for satisfaction. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [38]He who believes on Me will have living water flowing out of his inner being." {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} [39]Jesus was referring to the indwelling Holy Spirit, but the Holy Spirit had not yet been given because Jesus had not yet gone to glory. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

[40]Someone who had been in the crowd, said, "Jesus is a true prophet!" {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [41]Others said, "He is the Messiah!" {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} [42]But the crowd argued, "The Messiah doesn't come from

Galilee, but from Bethlehem, the village where David was born." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [43]The crowd was divided because of Jesus, {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} [44]and no one laid a hand on Him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

[45]The Jewish leaders asked the officers why they didn't arrest Jesus. They answered, "No one speaks like Him." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [46]Some said, "This man is not the Messiah; we know this man comes from Nazareth, we don't know where Messiah comes from." [47]The leaders rebuked them, "Are you also deceived by this Man? [48]Have any of our leaders believed Him?" {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} [49]The Pharisees said, "The crowd is cursed because they don't know the law." [50]Nicodemus, by this time a believer, said to them, {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} [51]"Does our law judge a man before we hear Him?" {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [52]The leaders ridiculed Nicodemus, accusing him of coming from Galilee. "Search the record; no prophet comes out of Galilee." [53]After the festival was over, they all went home.

Lord, You invite me to come to You and drink to find energy and satisfaction. I'm weak today; I come to drink of You for strength to continue on. I can't find happiness or satisfaction; I come to You to drink to find purpose in life, and peace. Fill me with Your presence. Amen.

John 8

The Woman Taken in Adultery

[1]Jesus went to the Mount of Olives for the night, [2]but early the following morning He went to the temple and sat down in the middle of the multitude to teach. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [3]The religious leaders threw a woman in the middle of the crowd who was caught in the very act of adultery. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [4]The leaders said to Jesus, "This woman was caught in the very act of adultery. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [5]The law demands that she be stoned, but what do You say we should do?" {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [6]The Jews used this occasion to try and trap Jesus so they would have an accusation against Him. Jesus stooped to write with His finger in the ground, {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [7]but the leaders continued to question Jesus. Then Jesus stopped to say, "He who has not committed a sin, let him cast the first stone." {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} [8]Again Jesus stooped to write on the ground, [9]then the eldest leader left first and eventually all the other leaders left. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [10]Then Jesus said to the woman, "Where are those who accuse you of sin?" {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [11]She answered, "They are not here to accuse me." Jesus said, "Neither do I accuse you. Now go from here and sin no more." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I need the light of Your guidance in my trouble; there are always some who try to trip me up. Amen.

Jesus Argues with the Religious Leaders

12 Jesus said, "I am the light of the world, those following Me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

Lord Jesus, sometimes I don't know what to do, and I don't know which way to turn. Shine some light in my soul so I'll know myself, and I'll know the plan You have for my life. {278 Life's Plan-Prayer, Rom. 12:1} I've got a lot to do, and I need You to help me today. You are light; come walk with me and I'll see where to go. With Your light, I can see dangers on the path as well as safe places. Amen.

13 The religious leaders snarled, "You bear witness to Yourself and You are bragging and lying." {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} 14 Jesus answered them, "My claim is true. I know where I came from, and I know where I am going. But you don't know anything about Me. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} 15 You judge according to the flesh, and you don't know the facts. 16 I will not judge you now, but I will in the future. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 17 The law says to accept a statement if two agree about what happened. {501 Two-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 18 Then I am one witness to My claims, and My Father is the other witness." {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 19 "Where is the Father?" they asked. Jesus answered, "If you knew who I am, you would have known the Father." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 20 Later, Jesus was sitting where money was received but the officials didn't arrest Him because His hour had not yet come. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 21 Jesus said to the crowd, "I am going away and you will search and not find Me because you can't come to where I'm going." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 22 The Jews didn't understand, so they asked, "Will He commit suicide?" {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} 23 Then Jesus said to them, "I am from above, you are from this world 24 and you shall die in your sins unless you believe that I am the Messiah." {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 25 The Jews asked again, "Who are You?" Jesus answered, "I am the One I claim to be. 26 I could teach you much, but that would condemn you. I am the One the Father sent to you, and the One who sent Me is true." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} 27 But the Jews still didn't understand that He was telling them He came from God, and that He is the Son of God. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} 28 Then Jesus said, "When you have lifted up the Son of God, then you will realize I am the Messiah from heaven. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} 29 The One who sent Me is with Me, and He has not deserted Me; I always do the things that please the One who sent Me

into the world." {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [30]Many people believed the words Jesus spoke. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

[31]Then Jesus explained to them, "If you abide in My words, then you are truly My disciples, [32]and you'll know the truth, and the truth will set you free." {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [33]Then the Jewish leaders answered, "We are Abraham's descendants, and we have never been slaves to anyone; how can You make us free?" {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [34]Jesus answered, "I say to you, everyone who commits sin is a bond slave to sin. {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [35]A slave does not live in the house forever, but a son lives there forever. [36]If the Son shall make you free, you shall be truly free. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [37]Yes, you are descendants of Abraham, but some of you are trying to kill Me because My words have not set you free. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [38]I speak what My Father tells Me to say, but you speak what your father tells you." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [39]The Jews answered, "Our father is Abraham." Jesus answered, "No, if Abraham were your father, you would do what Abraham told you to do. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} [40]Instead, you are planning on killing Me just because I told you the truth." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [41]The Jews said sarcastically, "We were not born out of wedlock," suggesting Jesus didn't have a father. The Jews bragged, "Our Father is God." {547 Wrong Motives in Prayer, James 4:3} [42]Jesus answered, "If God were your father, you would love Me, because I come from the Father." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [43]Then Jesus told them plainly, {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [44]"Your father is the devil, and you do the lustful sins of the devil. The devil is a murderer from the beginning, and doesn't have any truth in him. The devil is a liar, and doesn't speak the truth. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [45]I tell you the truth and you do not believe Me; {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [46]none of you can point out any sin that I have ever done. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [47]If you were of God, you would listen to My words, but you don't understand them because you are not of God." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [48]The Jews accused Jesus of being a Samaritan and being possessed with a demon. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [49]Jesus answered, "I do not have a demon, and I honor the heavenly Father. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [50]I have no desire to make Myself great; the Father will do this for Me." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [51]Then Jesus said, "I say to you, if you will obey My words, you will never taste death." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [52]"Now we know you have a demon," the Jews answered. "Even Abraham died, and You claim if a man obeys Your words he shall never die." {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [53]The Jews asked, "Who do You think You are—God?" {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [54]Then Jesus answered them,

"If I am just bragging, it doesn't mean anything; it is the Father who will glorify Me. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [55]But you do not know the heavenly Father. If I said you knew the Father, I'd be lying as you lie. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [56]Your father Abraham rejoiced to see My day. He knew I would come into the world and Abraham rejoiced to see My day." {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [57]The Jewish leaders said, "You aren't even 50 years old, and You said You've seen Abraham." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [58]Jesus answered, "You're right; before Abraham was even born, I existed." {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [59]The Jewish leaders picked up stones to kill Him, but Jesus hid Himself and walked past them out of the temple. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

The argument in this chapter is a battle between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. Jesus knew the religious Jews were agents of satan, and He knew their strategy to defeat Him. Therefore, we must study Scripture to understand satan's strategy and then follow God's principles to lead godly lives and serve God successfully. Lord Jesus, You understood satan's strategy to attack You through the religious establishment of his day. Calvary didn't catch You by surprise. I need wisdom to understand satan's strategy so I know how to react and fight him successfully. Amen.

John 9

The Man Born Blind

[1]As Jesus left the temple, He saw a blind man [2]and His disciples asked, "Who sinned, his parents or this man since he was born blind?" {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [3]Jesus answered, "Neither did this man nor his parents, but his blindness demonstrates the power of God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [4]Each of us is given a task in life; we must do it in the daylight because the night comes when work ends. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [5]While I'm still in this dark world, I am the light of the world." {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [6]Then Jesus spat on the ground to make clay and then rubbed it on the blind man's eyes [7]and told him, "Go wash in the Pool of Siloam." So he went and washed, and came back seeing. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [8]The neighbors who knew he was blind were dumbfounded. "Is this the same one we knew who begged?" {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [9]Others said, "It looks just like him." The healed man said, "I'm the one who was blind!" {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} [10]They said, "How were you healed?" {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [11]He answered, "A man named Jesus made clay and rubbed it on my eyes and said, 'Go wash in Siloam.' I did and now I see." They asked, "Where is this Jesus fellow?" {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6} [12]He answered, "I don't know!" {426 Searching for God in Prayer,

Heb. 11:6} [13-14]On the Sabbath the crowd brought the healed man to the religious leaders, {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} [15]and they asked how he was healed. The healed man answered, "Jesus put clay on my eyes, and now I see." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [16]The religious leaders criticized, "this Jesus is not from God because He breaks the Sabbath." But someone in the crowd answered, "How can a sinner do such a great miracle?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [17]The religious leaders asked the healed man what he thought of Jesus. He answered, "Jesus is a prophet!" {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} [18]The religious leaders said, "This man wasn't blind." {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [19]So they asked his parents if the man was born blind. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [20]The parents answered them, "We know that he is our son, and that he was born blind, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [21]but we don't know what happened to him. Ask him for he is old enough to speak for himself." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [22]The parents were afraid of the Jewish leaders because anyone saying Jesus was the Messiah would be excommunicated from the temple. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [23]His parents again said, "Ask him, since he is of age." {348 Perception-Expectation Prayer, 1 Sam. 14:8} [24]Then the Jewish leaders asked the man a second time, "Give glory to God, not to this Jesus fellow, for we know He is a sinner." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [25]The healed man said, "I don't know if Jesus is evil, all I know is that I was blind, and now I see." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, I know I can see because I once was blind and couldn't see anything spiritual. I know I am saved because I once was lost and knew it. Now I walk in the light because You walk with me. Amen.

[26]The religious leaders kept demanding, "How did Jesus heal you?" [27]The healed man became exasperated. "I told you once, do you want to hear it again? Do you want to become Jesus' disciple?" {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [28]They cursed him, "You are His disciple, but we are Moses' disciples." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [29]We know God spoke to Moses, but we don't know this fellow. [30]The healed man was incredulous, "Why, here is a miracle and you don't realize Jesus opened my eyes. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [31]We know God does not hear the prayer of sinners, but He answers those who worship Him and do His will. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [32]Since the world began, no one has opened the eyes of a blind man. [33]If this Jesus is not of God, He could do nothing." {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [34]The religious leaders shouted, "You were born in sin; are you trying to teach us anything?" So they excommunicated him from the temple. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [35]Jesus heard they excommunicated him so He found him and asked, "Do you

believe in the Son of God?" {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} 36The healed man answered, "Who is He?" {190 God-Hunger Prayer, Matt. 5:6} 37Jesus answered, "You are looking at Him; I am the One who healed you." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 38The blind man said, "Lord, I believe"; and then he worshiped Jesus. {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

I also worship Jesus because I was blind, but now since my conversion I see. Amen.

39Then Jesus announced to the crowd, "I come to judge so that those who think they see will become blind, and those who are blind will see." {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 40The religious leaders asked, "Do you think we are blind?" {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 41Jesus answered, "If you were blind, you would want Me to heal you. But because you don't understand who I am, you are blinded to the truth of God." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

Lord Jesus, when the healed man saw You, he recognized You did a miracle in his life. Then he worshiped You. I recognize You've done a miracle in my life and I too worship You. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} Amen.

John 10

The Good Shepherd

1Jesus said, "Those who don't follow Me but climb over the wall into the sheepfold are thieves. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 2My sheep enter by the door because I am the Shepherd of the sheep. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} 3The sheep hear My voice and I call My own sheep by name and lead them out."

Lord, I am Your sheep, I hear You call my name, and I follow You because I recognize Your voice. You go before me each day of my life, so I will follow You because I know You are good. I will not follow a stranger, but run from him because the stranger does not have Your voice. Amen.

4"I go before them and call them and they follow for they know My voice, 5but will not follow a stranger." 6When Jesus used this extended metaphor the crowd didn't understand what He meant. 7So Jesus said, "I am the door for the sheep; {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 8those who come before are thieves and robbers, but My sheep didn't obey their voice." 9Jesus repeated Himself, "I am the Door; all who enter by Me will be saved; they'll go in and out to find pasture. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8}
10"The thief comes to kill and destroy the sheep, but I come to give sheep the fullness of life." {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17}

Jesus promised that we who enter the door of salvation will enjoy the freedom of going and coming into His sheepfold. Also He promised we will eat abundantly (our needs will be fulfilled) and will enjoy life more abundantly. Those who pray salvation's request, will enjoy fellowship with Christ. Lord, I enjoy my freedom in Christ and I experience daily life more abundantly. Amen.

[11]Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd who gives His life for His sheep. {67 Church-Boss Rejection Prayer, 3 John 9} [12]A hired man will run away when the wolf attacks because the sheep don't belong to him and he isn't their shepherd. The wolf attacks the sheep and scatters the flock. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [13]The hired man runs away because he is hired, and he doesn't really care about the sheep." [14]Jesus said, "I am the Good Shepherd and know My sheep, and My sheep know Me and follow Me. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} [15]Just as the Father knows Me, and I know the Father, I know My sheep and will lay down My life for them. {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15} [16]I have other sheep who are not in this fold, they are the Gentiles who will believe on Me; I will lead them also. These other sheep will listen to My voice and then all My sheep will be one flock and all will live in one sheepfold—heaven." {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30}

Lord, I know You because I am Your sheep. Amen.

[17]Jesus said, "The Father loves Me because I lay down My life, but I will take back My life. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [18]No one can take My life from Me! I willingly die and I have power to raise Myself from the dead; this is the assignment I was given by the Father." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

We all received physical life when we were born physically. Then we received spiritual life when we prayed to receive Christ as our Savior. God intends for us to make our physical life a dwelling place—sanctuary—for Him to live in us. We must keep our body separated from sin (our responsibility), while God makes us holy by living in us (His responsibility). As we immerse ourselves in Scripture, fellowship with the Father, and attempt to follow Christ, we become transformed into God's image (2 Cor. 3:18).

[19]The crowd was divided over what Jesus said. [20]Some said, "He raves like a man possessed by a demon. Why should we listen to Him?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [21]Others said, "Can a demon-possessed man cause the blind to see? He doesn't sound like one possessed by a demon." {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10}

[22]When winter settled on Jerusalem, it was time for Hanukkah; [23]Jesus returned to the temple near Solomon's Porch. [24]The crowd

surrounded Him, asking, "How long will You keep us in suspense? Tell us if You are Messiah." {511 Urgent-Prayer, Luke 11:1-11} [25]Jesus answered, "I did tell you, but you didn't listen. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [26]I did miracles but you wouldn't believe them. You didn't believe because you are not sheep of My flock. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [27]My sheep know My voice and obey Me; I know them and they know Me and follow Me. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} [28]I give My sheep eternal life and they shall never perish, no one can snatch them from Me. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [29]My Father has given them to Me and He is more powerful than anything else, so no one can steal them from Me." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [30]Then Jesus said, "I and the Father are One." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [31]The Jewish leaders then picked up stones to kill Him. {509 Unpardonable-Sin Prayer, Matt. 12:30-32} [32]Jesus responded, "The Father has directed Me to do many miracles to help people who are hurting. For which one of these miracles do you stone Me?" {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} [33]They answered, "Not for works of mercy, but for blasphemy. You are a mere man like us but You have said You are God." {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [34]Jesus quoted Scripture, "Your law says men are gods, {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [35]so if the Scripture is always right, why did it call mere men gods? [36]How can You say I blasphemed God when the Father who sent Me said I am the Son of God? {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [37]Even if you refuse to believe who I am, at least believe the miracles I do. [38]Then you will realize the Father is in Me, and I am in the Father." {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [39]They tried to arrest Jesus but He walked away from them {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} [40]and crossed over the Jordan to stay near the place where John the Baptizer first baptized. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [41]His disciples said, "John didn't do miracles, but everything he said about Jesus is true." [42]At that time many people believed in Jesus. {265 John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:8}

Lord, thank You for eternal life; I enjoy fellowshipping with You, knowing that You hold me securely in Your hand. Amen.

John 11

The Story of Raising Lazarus

Lord, one day I'll die if You don't come back first; I look forward to my bodily resurrection from the grave just as You raised Lazarus. Amen.

[1]Jesus received a message from Mary and Martha telling Him that Lazarus was sick. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} [2]This is the same Mary who anointed Jesus with oil and wiped His feet with the hair of her head. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10}

[3]The sisters reminded Jesus that He loved Lazarus; actually Jesus loved all three of them. [4]When Jesus received the message, He told His disciples, "This sickness will not end in death but the Son of God will be glorified through it." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [5]Now Jesus loved Martha, her sister Mary, and Lazarus. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [6]Jesus stayed where He was for two more days {107 Delayed Answer-Prayer, Isa. 30:18} [7]and then He told His disciples, "Let's go to Judea." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [8]They cautioned Him against making the trip because the Jews tried to stone Him the last time He was there. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [9]Jesus replied, "There are 12 hours of daylight for walking so you won't stumble when there is light to see by. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [10]Those who walk in darkness stumble because there is no light to guide them." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [11]Jesus then said, "Our friend Lazarus sleeps but I go to awaken him." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [12]The disciples answered, "It's good if he sleeps." {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [13]They didn't understand what Jesus meant, [14]so He said plainly, "Lazarus is dead. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [15]Now I'm glad I wasn't there when he died because now you will believe completely in Me." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [16]Then Thomas—the twin—said to the other disciples, "Let us go with Him, and die with Him." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [17]When Jesus arrived, He found out Lazarus had been dead four days. [18]Bethany was about two miles from Jerusalem, so [19]many Jews had come to sympathize with Mary and Martha. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8} [20]When Martha heard that Jesus had arrived, she went out to the graveyard to meet Him, but Mary stayed in the house grieving. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} [21]Martha accused Jesus, "If You would have been here, my brother would not have died. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [22]But now I know that whatever You ask from God, He will give it to You." {400 Reserved-Prayer, John 11:33} [23]Jesus told Martha, "Your brother will rise again." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [24]Martha said, "I know he'll arise in the resurrection at the last day." {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} [25]Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [26]and those who believe in Me will never die." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Lord, I know I'll be raised in my physical body because You were raised physically from the dead. But I also know that I now have eternal life because I have believed in You. Amen.

[27]Martha answered, "Yes, I believe You are the Deliverer-Messiah, the Son of God Who was sent into the world." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [28]Martha ran to whisper to Mary in a low voice, "The Master is here and wants to see you." {58

Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [29]Mary immediately got up and went to Jesus {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [30]outside town. [31]When the Jews who were mourning saw Mary leave, they followed her, thinking she was visiting the cemetery. {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} [32]As soon as Mary saw Jesus, she threw herself at His feet, saying the same thing as her sister, "Lord, if You had been here my brother would not have died." {55 Brokenness-Prayer, Joel 2:12} [33]Jesus saw Mary's tears and the mourning Jews following her. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [34]He said with a deep sigh, "Where is the body?" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [35]Then Jesus wept. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} [36]The Jews responded, "Behold how much Jesus loved Lazarus," {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [37]and other Jews said, "This man makes the blind see. Why couldn't He keep Lazarus from dying?" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [38]Jesus sighed deeply. When He got to the tomb—a cave—with a stone closing the opening, [39]He said, "Take away the stone." Martha protested, "Lord, the body stinks; he's been dead four days." {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [40]Jesus answered, "Have I not told you that if you will believe, you'll see the glory of God." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [41]They rolled the stone away, then Jesus looked into heaven, "Father, I thank You for hearing Me before I pray, {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} [42]so that the people here will believe in Me." {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} [43]Then Jesus yelled with a strong voice, "*Lazarus, come out!*" {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [44]Lazarus came bound, hands and feet with swaths of cloth, and a cloth wrapped around his face. Jesus cried, "Unwrap him and free him."

Results from Raising Lazarus

[45]Then some of the Jewish leaders saw it happen, and believed. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [46]Therefore many Jews believed in Jesus because He raised Lazarus from the dead, but others ran to tell the religious rulers what happened. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [47]They gathered in council to decide what to do. One said, "What can we do? This man does miracles." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [48]Another said, "If we don't do something, the Romans will come punish us and the nation because they will think Jesus is fermenting a revolution." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [49]Caiaphas the high priest said, "You're all wrong! [50]Let this man die instead of many people; {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [51]why should our whole nation perish?" [52]This prophecy that Jesus should die for everyone came from Caiaphas the high priest when he was inspired by God to make this prediction. [53]So from that time on the religious leaders were convinced that it was right to plan the death of Jesus. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [54]Jesus stopped preaching to the multitudes and went to the desert and stayed on the border of Ephraim and Samaria. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [55]People were

journeying to Jerusalem for the Passover because {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [56]they were curious to see Jesus and kept asking, "Do you think Jesus will come to this Passover?" {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [57]Meanwhile the religious leaders had announced that anyone seeing Jesus must report it to the authorities so He could be arrested.

Lord, people hate Jesus because they love their sin and they do not want to repent and follow Him. Amen.

John 12

Lord, I worship Jesus for His death for my sins, just as Mary worshiped Him at the festival at Bethany. Amen.

Mary Serves Christ

[1]Six days before the Passover meal, Jesus attended a banquet at the home of Martha in Bethany. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [2]Lazarus, her brother, sat with Jesus at the head of the table. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [3]Mary poured a jar of costly perfume over the feet of Jesus and wiped them with her hair; the house filled with the beautiful smell. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [4]Judas Iscariot complained that {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [5]the perfume could be sold and the money given to take care of the poor. [6]He didn't care for the poor, and he was a thief who was in charge of the money given to Jesus. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [7]Jesus answered, "Let her alone, she is preparing Me for burial. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [8]You can help the poor later, but you won't have Me very long." {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [9]When the crowds heard that Jesus had come to Jerusalem, they came eagerly to see Him and Lazarus, the one whom Jesus raised from the dead. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [10]Then the religious leaders decided to kill Lazarus also [11]because many believed on Jesus because of Lazarus. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44}

Entry into Jerusalem

[12]On Sunday morning many people who had come to the Passover Festival wanted to see Jesus. When they heard He was coming to Jerusalem [13]they cut palm branches to wave before Him. They shouted "HOSANNA, blessed is the King of Israel who is representing the Lord." [14]Jesus was riding on a young donkey that had never been ridden before. [15]He was fulfilling Scripture, "Fear not daughters of Zion. Your King is coming, riding on a young donkey." [16]Jesus' disciples didn't understand what was happening that day, but after Jesus was resurrected, they understood the meaning of the triumphant entry because they saw it predicted in the Scriptures. [17]The people who saw Jesus raise Lazarus from the dead also witnessed this event. [18]Because of Lazarus' resurrection, many people came to see His triumphant entry. [19]The Pharisees were not impressed.

They said, "We are not getting anywhere; the whole world is following Him."

Lord, because I believe Jesus is the Son of God I give to Him the perfume of my worship. Amen.

The Greeks Want to See Jesus

[20]Some Greeks were worshiping in the temple, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [21]and they approached Philip asking, "We would like to meet Jesus." {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [22]Philip told Andrew and they told Jesus. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26}

Lord, just as the Greeks wanted to see Jesus in the temple, I too want to see Him with my spiritual eyes and experience Him in my heart. Amen.

[23]Jesus didn't answer directly, but said, "The hour has come for the Son of Man to return to heaven and be glorified. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [24]A grain of wheat must die when it falls to the ground. Otherwise it will remain only one grain of wheat. But if it dies, it yields a rich harvest of food. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [25]Those who love their life will lose it and those who don't live for this life will exchange it for eternal life. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [26]If anyone wants to be My disciple, including the Greeks, they must follow Me, then they will be where I am and the Father will honor them when they follow Me. {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [27]Now My soul is greatly troubled. Shall I ask My Father to deliver Me from the house of suffering? No! That is the reason why I came to earth. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [28]Father, glorify Your name through My coming death." Then they heard a voice from heaven, "I have glorified it, and I will glorify it again." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, it's difficult to crucify the old flesh (Gal. 5:24); I don't have the power in myself to do it. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} But if I don't die, I won't live; just as a seed falling into the ground must die to bring forth fruit, Jesus, You must do it for me. Amen.

[29]Some who heard the noise thought it was thunder; others thought it was an angel speaking. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} [30]Jesus answered, "This sound was for your sake, not Mine, the time for judgment of sin has come. [31]Satan—the prince of the world—will be cast out. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [32]When I am lifted up on the Cross I will draw all to Me"; {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [33]Jesus said this to predict the way He would die. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [34]The crowd was astonished answering, "We thought the Scriptures taught Messiah would live forever. Why are You saying the Son of Man must be lifted up in death? Are You talking about the Messiah?" {426 Searching for

God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 35Jesus said, "My light will illuminate you only a short time. Learn from the Light while you can or else darkness will come and you'll be lost in it. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 36While you have the Light, believe the Light and you'll become children of the Light." Then Jesus left and they couldn't find Him. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 37Despite all the miracles Jesus did, most of the people did not believe Jesus was the predicted Messiah. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 38This fulfilled the prediction of Isaiah, who said, "Lord they don't believe, they don't accept Your miracles." {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} 39Indeed, they couldn't believe, as Isaiah said in another place, 40"God has blinded their eyes and hardened their hearts, lest they should see with their eyes and understand with their hearts, and turn to God and He save them."
41Isaiah said these words when he saw the Lord glorified, sitting on the throne (Isa. 6), and he was speaking of Jesus. 42Nevertheless many leading citizens believed on Jesus, but they didn't confess Him openly for fear of social pressure. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 43They were afraid of being excommunicated from the temple for they desired acceptance by people, more than from God. Jesus proclaimed loudly in the temple, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 44"Those who believe in Me also believe in the Father who sent Me. {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} 45And those who understand what I am saying also understand what the Father wants them to know. 46I have come as a light to all people, and those who believe in Me will not live in darkness. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} 47If anyone hears and understands My teachings, but rejects them, I will not judge them for I come to save all people. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 48But those who do not accept My teachings and reject Me, will be judged in the last day by what I've said; {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 49the Father will judge him because the Father who sent Me told Me what to say, and His words give life eternal. 50Therefore everything I am saying to you comes from the Father in heaven." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

Lord, I believe in You and will obey Your words for I know they give me eternal life. Amen.

John 13

Jesus Washes the Disciples' Feet

1On Thursday night before the Passover supper, Jesus knew that His hour had come, the time for Him to die for the sins of the world. He would love His followers, having loved them to the end. 2After the supper the devil had already put into the heart of Judas Iscariot to betray Jesus. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 3Knowing the Father had put all things into His hand and that He had come from the Father, He knew He would return to the Father. {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} 4Jesus arose from the table,

laid aside His tunic, and wrapped a towel around Himself as a servant. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 5He poured water into the basin and began washing the disciples' feet and wiping them dry with the towel. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 6When Jesus came to Peter, the fisherman asked, "Will You wash my feet?" 7Jesus answered, "You don't understand now, but you'll understand in the future. {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 8If I don't wash you, you'll have no part with Me." 9So Peter answered the Lord, "If that's the case, then not only my feet, but my hands and head." {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 10Jesus answered, "He that is bathed all over, need only to have his feet washed; now you are clean, but not all of you." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} 11For Jesus knew who would betray Him; therefore He said, "You are not all clean." {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 12When Jesus finished washing their feet, He put His tunic back on and sat down with them and said, "Do you know what I have done for you?" {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, just as Jesus washed the feet of His followers, help me to be humble and serve others, so that I may follow Your example. I want to be humble as You are. Amen.

13"You call Me Master and Lord, and so I am. {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2} 14If I then Your Lord and Master have washed your feet, then you ought to be willing to wash one another's feet. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} 15I have given you the example to do to others what I have done for you. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} 16I say to you, a servant is not greater than his master; neither is the one sent greater than the one who sent him; {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 17if you know these things, happy are you if you do them. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 18I have chosen all of you, but not all are of Me, that the Scriptures may be fulfilled, 'He that eats with Me, lifts up his heel against Me.' {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 19I'm telling you before it happens, so when it comes to pass, {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 20you will know I am your Messiah." {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17}

Judas, the Betrayer

21Jesus was obviously troubled. Then He said, "I say to you, one of you will betray Me." {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} 22The disciples looked at one another, not completely understanding what Jesus meant. 23One disciple was leaning on Jesus' chest; he was John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. 24Peter beckoned for John to find out who Jesus meant. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 25John, who was leaning on Jesus, said, "Lord, who is it?" {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 26Jesus answered, "He that dips his hand in the same dish that I dip, he is the one who will betray Me; it is good if that man were never born. When I dip the bread into the lamb stew, the one to whom I give it is the one." Then Jesus dipped the bread into the stew and gave it to Judas, but the disciples

didn't understand because Judas sat in the place of honor, and it was the custom to give it to that person first. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 27After Judas received the bread, satan entered him, and Jesus said to him, "Do quickly what you are going to do." {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 28None of the disciples understood what happened {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 29because they thought Jesus said, "Buy what is needed for the Passover festival." {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 30When Judas received the bread, he went out into the darkness; the night was spiritually black. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Lord, may I never betray You with any deeds, thoughts, or attitudes. Amen.

Jesus and Peter

31When Judas left, Jesus was relieved saying, "Now is the Son of Man glorified and God is glorified in Him. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 32Since God the Father is glorified in the Son, He will also be glorified in Himself. 33Children, I am going to be with you only a short time. You'll look for Me and won't find Me because where I'm going you cannot follow Me now. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} 34So, I'm giving you a new command that you love one another as I have loved you." {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 35By your love, all people will know you are My disciples."

Lord, I have difficulty loving some people. It's my old proud ego. Forgive my sin and remind me of Your love for me. You love everyone in the whole world and died for them. So take control of my heart and love others through me. Amen.

36Peter asked, "Where are You going?" The Lord answered, "You cannot now go where I am going, but later you can follow Me." {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} 37Peter answered, "Why can I not follow You now? I'll lay down my life for Your sake." 38Jesus replied, "You only think you'll die for Me. I say to you, you will deny Me three times before the rooster crows." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

John 14

The Upper Room Discourse

1Jesus told the eleven, "Do not let your heart be troubled. Hold on to your faith in God and your faith in Me. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 2There are many rooms in My Father's house, if it were not true, I would have told you. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} 3I am going to prepare a place for you there, and when I get it ready, I will come back for you and I'll take you to be with Me. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 4You know the way to the place I am going." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
5But Thomas responded, "No! We don't know where You are going, nor do we know

how to get there." {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} [6]Jesus said, "I am the way to heaven, also I am truth and I am eternal life. You must come through Me to go to the Father." {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [7]"Since you know Me, you should also know the Father, and from now on you'll know the Father." {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10}

Lord, You said You'd come back to take me where You are. That's what I want. I want to live with You in heaven for all eternity. Amen.

[8]Philip disagreed, "We don't know what the Father looks like, so show us the Father so we can believe." {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15} [9]Jesus answered, "I have been with you all this time, and I'm surprised you don't know the Father. He who has seen Me has seen the Father. {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} [10]What I say are not My words, but they are from the Father who lives in Me. The Father also does the miracles that I do. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} [11]Believe that I am in the Father, and He is in Me, or else believe it because you have seen My miracles. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [12]I say to you he who believes in Me shall do the works that I do, and even greater ones, because I am going to the Father. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [13]Whatever you pray, ask in My name, I'll do it so that the Father will be glorified in Me. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [14]If you pray for anything in My name, I'll do it." {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13}

Lord, I come in the name of Jesus to ask my request. You said You would do it if I asked in Your name. I ask in Your name because You're in my heart and because Your blood has cleansed me and given me access to the Father; and because You're my intercessor. Amen.

[15]Jesus told them, "If you love Me, obey My commands, [16]and I will ask the Father to send you another person in My place. He will live in you forever. [17]This other Person is the Holy Spirit, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} the third Person of the Trinity. The unsaved cannot receive Him because they do not believe in Him or know anything about Him. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} But you will know the Holy Spirit because you believe in Me. He will dwell with you and be in you. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [18]I will not leave you alone in the world; I will come to you. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} [19]Shortly I will leave you because I'm leaving the world. But you will see Me later and because I live, you shall live also. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [20]At that time you'll know I'm with the Father in heaven, but I'll be in you and you'll be in Me. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [21]Those who have My commands and keep them are the ones who love Me, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and those who love Me will be loved by the Father, and I will

love them and I'll show Myself to them." {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

Jesus promised two things: first, He would come to live within our hearts when we are saved (our possession); second, we would be placed in Jesus in heaven (our position). The first means we have the life of Jesus in us. The second means we can be as close to the heavenly Father as Jesus, and in Him we get our prayers answered. That means Jesus is our intercessor. Lord, I have new life because I have Your life in me. But I also live in You, as You are seated at the right hand of the Father in heaven. Amen.

22 Judas—not Iscariot, but another disciple with that name—asked, "How can You show Yourself to us and not to the world?" {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 23 Jesus answered, "Those who love Me will obey My commands, and My Father will love them, and We will come to live in them. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} 24 Those who don't obey My commands don't love Me. It's not just My Word they reject; it's the Father's Word. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 25 I'm explaining these things to you while I'm with you, 26 but the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in My place, will explain all spiritual things to you, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and will remind you of the things I said to you." {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}

Lord, I need the Holy Spirit to help me learn Scripture and to remember the things You said in Your Word. Amen.

27 "I am leaving My peace with you, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} but not as the world gives, so don't be afraid of anything. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} 28 Previously I told you I'm going away but that I'm coming back. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} Because you love Me, rejoice that I'm going to the Father. 29 I tell you this before it happens so you'll believe in Me when it does happen. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} 30 I'll not be able to talk with you much more. The evil prince of this world is coming to try Me but don't worry, because he has no authority over Me. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} 31 I am going to do the thing the Father wants Me to do; that will show My love to Him. Now, let's leave this upper room." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9}

Jesus did supernatural miracles such as healing a leper and raising the dead. What could be greater than these miracles? A soul saved for all eternity is greater in an insurmountable measure. Because Jesus went to the Father, we can lead people to Christ. Lord, I want to be a soul-winner. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} Give me a desire to win people to Christ, then help me use every opportunity possible to do it. Amen.

John 15

This intimate chapter is turned into a prayer for you to pray Scripture.

[1]Lord Jesus, You are my true vine, and my Father is the gardener. [2]You cut away any branches not growing fruit and prune back every branch that has fruit. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}. So Jesus, [3]I am a healthy plant when I live by Your words. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [4]I will abide in You as You abide in me. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} Just as a branch can't bear fruit unless it's attached to the vine, {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} so I can't produce anything unless I'm attached to You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [5]Jesus, You are the vine, I am a branch, and as long as I remain attached to You, and You abide in me, I will bear plenty of fruit. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [6]Anyone who will not remain attached to You will be punished. He'll be like dead branches that are collected and thrown into a fire to be burned. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [7]Jesus, when I remain settled in You, and Your words remain in me, I can ask what I want and You'll give it to me. Amen. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7} [8]Father, I want to glorify You by bearing much fruit. Then everyone will know I'm Your disciple. Amen. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I want to produce more fruit in my Christian life, and more fruit in my service. I want to abide in You so I can be fruitful. Amen.

[9]As the Father has loved Jesus, so He loves me. So I'll settle down to rest in His love to me. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1} [10]I will obey the commands of Jesus to remain in His love just as Jesus kept the Father's love to remain in His love. {80 Conditional-Praying, Matt. 8:2} [11]Jesus, you told me this so your joy would rest in me {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} and my joy would then be complete. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}

[12]Jesus, You've commanded me to love one another just as You've loved us. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [13]I can't have greater love for others than to lay down my life for them. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [14]I am Your friend, Jesus, when I obey Your commands; {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [15]You no longer call me Your servant because a servant doesn't know what his master does. But I am Your friend because I know what You are doing, You're doing what the Father told You to do. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [16]I did not choose You, but You chose me and challenged me to go bear fruit. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} Now whatever I ask You, Father, in Jesus' name, You gladly give to me. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [17]Lord Jesus, again You command us to love one another, because the world will hate me and those who follow You.

[18]But the world hated You long before it hated me. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [19]I do not belong to this world. I have separated from it, and therefore the world hates me. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [20]I remember what You said, "A servant is not greater than his master. Since they persecute Me, the world will persecute you." [21]They will hate me and persecute me because I'm Your disciple, and because they do not know the Father who sent You. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [22]If You hadn't given the truth, the world wouldn't experience the guilt of their sin, but now they have no excuse. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [23]Those who hate me hate My Father. [24]If You hadn't done miracles among them, they would have been blinded in their sins. Now they see and hate both You and the Father. {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [25]As written in the Scriptures, "They hated Jesus without a cause."

[26]When the Holy Spirit comes—the Spirit of truth who comes from the Father—{224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} He will speak plainly to my heart about You. Then I can also speak plainly about You because You will speak through me and remove their blindness. {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} [27]Then I can bear witness because I have been with You.

Jesus promised if we would abide in His Word, our prayers would be answered. That means we live and ask according to Scripture to get our prayers answered. Lord, I will abide in the Word and let it control my life so I can get answers from You. Amen.

John 16

[1]Jesus told us about coming persecution so our faith wouldn't be shaken. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [2]He said that they will excommunicate me from their assemblies. There is coming a time when they will kill people like me, thinking they have served God. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [3]They'll do this because they don't have true knowledge of Jesus or the Father. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [4]Jesus did not originally tell His disciples about persecution because He was walking among them. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} But now that He is going away, they needed to be reinforced, so they wouldn't be shaken when it happened.

Lord, You said that the world would hate me, just as it hated You. Give me strength to endure persecution and live for You. Help me to do more than endure trials; give me victory over them. Amen.

[5]Yet none of His disciples asked, "Where are You going?" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [6]because they were distressed that He was leaving. {116 Difficulties-Prayer, Ps. 40:2} [7]But it was a good thing for Jesus to go away, because if He hadn't left, the Holy Spirit would not have come. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13}

[8]But because Jesus left, He sent the Holy Spirit to convict the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [9]The Holy Spirit will convict, causing people to see their sin because they do not believe in Jesus. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [10]The Holy Spirit will convict, causing people to see their lack of righteousness, which will keep them out of heaven. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [11]The Holy Spirit will convict—cause people to see coming judgment because Jesus suffered for them on the cross. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [12]Many more things could be said, but the disciples weren't ready to hear. [13]Then Jesus told what the Holy Spirit will do for believers: when He comes, the Spirit of Truth, He will reveal to us everything that is truth. Then He'll guide us to understand truth. {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} The Holy Spirit will not be concerned with His own agenda, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} but He will bring glory to Jesus Christ, and He will reveal to us things to come. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [14]All the Father's glory also belongs to Jesus; {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} this is the glory the Holy Spirit will reveal. [15]All things the Father has also belong to Jesus.

Lord, send the Holy Spirit to guide me into truth and to keep me from error. The world, the flesh, and the devil continually try to pull me away from You. Amen.

[16]In a little while Jesus will leave His disciples and they will see Him no longer in the flesh. But a short time later they will see Him. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [17]The disciples did not understand what Jesus meant about leaving them and then coming back to them. {255 Introspective-Prayer, Ps. 139:23-24} [18]They were puzzled over His leaving in a little while. [19]Jesus knew they wanted to question Him, so He said plainly, "In a short time you'll see Me no longer. Then a short time later you'll see Me again." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [20]Then Jesus explained, "You will weep when I'm gone, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} but the world will rejoice. But your weeping will be turned to rejoicing. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [21]It'll be like a woman suffering in childbirth, but when her child is born, she forgets about her suffering." {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [22]Jesus explained they would be sad, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} but when they see Him again, they would be full of joy, a joy that no one could take from them. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [23]When that day comes, they won't have any questions to ask Jesus. They can go directly to the Father with their questions. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} [24]Jesus then promised that whatever we ask in His name, the Father will give it to us. Up until then the disciples hadn't prayed in Jesus' name, now we can ask in Jesus' name and we'll receive answers so that our joy will overflow. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [25]Up until that time Jesus used figures of speech and parables, but the time had

now come when He spoke plainly. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [26]When that day comes—and now is—we can ask the Father in Jesus' name, {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} and Jesus will pray to the Father for us. [27]The Father loves us because we have loved Jesus {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [28]and we know that Jesus came to the world from the Father. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1}

Jesus told His disciples, "Until now you have asked nothing in My name" (John 16:24). That meant Old Testament praying differs from New Testament praying. What was new? Now, prayer must be in Jesus' name which means: (1) we go to the Father through Jesus, our Intercessor and High Priest, who sits at the right hand of the Father. Jesus sifts out unbiblical requests and presents them properly; (2) our sins have been forgiven by the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7), so we pray in Jesus' name; (3) Christ indwells us to motivate us to pray to the Father. Lord, before I was saved, I couldn't come to You in Jesus' name. Now that I am Your child, I come to You through Him. Also, I enter the New Testament world of grace that gives me access to You. Amen.

[29]The disciples said, "Now we believe You came from the Father. You are not using figures of speech. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [30]Now we understand." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [31]Jesus said, "You only think you understand. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [32]The time is coming when you will be scattered to your homes, leaving Me alone." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [33]Jesus said, "I have told you this so you will have peace in the world. But you will also have trials, so have faith I have conquered the world." {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

John 17

A Prayer to Be Glorified

[1]After Jesus left the upper room, He lifted His eyes to heaven and prayed, "Father, My hour is come. Glorify Thy Son so I can glorify You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [2]I pray that those You have given Me will have eternal life. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [3]Eternal life is in You, the only true God, and is found in Me, the One You sent to earth. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [4]I have glorified You on earth and accomplished the work You sent Me to do. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [5]Now Father, glorify Me with the glory I had in heaven which I had with You before the world was created." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord Jesus, You asked for the Father to glorify You with the previous glory You had in heaven. But I ask for more glory for You because You were born of a virgin. You lived without sin. You suffered for my sins, and You ascended back into heaven leading a victory parade of all Old Testament believers. I glorify You as my new High Priest seated

at the right hand of the Father to intercede for me. I now glorify You as the God-Man. Amen.

6"I have given Your name to the men You gave Me. They were Your men and You gave them to Me and they have faithfully kept Your Word. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 7They know the things You told Me to do because I told them what You said to Me. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 8They have received Your Word and they believe it, and they believe I came from heaven to do Your will. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 9I pray for these disciples that You have given Me, but I do not pray for the world. {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13} 10All things that are Mine are Yours, and I am glorified in these disciples. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 11I am no longer in the world, but they are in the world, so I pray for them. I pray, Holy Father, that You would keep them safe, that they may be one, as We are One. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 12While I was with them, I kept them {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}—guarded them—and not one of them is missing, except the son of perdition {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} who fulfilled Scripture by betraying Me. 13Now I come to You, Father, that they may have joy. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 14I have given them Your Word, and the world hates them because they reject the world, even as I am not of the world. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 15I am not praying for You to take them out of the world, but that You would keep them from the evil one. 16They are not of this world just as I am not of this world. 17Make them holy by Your Word, because Your Word is truth. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 18I am sending them into the world, even as I was sent into the world. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 19I set Myself apart from heaven for them, now may they be set apart to reach others. {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1}

20"I am not praying for these disciples only, I'm also praying for those who will believe because of their word. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 21I pray that all believers may be one as You and I are One. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} 22And the glory You gave Me I give them so they may also be one as We are. 23I am in them, as You are in Me, {492 Trinity-Response Prayer, Matt. 3:16-17} so that the world may realize You sent Me, and You love Me and You love them. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 24Father, I want them to be with Me in heaven, that they may see My glory that I've had before the foundations of the earth. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} 25O Father, the world does not know You, but I have known You and made You known to these disciples 26that the love You have for Me may be in them, and I in them, and they in Me." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

Lord Jesus, You prayed for me to be one with other believers on earth. That's a glorious

prayer because it prefigures what we will be like in heaven. But it's a difficult prayer for me to visualize because Christians are so divided on earth over various doctrines, programs, denominations, and even personalities and racial traits. Lord, can it ever happen on this side of glory? I pray that it will. Amen.

John 18

Jesus Betrayed, Arrested, and Forsaken

[1]After Jesus spoke these words, He and His disciples went over the Brook Kidron and entered a garden. [2]Judas knew the place where Jesus often went to pray, {73 Comfortable Place to Pray, John 18:2} [3]so he led Roman soldiers and officers from the religious leaders with lanterns, torches, and weapons to arrest Jesus. [4]Jesus knew what was happening so He met them and asked, "Who are you looking for?" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [5]They answered, "Jesus of Nazareth." Jesus responded, "I am He," His statement of deity. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [6]Then the Roman soldiers and Jewish guards were driven backward to the ground. {26 Atmospheric-Worship, Gen. 32:24-30} [7]Again Jesus asked, "Who are you looking for?" They said, "Jesus of Nazareth." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [8]Jesus answered, "I told you, I am He. Since you want Me, let these go." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [9]Thus prophecy was fulfilled: "I lost none of those that You gave Me." Judas had given them a sign that Jesus would be the one whom he kissed. So when Judas kissed Jesus, and said, "Arrest Him," the Master said, "Are you betraying the Son of Man with a kiss?" {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [10]As the guards moved forward to take Jesus, Simon Peter, having a sword, cut off the right ear of Malchus, the high priest's servant. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [11]Jesus answered, "Put up your sword, for I must drink the cup of suffering the Father has for Me"; then Jesus touched him and healed him. {326 Non-Violence Prayer, Luke 6:28}

The King James Version describes this place where Jesus "oft times resorted thither" (John 18:2). Jesus went to the place to pray where He was comfortable because the topic of His prayer was extremely uncomfortable. He was going to wrestle with the sin debt of the world. {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} No human can ever conceive of Jesus' agony when the perfect Sinless One was being made sin (more than taking on sin) for us. Lord, I marvel to see You agonize in Gethsemane with the sin of mankind; You, the Holy One, were becoming my sin. How can I say thanks, and how can I respond, except in worship. Amen.

[12]They grabbed Jesus and bound Him, but He responded, "Have you come out in the middle of the night to arrest a thief? I sat daily in the temple, but you didn't arrest Me." This came to pass because it was predicted in Scripture. Then the disciples left

Jesus and fled into the night. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Lord, may I always stand courageously for You and not run away as the disciples did. Amen.

The First Trial—Before Annas, the Former High Priest

13The soldiers and guards led Jesus bound to Annas the former high priest who was deposed for his corruption. Caiaphas, his son-in-law, was put in that office. 14Now Caiaphas was the one who counseled the Jewish leaders that it was expedient for one man to die for the people. 15Simon Peter followed Jesus along with John. Since John was known by the servants in the high priest's home, he was allowed to enter, 16but Peter was kept out. Then John vouched for Peter and he was allowed to enter the courtyard. 17The girl at the door said to Peter, "Aren't you a disciple of Jesus?" Peter said, "No!" 18Then Peter warmed himself by a fire, for it was cold. He was standing with the others by the fire. 19Annas asked Jesus about His disciples and what He taught. 20Jesus answered, "I spoke openly in synagogues and the temple and I kept back nothing secretly. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 21Ask those who heard Me what I taught." 22When Jesus answered this way, an officer struck Jesus with his hand, saying, "Why did You answer the high priest that way?" 23Jesus replied, "Tell Me if I have spoken evil; if not, then don't strike Me." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

Lord, thank You for being faithful at Your trial, though You never sinned; You died for my sin. Amen.

24So Annas sent Jesus, still in handcuffs, to Caiaphas the high priest. 25But Simon Peter was still warming himself when someone said to him, "Are you one of His disciples?" He denied it and said, "No, I am not." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 26One of the high priest's servants, a relative of the one who cut off Peter's ear said, "Didn't I see you in the garden with Jesus?" 27Again Peter denied it, and immediately a rooster crowed. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}

The Second Trial—Before Caiaphas

28They led Jesus from Caiaphas to the judgment hall—the courtroom—in Pilate's place. It was early morning and they would not go into a Gentile's house because that would defile them, and they would be unfit to eat the Passover meal. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3}

The Third Trial—Before Pilate

29So Pilate came outside and asked, "What charge do you bring against this man?" {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} 30They answered, "If He had not broken the law, we would not have brought Him to you." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 31Pilate told them, "You take Him and try Him in accord with your religious laws." {231 Hypocritical-Prayer,

Matt. 6:5} 32But the Jews answered, "It is not legal for us to execute anyone." This fulfilled the prophecy of Jesus that He indicated He would die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 33So Pilate went back into the judgment hall to call for Jesus and asked, "Are You the King of the Jews?" 34Jesus answered him, "Are you asking Me this on your own or have others put this question in your mind?" {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 35Pilate answered, "I don't think like a Jew. Your people and their high priests have brought You here. What have You done?" {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} 36Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not in this world. If My kingdom were of this world, My followers would have fought to keep Me from being arrested. So My kingdom is not about this world." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 37Then Pilate retorted, "Then You are a King?" Jesus answered, "Yes, I am a King. For this purpose I was born, and for this purpose I have come into the world, to give them the truth. Everyone who seeks truth will listen to what I say." {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} 38Pilate asked Him, "What is truth?" Then he went outside again to the Jews to tell them, "I have no grounds to try this man." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12}

Pilate had just asked, "What is truth?" He was probably asking a philosophical question to direct the conversation from the real issue. Jesus was standing before Pilate, and Pilate had to judge the truthfulness of what Jesus had just said. Pilate didn't realize Jesus was the truth. Then unknowingly, Pilate declared a truth-statement: "I find no fault in Him" (John 18:38). Lord, I agree with Pilate, "I find no fault in Jesus." He was perfect in action and nature. Jesus is the perfect Savior. The only sin I find in Jesus is my sin. He became sin for me, dying for my sin. Amen.

39Pilate told them there was a custom to set one man free at Passover. He asked, "Do you want me to set free the King of the Jews?" 40Then they yelled and chanted, "No! Not this man, but Barabbas!" Now Barabbas was a robber.

John 19

The Death of the Son of God

1So Pilate had Jesus scourged. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 2Then the soldiers wove a crown out of thorns to place on His head. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 3Then they put a purple coat on Him, and mocked Him saying, "All hail, King of the Jews!" {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

The world has its fake worship of Christ when there's prayer by a public official or some other "empty" recognition of Christ. It could be a testimony or Christian symbolism by athletes. No matter the motivation, it's just as vain as the crown of thorns put on Christ. It's nothing but sarcastic mockery of Christ. Lord, keep me from praying when I

do it for public show, or for any other motivation that's not from the heart. Remind me that prayer is real communication with You. Amen.

4Then they slapped Him on the face. And Pilate went outside again to the Jews and said, "I am going to bring Him out so you can see that there are no grounds to try Him." 5So Jesus was brought out still wearing the crown of thorns and purple coat. Then Pilate announced, "Look at this man!" {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 6But the high priests and temple officers glared at Jesus and shouted to stir up the crowd, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate answered, "You take Him and crucify Him for I find no ground to try Him." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 7The Jews answered, "We have a law, and He has broken God's law. He deserves to die for claiming to be God's Son." 8When Pilate heard that statement, he was more afraid than before {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 9and went back into the judgment hall to ask Jesus, "Where are You from?" but Jesus did not answer. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3} 10Then Pilate said, "Why do You refuse to speak to me? Don't You know that I have the authority to free You or crucify You?" {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} 11Jesus answered, "You could have no power at all over Me if authority had not been given to you from above. So the one who betrayed Me has the greater sin." {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 12Pilate kept looking for a reason to set Jesus free, but the Jews shouted, "If you set Him free, you are not a friend of Caesar. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 13Anyone who claims to be a king is speaking treason against Caesar." When Pilate heard the charge of "treason," he had Jesus brought out. 14Then Pilate sat on the judge's bench at the place called the stone platform, or in Hebrew, *gabbatha*. It was the day of preparation for the Passover and it was about six o'clock in the morning. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 15Then Pilate said to the Jews, "Look at your King!" But they shouted, "Crucify Him! Crucify Him!" Pilate said to them, "Do you want me to crucify your King?" The high priests answered, "We have no king but Caesar." {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 16Then Pilate turned Jesus over to them to be crucified. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

The Crucifixion of Christ

17So they led Jesus, carrying His cross to a place called "the Skull," or in Hebrew, *Golgotha*. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 18There they crucified Him, with two criminals, one on each side, with Jesus in the middle. 19Pilate had the legal indictment written and nailed to the cross: "Jesus of Nazareth, the King of the Jews." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 20Now many of the Jews read this sign, because Jesus was crucified near the city. 21It was written in Hebrew, Latin, and Greek. So the high priests of the Jews demanded of Pilate, "Don't write, 'The King of the

Jews,' but write, 'He said, "I am the King of the Jews."'" {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 22Pilate refused, saying, "What I have written, I have written!" {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 23After the soldiers crucified Jesus, they divided His clothes into four parts, one for each soldier. But the coat, woven without a seam, was expensive. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 24So they agreed, "Let us not cut it up, but let us cast lots to see who gets it." This fulfilled Scripture, "They divided My clothes among them, and for My clothing they cast lots." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16} 25His mother and her sister, and Mary, the wife of Clopas, and Mary of Magdala were standing near Jesus' cross. 26So when Jesus saw His mother and the disciple whom He loved, John, standing near her, He said to His mother, "There is your son." {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} 27Then He said to John, "There is your mother." From that time on, John took Jesus' mother to his own home. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7} 28When Jesus knew that the end was near, He said, "I am thirsty." {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 29Some vinegar was there. So they soaked a sponge in some vinegar and put it to His lips. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 30As soon as Jesus tasted the sour vinegar He said, "It is finished!" Then He bowed His head and gave up His life. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

Lord Jesus, You thirsted in death for me. Forgive me when I don't thirst to know You and love You for giving Yourself for me. Forgive me for thirsting for the world's entertainment or for selfish recognition. Make me thirsty for You. Amen.

31It was the day of preparation for the Passover, so they did not want the bodies to remain on the crosses during the Sabbath. Therefore the Jews asked Pilate to break their legs and take down their bodies. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 32The soldiers broke the legs of the first and second thieves who had been crucified with Jesus. 33But they saw that Jesus was already dead, so they did not break His legs. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 34However, one of the soldiers thrust a lance into His side, and blood and water flowed out. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} 35The man (John the Apostle) who saw this testified to it. And his testimony is true, and he knows it is true so that the reader may believe it. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} 36This fulfilled Scripture, "Not a bone of His was broken." 37It also fulfilled another Scripture, "They shall look on Him whom they pierced." {425 Scripture-Prayer, Col. 4:16}

The Burial of Christ

38After this, Joseph of Arimathea, a secret disciple of Jesus for fear of the Jews, asked Pilate if he could remove the body of Jesus, and Pilate said yes. So Joseph took down Jesus' body. {163 Fear of God-Praying,

Heb. 5:7} 39Also Nicodemus, who came to Jesus by night, brought a mixture of myrrh and aloes of about one hundred pounds to anoint the body. 40So they wrapped the body of Jesus in swathes of cloth and anointed it with spices, in accord with the Jewish custom of preparing a body for burial. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} 41There was a garden near the place where Jesus had been crucified. There was a new tomb in the garden where no one had yet been buried. 42So, because it was the Jewish Preparation Day and because the tomb was there, they laid His body there. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

John 20

Peter and John Visit the Tomb

1On the first day of the week Mary Magdalene went to the tomb. It was still dark because it was early in the morning. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 2She saw the stone was removed, so she ran to tell Simon Peter and John, the disciple whom Jesus loved. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 3"Someone has taken away the Lord from the tomb, and we do not know what they have done with the body." 4So, Peter and John ran to the tomb; the younger John outran Peter. 5John looked inside the tomb and saw the linen cloths still wrapped together, but he didn't go in. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 6Peter didn't stop, but ran straight into the tomb and also saw the {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 7linen cloths together and the death mask lying at another place. 8Next, John entered the tomb and examined everything. 9Then he believed that Jesus had risen from the dead, {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} 10and they returned to their house. {276 Leave the Cemetery-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-2}

Lord, I believe You arose physically from the dead; the empty tomb proves that You arose from the dead. Amen.

Mary Returns to the Tomb

11Later that morning Mary Magdalene returned to the tomb; she wept as she looked into the tomb. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} 12Then she saw two angels clothed in white sitting at the head and feet where Jesus' body had lain. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 13"Woman, why are you crying," the angels asked. She answered, "Because they have taken away my Lord and I don't know where He is." {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} 14Someone was standing in back of her, but she didn't know who it was. She thought he was a gardener, so she asked, "If you have taken His body away, tell me where it is and I will take Him away." {313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} 15It was Jesus who said, "Mary." Her blindness was taken away and she called Him, "Rabboni," an old Hebrew word for "respected master." {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} 16Jesus said, "Quit clinging to Me as though things will continue in the future as they were in the past." {259

Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [17]Jesus explained, "I must go to My Father in heaven; He is also your Father. He is My God and your God." {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10}

Mary loved Jesus so much that she wept when seeking His body. Don't outward tears reflect our inner emotions and don't tears reflect our sincerity? When was the last time you cried when praying? Lord, forgive my hard heart. Touch my heart and make me weep in love for You and others. Amen.

[18]Mary returned to Jerusalem to tell the disciples, "I have seen the Lord." Then she told them all the things Jesus said to her. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Christ Appears to the Disciples

[19]In the evening of resurrection day—the first day of the week—the doors of the room were locked where the disciples had gathered for fear of the Jews. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [20]Jesus came to stand in the midst of them and said, "Peace to you!" {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} [21]Then He let them examine His hands and His side, and so the disciples were filled with confidence and joy over seeing their Lord. Then Jesus said again, "Peace to you! Just as the Father has sent Me into the world, so I am sending you into the world." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [22]Jesus breathed on them and said, "Receive the Holy Spirit, who will teach you and use you, just as He has done throughout past ages. He will be with you until you are endued with His power. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [23]Those you lead to faith will have their sins forgiven and those who reject Christ will retain their sins." {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4}

There's a time to weep when we are brokenhearted, and there's a time to laugh when we're happy (Eccl. 3:4). When Jesus appeared to the disciples in the upper room, they were "overjoyed" (John 20:20, Phillips). That means they "laughed and were happy." It's alright to show abundant joy in prayer. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} Lord, I remember the times I was overjoyed in prayer. Thank You for laughter and happiness. Amen.

[24]Thomas, the disciple called Didymas—a twin—was not there. [25]The disciples told him, "We have seen the Lord." He said, "I must see the nail prints in His hands, and put my hand into the wound in His side; otherwise, I will not believe." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, I'll not demand physical assurances to believe; I know You are the crucified Son of God who died for me. Amen.

The Upper Room One Week Later

[26]Eight days after Passover, the disciples gathered again in the upper room on a Sunday evening and Thomas was with them this time. The doors were locked but Jesus

again stood among them and said what He said last Sunday, "Peace to you!" {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 27Jesus spoke first to Thomas, "Reach your finger to touch My wounds and place your hand in the wound in My side. Don't doubt, but believe." {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} 28But Thomas didn't do it, he answered, "You are my Lord and my God." {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 29Jesus said, "God will bless you because you have seen Me and believe. But God will also bless those who haven't seen Me, and yet believe." {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

30Jesus did many miracles that were not written in the gospels, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 31but these miracles are written that people will believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and when they believe, they will receive eternal life. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10}

I believe that Jesus is the Son of God and so I have eternal life. Amen.

John 21

Jesus Appears on the Lake Shore

1A week later, on Sunday, Jesus appeared to seven disciples on the shore of the Sea of Galilee; 2Simon Peter, Thomas, Nathanael of Cana in Galilee, the sons of Zebedee, and two disciples of His were together. 3Simon Peter had announced, "I am going fishing" and those who went with him were Thomas, Nathaniel, James and John, Andrew, and Phillip. They got into a boat and fished all night, but caught nothing. When the day was breaking, {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 4Jesus stood on the beach, but the disciples didn't know it was Jesus. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 5Jesus yelled to them, "Have you caught any fish?" They answered Him, "No!" {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

The idea of night suggests darkness, loneliness, and despair; but then comes the morning of optimism and the prospect of a new day and new opportunities. The disciples fished all night and "caught nothing," then came morning when Jesus appeared to them. If we will meet Jesus every new morning with prayer, even when we "know not that it was Jesus" (John 21:4), then He will appear to us. Lord, I still get discouraged when the "night" of darkness closes in, so come to me each new morning. Meet me as I come to You in prayer. Prepare me for the morning and new opportunities. Amen.

6Jesus answered, "Cast the net on the other side of the boat and you will catch fish." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 7They cast on the right side and couldn't draw in the fish because there were so many. So John said to Peter, "It's the Lord." Peter put on his tunic and dove into the water to swim to Jesus. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} 8The other disciples came in a little boat, for they were 100 yards from the beach. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 9When they got to shore, they saw a charcoal fire

cooking fish and there was also bread. [10]Jesus said, "Add the fish you've caught to these." [11]Simon Peter went and pulled the net to land. It had 153 fish in it, yet the net didn't break. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [12]Jesus said, "Come eat, break your fast." {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [13]No one asked who it was, for they all knew it was Jesus. He served all of them breakfast. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [14]This was the third Sunday that Jesus appeared to them. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

Peter Restored

[15]After breakfast Jesus said, "Simon, Son of Jonah, do you love Me more deeply than you love these nets?" Peter answered, "Lord, You know that I like and admire You." Jesus answered, "Feed My lambs." {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} [16]Jesus said to him a second time, "Simon, do you deeply love Me?" Peter answered, "Lord, You know that I like and admire You." Jesus answered, "Tend My sheep." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [17]Jesus said a third time, "Simon, do you really like and admire Me?" Peter was ashamed the Lord asked him three times, because he denied the Lord three times, and because he only said he liked and admired the Lord. So Peter answered, "Lord, You know everything, and You know I really like and admire You." {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} [18]Jesus said, "Feed My sheep." Then Jesus predicted, "When you were young, you were able to dress yourself, and go where you wanted. But when you get old, they will stretch your hands out on a cross and they will clothe you with what they choose, and lead you where they want to go." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [19]By this Jesus was saying Peter would die as a martyr. Then Jesus concluded, "Follow Me." [20]Then Peter turned around and saw John who also leaned on His breast at the supper saying, "Lord, who betrays You?"

What's in the heart must have an outward expression. Don't we express our love to another with hugs, kisses, gifts, and physical expressions? So, we should tell the Lord we love Him, just as Peter had to answer the question, "Do You love Me?" (John 21:15). Lord, I love You; forgive me for the times I've been cold and indifferent. I love You from the bottom of my heart. Amen.

[21]Peter turned to John and asked Jesus, "What about him?" {251 Interchange with God, Gen. 18:23-33} [22]Jesus said, "If he lives till I return, how does that concern you? You must follow Me." This statement made many think John would live until Jesus' return. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [23]But Jesus didn't say John wouldn't die; He only said, "If he lives till I return, how does that concern you?"

[24]This disciple testified and wrote these things and his testimony is true. [25]Jesus did many other things; if they were all written the world couldn't contain the books that could be written. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

Lord, I really love You with all my heart. Give me courage to tell everyone of my devotion to You. Amen.

Acts

Ch 1 1566
Ch 2: The Coming of the Holy Spirit 1568
Ch 3: Healing a Man Born Crippled 1571
Ch 4: The Apostles Arrested 1573
Ch 5: The Sin and Judgment of Ananias and Sapphira 1575
Ch 6: Internal Problems in the Early Church .. 1578
Ch 7: The Sermon by Stephen 1579
Ch 8: Christians Leave Jerusalem 1582
Ch 9: The Conversion of Saul 1585
Ch 10: God Sends a Message to Cornelius 1587
Ch 11: Peter Explains His Actions to the Jerusalem Church 1590
Ch 12: James Killed—Peter Imprisoned 1592
Ch 13: God Called Barnabas and Saul to Be Missionaries 1593
Ch 14: In Antioch 1596
Ch 15: The First Church Council 1598
Ch 16: Paul Recruits Timothy 1600
Ch 17: The New Church at Thessalonica and Berea 1603
Ch 18: Paul at Corinth 1605
Ch 19: Paul's Ministry in Ephesus 1607

Ch 20: Paul's Last Trip to Ephesus 1609
Ch 21: Paul Goes to Jerusalem 1611
Ch 22: Paul Seeks to a Crowd in Jerusalem 1613
Ch 23: Paul before the Jewish Council 1614
Ch 24: Paul before Felix 1616
Ch 25: Paul before Festus 1617
Ch 26: Paul before King Agrippa 1619
Ch 27: Paul's Trip to Rome 1620
Ch 28: From Malta to Rome 1622

ACTS

Key Words: *Prayer, Witness, Holy Spirit, Church* (see Acts 1:8, 14; 2:4, 47)

Key Verse: "But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

Theme: The author Luke continues writing about the record he began in the gospel of Luke (Luke 1:1, 2). What Jesus began in the gospels results in the formation and spread of the church in Acts. The four key words explain the success of the new church. It all began with the first words, *earth-shaking prayer.* God responded to the intercession of His people in the upper room by filling them with the Holy Spirit. The gospel was spread by all believers *witnessing* (second word) to everyone, every place they went. The *Holy Spirit* was the power that worked in and through all believers who spread the message of the gospel at all times. The result was the formation of the *church* (fourth word). But this new church was not just an organization to join; it was a life-giving movement that flowed through communities where sinners were transformed when they believed in Jesus Christ. The church was the body of Christ on earth that determined to spread its gospel from Caesar's palace (Phil. 4:21) to the entire earth (Acts 1:8). *Lord, I will serve You in my church, and will love doing it because You "loved the church and gave Yourself for her"* (Eph. 5:25).

Acts 1

Lord, help me understand Your plan for my life as I pray through the book of Acts. Fill me with the Holy Spirit so I can minister in resurrection power as did the believers in the early church. Amen.

[1] Luke reminded Theophilus that his first letter told all that Jesus began to do and teach while He was alive on earth. This second letter tells of the acts of the Holy Spirit through the disciples as they planted the church.

Jesus' Ascension Back to Heaven

2After His death Jesus returned to heaven, {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} but during the 40 days after His crucifixion, 3He appeared to the disciples from time to time {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} where He prepared them for life-long ministry and He demonstrated to them proofs of His deity. 4In His last meeting with them in Jerusalem, Jesus told them not to leave Jerusalem, but to pray until the Holy Spirit came on them in power. 5Jesus reminded them, "John the Baptizer baptized with water, but in a few days I will baptize you with the Holy Spirit." {124 Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer, Gen. 32:30} 6But the disciples didn't understand. They asked, "Lord, will You now restore the kingdom to free us from Rome?" {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 7Jesus answered, "The Father has set that date, and it's not for you to know." 8Jesus said, "But take the gospel into all the world when the Holy Spirit is come on you. Tell them about Me: beginning in Jerusalem, then Judea, next Samaria, and finally to the ends of the earth." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

9When Jesus finished, He was lifted into the sky and disappeared into a cloud, leaving the disciples staring into the sky, looking for Him. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 10Suddenly two men in glistening white robes said to them, 11"Why are you staring into the sky? Jesus has returned to heaven, and one day He will return just as He left." {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7}

Lord, while Your glorified body is at the right hand of the throne of God in heaven, I know You are in my heart. Help me live for You until You return. Amen.

Praying in the Upper Room

Lord, it must have been perplexing to other disciples when Jesus left them. Be with me and let me always feel Your presence. Amen.

12The disciples walked a half mile back into Jerusalem and 13began praying in the upper room, as Jesus instructed. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} The disciples present were Peter, John, James, Andrew, Philip, Thomas, Bartholomew, Matthew, James, the son of Alphaeus, Simon the Zealot, and Judas, son of James. {119 Disciple Fast and Prayer, Matt. 17:21} 14Several women were there, including Mary, the mother of Jesus. 15There were 120 present and they prayed for 10 days.

Finally, Peter stood to address the group, 16"Brothers, it is necessary for us to fulfill the Scriptures about Judas who betrayed Jesus by guiding the mob to arrest Him. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} The Holy Spirit through David predicted what we should do. 17He (Judas) was chosen just as we were, and had part in our ministry, but he lifted up his heel against us."

Remorse and Suicide of Judas

18"Judas purchased a field with the money
he stole from us and he plunged to his
death in that field; all his bowels spilled
on the ground. {267 Judgment Prayer,
Rev. 17:5} 19The news of his death circu-
lated among the people, and they called it
the Field of Blood. 20King David also pre-
dicted in Psalms, 'Let his home be deso-
late, and let no one live there, and let his
work be given to someone else.'" Peter said
they should choose someone to take Judas'
place and join them as witnesses of Jesus'
resurrection. 21"Let us choose someone
who has been with us {382 Problem-Solv-
ing Prayer, Acts 27:33} 22since the baptism
of John and must have seen the physically
resurrected Jesus and been with us since
the ascension." {166 Fellowship-Praying,
1 John 1:3}
23They nominated two men: Joseph Jus-
tus (also called Barsabbas) and Matthias;
24then they prayed that the right man
would be chosen, saying, "O Lord, You
know their hearts, show us which of these
men You have chosen 25as an apostle {207
Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} to replace
Judas, the traitor, who has gone to his
place." 26Then they cast lots {390 Ques-
tionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} and Matthias'
lot was chosen, and he was numbered with
the eleven. {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer,
2 Cor. 2:14}

Waiting in prayer (Acts 1:14) has been an example to believers of all times to "watch and pray" (Matt. 26:41). It suggests (1) we wait in prayer together; (2) we not quit, and (3) we mix believing faith with anticipating prayer. Lord, I will expect You to come at any moment, yet I will live as though You won't come for a thousand years. I will pray for Your return, yet I will pray for strength to serve You until You return. Amen.

Acts 2

The Coming of the Holy Spirit

1When the day of Pentecost had come—
seven weeks and one day since the Pass-
over when Jesus died—they were still
praying in unity in the upper room.
{10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}
2Suddenly they heard a great noise that
sounded like a wind storm that filled the
room where they were praying, but they
were not blown about, nor was the room
disrupted. 3They saw flames of fire in the
air, and it settled on each of them, but no
one was burned. 4And they were all filled
with the Holy Spirit, {167 Filling of the
Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and all began to
speak in foreign languages that they didn't
know. The Holy Spirit gave them this
miraculous ability. {358 Powerful-Minis-
try Prayer, Acts 2:4}

Lord, when I read of the Holy Spirit empowering the disciples, I want the same power in my life, and service for You. Amen.

5Many obedient Jews were in Jerusalem
for Pentecost, having come from many
nations of the earth. 6When they heard the
noise of the mighty wind, they came to see

what was going on. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 7They were surprised {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} to hear their own languages being spoken by the disciples. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} "How can this be," they asked, "these men are from Galilee, 8yet we hear them speaking fluently in our languages?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 9They were Parthians, Medes, and Elamites, and those who live in Mesopotamia and Judea, and Cappadocia, in Pontus and Asia, 10Phrygia and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in parts of Libya near Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, both Jews and Jewish converts, 11Cretans and Arabians. They exclaimed, "We hear them tell the wonderful works of God in our mother tongue." {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 12They were amazed and asked one another, "What does this mean?" 13Others in the crowd mocked the disciples, saying, "They are drunk with new wine." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

Lord, help me to tell everyone what You've done for me, just as the disciples did. May I never keep silent because I'm afraid of what the crowd will think or say. Amen.

Peter Preaching at Pentecost

14Peter with the eleven disciples stood before the crowd to answer them, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} "Listen, you people of Judah, and all who live in Jerusalem, 15these are not drunk as you suppose. It is too early, it's only 9 o'clock in the morning. {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} 16What you see is what was predicted by Joel the prophet, 17'In the last days,' God said, 'I will pour out My Spirit on all mankind {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and your sons and daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams.'" {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18}

Because believers were "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4), the power of the Spirit was poured out on the disciples. The power of the Spirit (1) gives broken people strength, (2) gives weak Christians an opportunity to witness, and (3) produces spiritual phenomena, for example, a sound of wind from heaven and they "spoke in other languages" (Acts 2:4). Lord, fill me with power as I pray so that there will be supernatural results in my life and ministry. Amen.

18"'And on my servants and handmaidens {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 19I will cause miracles in heaven and earth, {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} 20the sun shall become black, and the moon blood red before the awesome day of the Lord arrives. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 21And all who call on the name of the Lord will be saved.' {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

22"Listen, men of Israel! You know God publicly endorsed Jesus of Nazareth by doing miracles through Him. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 23God predetermined for you to

deliver Jesus to the Roman government to murder Him by nailing Him to a cross, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [24]then God released Him from the grip of death and brought Him back to life again because death could not keep Jesus in the grave. [25]David predicted this resurrection when he said, {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 'I saw the LORD before me. He is always by my side, so that I shall not be shaken. [26]Therefore, my heart is filled with rejoicing and my tongue shouts praise to God because I know God will take care of me in death. [27]You will not leave my soul in hell, neither will You let Your Holy Son decay in the grave. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [28]You will give me back my physical life and fill me with joy as I stand in Your presence.'"

[29]Peter continued preaching, saying that David was dead and buried and his tomb was in Jerusalem, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} yet [30]David was a prophet who said, "God has sworn in an oath that the Messiah would be his descendant and sit on the throne." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [31]Seeing the future, David said, "'Messiah would not be abandoned to the grave, even His body would not suffer decay.' {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [32]We are witnesses that God has raised Jesus to new life, [33]then He was exalted to the right hand of God and received by the Father. Then God poured out the promised Holy Spirit {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} as evidenced by what you see and hear among His followers." [34]Then Peter referred to David again. "For David did not ascend to heaven, yet he quoted the Messiah who said, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 'The LORD said to my Lord, sit at My right hand {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [35]until I make Your enemies Your footstool.'

[36]"Therefore, all Israel should realize God the Father has made Jesus—whom you crucified—both Lord and Messiah." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [37]The people were cut to the heart when they heard this, and they asked, "What shall we do?" {202 Grief-Prayer, Eph. 4:30} [38]Peter answered, "Repent, so your sins will be forgiven, and be baptized every one of you in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. [39]This promise is for you, your children, {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} and those in distant lands who will call on the Lord our God." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

Lord, Peter preached a powerful sermon at Pentecost; help me witness for You according to my ability, and according to my opportunities. Amen.

The New Church Was Born

[40]Peter preached a long sermon featuring Jesus, urging all of his listeners to "Save yourself from the punishment that's coming upon this nation." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [41]And approximately three thousand were baptized {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} and joined them.

42They regularly attended the apostles' teachings, {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} and the Lord's Table, and prayer meetings. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} 43A deep awe came on them as many miracles were done by the apostles. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} 44The believers had everything in common, 45selling their belongings to give to anyone who had need. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 46They met together every day in the temple courtyards and broke bread together in homes and shared meals with great joy and thankfulness, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 47praising God. The unsaved were favorable to the believers, and daily God added to the church as people were being saved. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

The early church "continued steadfastly in prayers" (Acts 2:42). Whatever praying the early believers did, they did it daily (Acts 3:1). Apparently this involved private prayers, family prayers, group prayers, and corporate church prayers. Lord, I will pray daily because that's how the early church prayed. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} And I will pray many different ways. Amen.

Acts 3

Healing a Man Born Crippled

Lord, give me a passion to pray at all times, with all people, at all places, for all requests, in all the various ways You've taught us to pray. Amen.

1Peter and John went into the temple at 3:00 p.m. to pray with all those seeking to call on Jesus' name. {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} 2They encountered a lame man at the gate who had never walked in his life. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} Friends brought him there every day. He was begging for alms from worshipers, 3so he asked Peter and John for a gift of charity. 4Peter looked directly at him and said, "Look at us!" 5So the lame man looked at them, expecting to receive some money. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} 6Then Peter said, "I don't have any silver or gold, but I'll give you what I have. In the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, rise up and walk." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 7Then Peter grabbed him by the hand and pulled him to his feet. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} Immediately his feet and ankles were strengthened. 8He leaped up and walked into the temple with them, and he was leaping and dancing and shouting praises to God. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 9The worshipers saw him walking and leaping and 10recognized he was the lame man who begged at the gate. So the crowd was surprised and curious. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 11The other worshipers rushed into Solomon's porch to see the healed man. They stood in awe at the miracle that just happened.

Lord, I stand in awe of Your miracle-working power. Thank You for healing the crippled man at the temple gate. Help me believe You today for other healing events and give me the prayer of faith to pray for those who are sick. Amen.

Peter's Sermon in Response

12Peter realized it was an opportunity to preach, so he said, "Men of Israel, why are you surprised {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10}, and why are you staring at us as though we did this? 13The God of our ancestors has done this miracle. The God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob has done this to honor His servant, Jesus. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} You betrayed Jesus {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} and denied Him before Pilate, even when Pilate decided to let Him go." 14Peter preached straight at them, "You disowned the righteous Jesus and begged for Pilate to give you a murderer instead. 15You were responsible for the death of Christ, but God raised Him from the dead. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} John and I are witnesses of this truth; {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} we saw Him alive. 16This man was healed in the name of Jesus. It was faith in Christ Jesus {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} that gave this man his health and healing, and all of you can see it. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 17I realize that you had no idea what the Jewish leaders were doing to Jesus Christ, 18but the prophets foretold that Messiah would suffer, {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} and through your blindness this came about. 19Now you must repent and turn to God so that your sins can be forgiven, and so God can send to you times of refreshing that come from the presence of God. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 20Then God will send Jesus your Messiah back to you, {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 21but for now He must remain in heaven until the final restoration of all things. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 22This is the prediction of Moses who said, 'The Lord God will raise up a prophet like me, so listen to all His messages. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 23Every soul that will not listen to that prophet shall be utterly destroyed.'" 24Peter continued preaching, "All the prophets from Samuel onward have predicted these days. 25You are the sons of the prophets who have predicted these things, and heirs of the agreement that God made with Abraham {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} that 'Through you shall all the families of the earth be blessed.' {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 26It was you whom God first wanted to bless through His Son Jesus after He had raised Him from the dead by forgiving the sins of every one of you." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

Peter and John went up together to the temple at "the hour of prayer" (Acts 3:1). The verb tense for "went up" suggests they went to pray every day at the same time, that is, at 4:00 p.m., the national hour of prayer.

Apparently they had a habit of praying at the same time; that means some habits are good. {210 Habit-Prayer, Acts 3:1} Lord, help me form good habits that will turn my thinking and actions toward You. Amen.

Acts 4

The Apostles Arrested

[1]While Peter and John were talking to the people, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} the chief priest, captain of the temple guard, and some Sadducees [2]were disturbed that they preached Jesus had risen from the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [3]so they arrested them and put them in jail for the night. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [4]But many believed {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} who heard what they said, so that about five thousand men now believed.

Lord, I know You came first for the salvation of the Jews, but I'm glad You provide salvation for all Gentiles... but most of all for me. Amen.

Peter and John before the Jewish Leaders

[5]The next day the council of Jewish leaders convened in Jerusalem [6]with Annas the high priest, Caiaphas, John, Alexander, and others of the high priest's relatives. [7]Then the two disciples were brought in before them and were asked, "By what name or authority have you done this?" {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [8]Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} answered, "Leaders and elders, [9]are you questioning us about the kindness done to a crippled man, and how he was healed? {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [10]It is high time that you leaders and all Israel realize this miracle was done in the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth! {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} He is the One you crucified, but God raised Him from the dead. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} By the power of Jesus this man stands here healed. [11]Jesus is the Stone which you builders rejected, but now He has become the Cornerstone of the building. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [12]Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among people, whereby we must be saved." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

Lord, give me boldness like Peter to witness for Jesus, especially to those who don't believe in Him. Amen.

The Jewish Leaders Forbid Preaching in Jesus' Name

[13]The Jewish leaders were amazed at the boldness of Peter and John {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} because they were uneducated and ignorant men. The leaders realized they had been with Jesus {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [14]but they couldn't say anything against

the disciples because the healed man was standing with them. [15]So the leaders ordered the disciples to leave the council so they could discuss the issue among themselves. They said, [16]"What are we going to do with these men? It is evident to everyone in Jerusalem that an outstanding miracle has been done by these men, and we can't deny it. [17]Nevertheless, to prevent this thing from spreading, let's command them not to speak in His name again." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [18]So they called Peter and John and commanded them not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [19]Peter and John answered them, "We have to decide whether God wants us to listen to you, more than to Him, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [20]because we cannot stop telling everyone what we have seen and heard." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [21]After more threats, they let Peter and John go because they didn't know how to punish them any further. The people supported them wholeheartedly, glorifying God for the miracle {367 Praise-Worthy Prayer, Luke 10:21} [22]on the man who was over 40 years old.

Lord, all life is in Your hands, I praise You for good health; I praise You for times when You heal and times when You don't. Amen.

The Church Prays

[23]When the apostles were released, they went back to the believers and reported what the chief priest and elders said to them. [24]The Christians raised their voices to God in praise, {9 Agree-Bless Prayer, Matt. 18:19} "Almighty Lord, You have made heaven and earth, the seas and everything in them. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [25]You spoke by the Holy Spirit through David, 'Why do the pagans rage, and the people imagine sinful things, [26]the kings of the earth unite to fight You, and oppose the Messiah, Your Son?'
[27]"For in this city of Jerusalem, the rulers have united to fight against Your Holy Servant, Jesus, the Anointed One. Herod, and Pontius Pilate, and the Roman soldiers, and the people of Israel, have gathered together {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [28]to carry out what You had previously planned to happen. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [29]Now Lord, listen to their threats and give to us, Your servants, boldness to speak Your Word courageously. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [30]Continue to stretch out Your hand to heal and do miracles in the name of Your Holy Servant, Jesus." {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} [31]When they had finished praying, the room was shaken and they were all filled with the Holy Spirit {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and they spoke the Word of God boldly.

Lord, I want to speak boldly for You; fill me with the Holy Spirit and courage. Amen.

The Church Prospers

32All the believers were of one heart and mind {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} and no one was selfish with their belongings, but shared them freely as though their things belonged to everyone. 33The apostles continued witnessing boldly of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} and there was a wonderful spirit of fellowship among them all, {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 34and there was not a single believer in need of anything. Those who owned property sold it and brought the proceeds 35and placed them at the apostles' feet; {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} then distribution was made to all in need. 36Joseph was given the name Barnabas (meaning "Exhorter") by the apostles. Barnabas was a Levite who broke the Mosaic law 37by owning land, so he sold his farm in Cyprus and gave it to the church. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1}

When the church was threatened with violent punishment, they gathered and prayed large, which means they were not scared of punishment, but rather they feared God. {273 Large-Praying, Acts 4:23-31} Praying large means (1) acknowledging the greatness of God (v. 24); (2) giving Jesus a large place in their lives (vs. 25-28); (3) submitting to God's will, not their own (v. 29); (4) praying for God to do a large work (v. 30). As a result of large praying, God came to the prayer meeting with His presence; He filled the believers with the Holy Spirit and they spoke the Word of God with boldness (v. 31). Lord, teach me to pray large, and keep me from being little. Amen.

Acts 5

The Sin and Judgment of Ananias and Sapphira

1Another man who owned property named Ananias agreed with his wife, Sapphira, to sell it, 2but they kept back part of the price for themselves. Ananias placed the remaining money at the apostles' feet, {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 3but Peter said, "Why have you let satan fill your heart to cheat the Holy Spirit? {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} Why have you kept part of the price for the land? 4The land didn't need to be sold since it was yours; the price for the land was also yours. Why have you thought you could deceive God? {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} You have not lied to the church; you've lied to God!" {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 5When Ananias heard this condemnation, he collapsed and died, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and all who heard it were terrified. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 6The young men covered him with a sheet, and then buried him. 7About three hours later, his wife came into the assembly, not knowing what happened to her husband. 8Peter asked her, "Did you sell your land for so much?" "Yes," she answered, "that was the price." 9Peter asked, "Why did you agree to cheat the Holy Spirit? {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} 10The

young men who buried your husband are at the door." Immediately she collapsed and died. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} The young men buried her next to her husband, [11]and terror gripped the young church, {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} and no one was tempted again to lie or cheat God in any way.

Is there ever a time that a believer can pray judgment on someone because they hinder the work of God, or their sin is an attack on God? Here Ananias and Sapphira were judged for their sin. The Jewish sorcerer was struck blind for hindering Paul's sermon (Acts 13:6-12). Note the following guidelines: (1) the sin must be against God, and not just something to irritate or embarrass the believer; (2) judgment does not come from the believer who prays, but from God Himself; (3) expect persecution that is promised by God (John 15:18-25), realizing you may not be delivered; (4) realize there is no command to "strike out" or pray judgmentally at those who persecute you; and (5) the Bible teaches us to bless those who persecute us, rather than to pray judgmentally against them (Matt. 5:43-46; Luke 6:27-38). Lord, teach me how to respond to persecution and keep me in my hour of trial. Draw me closer to You when trials come. Teach me how to pray against those who persecute me, or sin against You. Amen.

Victory in the Early Church

[12]The apostles were meeting regularly at Solomon's porch in the temple and doing miracles among the people. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [13]But some were afraid to join them for the wrong reasons. The believers were well respected by people in general. [14]As a result more and more men and women became believers in growing numbers. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [15]Many signs and wonders were being done by the apostles, and as a result people brought the sick to the streets and laid them down so Peter's shadow might fall on them. [16]A large crowd of people came from other cities, bringing their sick {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} and those who were demon-possessed, {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} so they could be healed by the apostles.

Lord, keep me excited with the work of evangelism so that many people will become Christians by my ministry. Amen.

The Second Persecution

[17]The high priest and the Sadducees reacted to the work of the apostles, and in jealousy [18]they had the apostles arrested and put in a common prison. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [19]But an angel of the Lord came at night and opened the door {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and led them out, telling them: [20]"Go stand in the temple and tell people about the Christian life." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [21]About sunup they went into the temple and began to preach. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} Later

the members of the Sanhedrin arrived, and gathered the Senate and sent for the apostles to come from the jail. [22]The officers could not find them in the prison. They reported, [23]"We found the jail locked, and guards on duty, but when we opened the door, no one was there." {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [24]The Sanhedrin was mystified, wondering what happened to their prisoners. [25]Then someone arrived to announce that the prisoners were preaching in the temple. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [26]The captain went with guards to get them, but didn't use any violence because they feared the crowd, [27]so they brought them to the Sanhedrin. [28]The high priest said, "We gave you strict orders not to teach in this name, but you have filled Jerusalem with your teaching, and accused us of the death of Jesus." {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} [29]Peter replied, "We must obey God and not men. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [30]The God of our ancestors raised Jesus up from the dead because you had Him executed on a wooden Roman cross. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [31]God has exalted this man to His own right hand as Prince and Savior {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} for the forgiveness of Israel's sins. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [32]We are witnesses of the resurrection and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey Him." {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}

[33]When the Sanhedrin heard this, they were furious and wanted to execute them, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [34]but Gamaliel, a Pharisee and teacher greatly respected by all, stood and gave orders for the apostles to be taken outside. [35]Gamaliel said, "Men and brethren, be careful what action you take against these men. [36]Remember a man named Theudus who claimed to be something great? He had a following of 400 men. When Theudus was killed, his followers were dispersed and the threat was gone; [37]also remember Judas who had a great following. When Judas was killed, his followers dispersed. [38]I suggest you leave the apostles alone; if their movement is of men, it will break up of its own accord. [39]If their movement is of God, you can't do anything about it, and you may find yourself fighting against God." {76 Common-Sense Praying, Gen. 24:12-14}

[40]The advice of Gamaliel was accepted. They called in the apostles and warned them not to preach in this name; {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} then they flogged them and let them go. [41]The apostles left the Sanhedrin rejoicing {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} because they had been counted worthy to suffer for the name of Jesus. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [42]Day after day, they did not cease preaching and teaching Jesus Christ from house to house and in the temple courts. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, thank You for the courage and boldness of the early church. May I always live for You with the same level of courage. Thank

You for using the early church to reach people for Jesus; use me as a witness in the lives of lost people. Amen.

Acts 6

Internal Problems in the Early Church

[1]Even though believers were multiplying in the early church, {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} there were rumblings of discontent among them. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} The Hellenistic widows born outside the Holy Land were complaining about the Jewish widows born in the Holy Land, because they were being discriminated against when food was daily passed out to those in need. [2]The twelve apostles called the multitude of Christians together and explained that it was not appropriate for them to spend their time supervising a humanitarian hot-food kitchen. {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4} [3]They explained, "Look around and pick seven men of good reputation, practical minded, and filled with the Holy Spirit and faith {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} who can administer this program. [4]We will spend our time in prayer and preaching the Word of God." {88 Continue in Prayer, Luke 11:8-10} [5]There was unanimous approval from the multitude, so they chose seven Hellenistic men beginning with Stephen because he was filled with the Holy Spirit. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} They also chose Philip, Procorus, Nicanor, Timon, Parmenas, and Nicholas of Antioch who had just become a Christian. [6]These seven men were brought before the apostles who laid their hands on them and committed them to God. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [7]As a result, the Word of God reached a larger circle of listeners and the number of disciples multiplied greatly. Also a number of priests—those who hated Christianity—were saved when they saw how the early church handled its money problems and internal griping. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26}

The early church faced a problem of a crowded agenda. Should the apostles take time away from Bible and prayer to serve tables? The problem was not an inferior work, but an interrupting work. It was a matter of priority. So they delegated their work schedule so the work of God could go forward. Lord, give me such a deep passion for prayer that I'll always want to spend more time in prayer than working with my hands. Teach me how to prioritize my life so I'll always do the most important things first. Amen.

The Ministry of Stephen the Deacon

[8]Stephen, a deacon filled with the Holy Spirit and power, {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} worked miracles and signs among the masses. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [9]He got opposition from the synagogues of freemen, Hellenistic Jews from Cyrene, Alexandria, Cilicia,

and Asia. [10]They debated with Stephen, but couldn't answer his wisdom and spirit. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [11]So the freemen brought in men to lie, saying Stephen cursed Moses and God. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [12]This stirred up the people, the elders and teachers of the law, so they seized Stephen and brought him before the Sanhedrin [13]to face false witnesses, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} who said Stephen spoke against the Holy Spirit and the law, [14]also claiming Stephen said, "Jesus will destroy the temple and change the customs handed down by Moses." [15]The members of the Sanhedrin saw Stephen's face become as radiant as an angel's face. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, when I take a bold stand against Your enemies, may they experience Your love flowing through my life and may they see Your beauty in my countenance. Amen.

Acts 7

The Sermon by Stephen

[1]The high priest asked if the charges against Stephen were true. [2]Stephen answered, "My brothers, and fathers, listen to me. The God of glory appeared to Abraham while he was in Mesopotamia {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} before Abraham went to Haran. [3]God said, 'Leave your country and family and go to a land I will show you.' [4]So Abraham left Chaldea and settled in Haran, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} staying there until his father died. Then Abraham left to come to this land where we now live today, [5]but God did not give him the land {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} while he was alive, but promised to give it to him and his descendants, even though he was childless when the promise was made. [6]Then God told him, 'Your descendants will be strangers in a foreign country, where they will become slaves and be oppressed for 400 years.' [7]God promised to judge the nation that enslaved them. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} Then God promised His people that they would worship Him in this land." {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Lord, Stephen thought it was important to show that You spoke to people who were not in the Promised Land. That meant You were offering salvation to Gentiles outside the Promised Land. Stephen was laying a foundation to prove You would bless the apostles as they went to preach to every person, beginning at Jerusalem, then going to Judea, Samaria, and all the world. Amen.

[8]Stephen continued preaching, "God made a covenant of circumcision with them, so Isaac was circumcised on the eighth day. Isaac did the same for Jacob, and Jacob did it for his twelve sons who became the twelve patriarchs. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [9]The patriarchs were jealous of Joseph and sold him into slavery in Egypt, but God was with him.

{377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}
10God rescued Joseph and made him wise
enough to get Pharaoh's attention, {458
Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} who
then made him governor of Egypt."

Lord, You called Your servant Joseph to serve You but the Jewish establishment rejected him, just as they rejected Jesus. Lord, this helps me understand why the religious establishment rejects Jesus today. Amen.

11Stephen continued preaching, "When
famine caused suffering and devastation
throughout Egypt and Canaan, {465 Suf-
fering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} our ances-
tors had nothing to eat. 12When Jacob
heard there was grain for sale in Egypt, he
sent his 10 sons there on their first visit to
buy food. 13On the second visit, Joseph
made himself known to his brothers, and
then told Pharaoh about his family 14and
called his father and all his relatives to him.
15Jacob went to live in Egypt, where he and
his family died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer,
Ps. 88:3} 16Their bones were brought back
and buried at Shechem in the tomb Abra-
ham purchased from Hamor, the father of
Shechem."

Lord, when I read how enemies persecuted Your people in Scripture, it helps me understand why the world persecutes Your people today. Amen.

17Stephen continued preaching, "The
nation of Israel grew larger in Egypt. {47
Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 18A
new king took the throne who didn't know
Joseph. 19He oppressed our people and
victimized our ancestors, {349 Persecu-
tion-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} and forced par-
ents to abandon their babies. 20During this
time Moses was born. He was no ordinary
child; for three months he was cared for at
home. 21But when Moses was exposed to
Pharaoh's daughter, she adopted him and
raised him as her own child. 22Moses was
taught all the wisdom of the Egyptians
and became mighty in speech and actions.
{364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen.
45:5} 23At the age of 40 he decided to visit
his Jewish people, 24and when he saw one
of his fellow countrymen being abused,
he defended him by killing the Egyptian.
25Moses thought the Jews would under-
stand that God would use him to deliver
them, but they didn't understand {506
Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24}
nor respond positively to him. 26The next
day Moses saw two Israelites fighting and
he separated them. 27The attacker said,
'Who made you our leader and judge?
28Will you kill me as you did the Egyptian
yesterday?' 29Moses fled when he heard
this, realizing his actions were known.
{142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}
He went to the land of Midian where he
became father of two sons. {430 Sepa-
ration-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 30Forty years
later in the desert near Mount Sinai, an
angel appeared to him in the flames of
a burning bush. {377 Presence of God-
Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 31He was curious, {470
Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} so he
drew closer to the bush. A voice said, 32'I
am the God of your ancestors, the God of

Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob.' Moses trembled {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} and couldn't look at the fire. 33The LORD said, 'Take off your shoes because you are standing on holy ground.' {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 34'The LORD also said, 'I have seen the suffering of My people, and I have heard their cries for deliverance, and I have come down to deliver them. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} Go deliver My people from Egypt.' {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} 35This was the same Moses they rejected saying, 'Who made you our leader and judge?' Now Moses was sent by God {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} to be both leader and judge, 36and he performed miracles and signs in Egypt, then led them through the Red Sea and through the desert 40 years. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} 37Moses told the people, 'God will raise up a prophet for you, like myself, from among your people.' 38Moses was the mediator between the people and God; he gave them the living law of God from Mount Sinai. 39But the people rejected Moses, and wanted to return to Egypt. 40They asked Aaron to make idols for them so they could have gods to lead them back to Egypt. 41They made a golden calf and offered sacrifices to it {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} and were happy in what they were doing. 42God gave them up and let them worship the sun, the moon, and the stars as their gods. In the book of Amos, the LORD God asks, 'Were you sacrificing to Me 40 years in the wilderness? 43No! You carried the sanctuary of Moloch on your backs, and you carried the star-god of Rephan in your hearts. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} You worshiped idols that you made so I will exile you to Babylon.' {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 44While in the desert, our ancestors carried the tabernacle with them {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} that Moses had them construct from the pattern that God gave him." 45Stephen continued preaching, "It was handed down from one generation to another until Joshua conquered the nations and drove them out {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and the tabernacle was set up in the new territory. 46Israel worshiped in the tabernacle until the time of David who found favor before God. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} Then he asked for permission to build a temple for Israel, 47though Solomon actually built the house of God. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 48Even so, the Most High does not live in a house built by human hands, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} as the prophet quoted the Lord, saying, 49'Heaven is My home, the earth is My footstool, what kind of home could you build for Me? 50Didn't I make the heavens and the earth?'" {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}

Lord, so many people are turning to sin, turning from You and turning to the world. Also people with a hardened heart are persecuting Your preachers. Lord, may I never be a persecutor of others. Amen.

[51]Stephen continued preaching, "You are stiff-necked with a pagan heart; you are resisting the Holy Spirit, {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} just as your ancestors. [52]Name one prophet your ancestors didn't persecute. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} In the past they killed the prophets who predicted the coming of the Just One; the One you betrayed and murdered. [53]You had the law given to you by angels, but you have deliberately destroyed it." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

[54]They were outraged when they heard these stinging accusations against themselves. [55]Stephen was filled with the Holy Spirit, and {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} looked into heaven and saw the glory of God and Jesus standing at God's right hand. [56]He said, "I see the heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God." {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [57]But they covered their ears with their hands and furiously yelled at him, [58]and rushed at him and carried him out of the city and stoned him. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} They dropped their coats at the feet of a young man named Saul and stoned Stephen who [59]called on God, saying, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} Then kneeling, [60]Stephen cried out to God, "Lord, forgive their sin," {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} and with these words, he died. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13}

As Stephen was dying, he prayed, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit" (Acts 7:59). It's the same type of prayer Jesus prayed at His death, "Father, into Your hands I commit My Spirit" (Luke 23:46). John Wesley said to his Methodists, "Die well" because they would stay firm in their faith to the very end. They did not let pain or doubts about death weaken their faith. Lord, I don't want to die. I don't like pain, and I don't like the thought of a frail emaciated body that is crippled or tormented by sickness. You control the moments of my death; I will come home when You call. If I come home in the rapture, that's even better; even so come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Acts 8

Christians Leave Jerusalem

[1]Saul approved of the death of Stephen and immediately that day a storm of persecution erupted in Jerusalem against the church {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} and believers fled into the countrysides of Judea and Samaria to escape persecution, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} except the apostles. [2]However, some reverently buried Stephen and mourned for him. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [3]Saul then worked feverishly to destroy all remains of the church, by going house to house, dragging men and women to prison. [4]But Christians were scattered everywhere, preaching the Word. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

Lord, thank You for the example of martyrs who gave all in death; others were willing to suffer or go to prison for You. I'll give You everything in life, and if I have to suffer or die, give me the spirit to do all for Your glory. Amen.

Philip Ministers in Samaria

5So Philip the deacon went to Samaria to preach Christ. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 6The crowds paid close attention to what Philip preached because they heard about what he did and saw his miracles. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} 7Evil spirits screamed {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} as they were cast out of their victims and the paralyzed and lame were healed; {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 8as a result, there was great joy in the city.

9A man named Simon had formerly been practicing magic {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} and amazed crowds by the mystifying things he did. 10The people said, "Simon must be sent by God." 11Previously the people had listened to him because of his magic but Simon became a believer when Philip preached. 12Many men and women were converted and baptized {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} because of Philip who preached the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 13Simon also was baptized because he believed. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} Simon followed Philip everywhere he went because he was amazed at the miracles he saw. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 14When the apostles in Jerusalem heard all that was happening in Samaria, they sent Peter and John to check it out. 15Peter and John prayed for the Samaritans to receive the Holy Spirit. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} 16They had been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, but they had not received the Holy Spirit. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12}17So the apostles laid hands on the people and prayed for them, and they received the Holy Spirit. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 18When Simon saw that the people received the Holy Spirit, {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} he wanted the same power in his hands. So Simon offered them money, saying, 19"Give me this power so I can lay hands on people so they can receive the Holy Spirit." {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 20Peter erupted, "Your money will go to hell, and you with it because you think money can buy what God gives for free. 21You have no part in this ministry because your heart is not right with God. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} 22Turn from your wickedness {339 Overcoming-God's Inertia Prayer, Exod. 32:30-32} and pray to God. Perhaps He will forgive your sin {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} for thinking this evil. 23It is plain that you are a prisoner of greed." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 24Simon cried out, "Pray for me that nothing you said will happen to me." {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 25The apostles preached in that city,

{478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} and many other Samaritan villages. Then they returned to Jerusalem. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, Simon the sorcerer was told, "You are a prisoner of greed" (Acts 8:23). This scared him so greatly that he said, "Pray for me that nothing you said will happen to me" (Acts 8:24). Lord, that's my prayer. Amen.

Philip Ministers to the Ethiopian Eunuch

[26]The angel of the Lord then spoke to Philip, "Go south to the route through the desert from Jerusalem to Gaza." {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [27]There Philip saw {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} an important Ethiopian official {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} who was returning [28]from worshiping in Jerusalem. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} This Ethiopian was the country's treasurer, who was reading the book of Isaiah out loud {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} to his entourage as he rode along in his chariot. [29]The Holy Spirit told Philip, "Go meet this man." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} As [30]Philip approached, he heard the man reading from Isaiah. Philip asked, "Do you understand what you're reading?" {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [31]"How can I," the man answered, "unless someone helps me;" so the Ethiopian invited Philip to ride with him. [32]He was reading, "He was like sheep that was led to the slaughter, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} like a lamb, He said nothing before His shearers, He never opened His mouth. [33]He was humiliated, but no one defended Him. Who will ever talk about His descendants, since His life is cut short on earth?" [34]The eunuch asked Philip, "Is this passage a reference to the prophet who wrote it, or to someone else?" [35]Beginning with this text, Philip explained to him the good news of Jesus Christ. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [36]A little farther on they came to a pool of water. The eunuch said, "Look, here is water. Is there any reason why I can't be baptized right here {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} right now?" [37]Philip said, "You may, if you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [38]The eunuch ordered the chariot to stop. Then the eunuch and Philip went down into the water and Philip baptized him. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [39]After they came out of the water, the Holy Spirit took Philip away. The eunuch never saw him again, and the treasurer went on his way rejoicing. [40]Philip was at Azotus, and continued preaching the good news in every town until he got to Caesarea. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, may I always rejoice when someone gets saved and baptized; help me be a faithful witness to lost people. Lord, there are many religious people who are blinded to the truth, even as the eunuch who didn't

understand the Scriptures he read. May I be able to help them understand Your truth, and lead them to salvation through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Acts 9

The Conversion of Saul

[1]Meanwhile Saul was still threatening to destroy every Christian. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [2]He had a letter from the high priest that gave him authority to arrest Christians in Damascus and bring them to Jerusalem. [3]Suddenly as he almost reached Damascus, a blinding light from heaven shone all about him. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [4]Saul fell to the ground and heard a voice saying, "Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?" {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [5]Saul answered, "Who are You, Lord?" {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} The voice answered, "I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [6]Now get up and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [7]The men traveling with Saul stood speechless. They heard the sound, but didn't see anyone. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [8]Saul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing. He was blind, so they led him into the city of Damascus. [9]While he remained blind for three days he ate and drank nothing. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7}

Lord, I've met You and was saved. While my conversion was not as dramatic as Saul's, I nevertheless know You are real; I once was blind in my sin, but now I see. Amen.

[10]In Damascus there was a follower of Christ named Ananias. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} The Lord called him by name in a dream. He responded, "Here I am, Lord." {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [11]"Go to the street called Straight," the Lord said, "to the house of Judah and ask for Saul from Tarsus. He is praying there. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [12]Saul knows you are coming to lay hands on his eyes to restore his sight." {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [13]But Ananias replied, "Lord, I have heard evil reports about this man. He has done terrible things to Your servants, and {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [14]he has come with authority to arrest those who call on Your name." [15]The Lord said to Ananias, "Go pray for him because I have chosen Saul to preach My name before Gentiles and kings, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [16]and he will suffer much for My name's sake." {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [17]So Ananias found Saul {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and laid hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus who appeared to you on the road sent me so you will be filled with the Holy Spirit {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and get your sight back." [18]Instantly the scales fell from his eyes and Saul could see. Then

he was baptized, and he was strengthened when he ate. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12; 463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [19]Saul stayed with Christians in Damascus for a while.

Paul was determined to arrest and persecute Christians in Damascus. Then he met the Lord and prayed, "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:6, KJV). Because sin is so pervasive, and salvation so all-consuming that no "half-way" prayer will save a person, he must make Jesus the Lord of his life to be saved. Lord, You became the Lord of my life when I accepted You as my Savior. Now I will serve You as my King. Amen.

Saul Begins Preaching the Gospel

[20]Immediately Saul went to the synagogues to preach the good news that Jesus is indeed the Son of God. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [21]All who heard Saul were amazed, and asked, "Isn't this the man who arrested Christians in Jerusalem and came here to do the same thing?" [22]Saul became more fervent in preaching, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} and the Damascus synagogue was silenced by the strength of Saul's preaching that Jesus is the Christ. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16}

[23]After a time, the Jews plotted to kill Saul, {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [24]but he heard about it. The assassins waited at the gate night and day, [25]but at night the believers helped Saul escape over the wall in a basket. {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [26]When Saul got to Jerusalem, he tried to join the Christians but they were afraid of him. They were not sure Saul was a true believer. [27]Barnabas received Saul and introduced him to the apostles, and explained how the Lord appeared to Saul, and what the Lord had said to him, and how Saul had preached boldly in the name of Jesus in the synagogue in Damascus. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [28]Then the believers accepted Saul, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [29]and he preached boldly among them. Some Greek-speaking Jews to whom Saul preached plotted to murder him. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} [30]The believers heard about it and took Saul to Caesarea, and then sent him to his hometown in Tarsus. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [31]Although the church was no longer threatened by persecution, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} the believers grew in number {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} and spiritual maturity. They no longer worried about persecution, but they feared the Lord {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} because the Holy Spirit was their Comforter.

Lord, help me to be a persistent witness to You even when people refuse to believe and reject my message. May opposition make me stronger in my faith and more determined to serve You. Amen.

Ministry of Peter

32Peter was traveling to evangelize the lost and encourage the churches. When he came to Lydda, 33he found Aeneas who had been paralyzed eight years. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} 34Peter said, "Aeneas, Jesus Christ heals you. Get up and fold your mat." He was healed instantly. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 35Everyone living in the area turned to the Lord when they saw Aeneas walking. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 36A woman named Dorcas, who lived in Joppa, died; she was a believer who always did kind things for others, especially the poor. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 37Her friends prepared the body for burial and placed it in an upstairs room. 38When the people learned Peter was nearby, they sent two men to bring him to Joppa. 39When Peter arrived, he went upstairs to where Dorcas lay. The room was filled with widows {474 Tears in Prayer, Luke 6:21} who showed Peter the clothes Dorcas had made for them. 40Peter sent the ladies out of the room {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} and knelt to pray. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Peter turned to the dead body and said, "Tabitha, stand up"; {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23} she opened her eyes, looked at Peter, and sat up. 41Peter helped her to her feet and presented her to the believers. {397 Rejoicing in Prayer, Ps. 5:11} 42When the people of Joppa heard of the miracle, many of them believed in the Lord. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 43Peter stayed there for some time, living with Simon, the tanner.

Lord, I know You can do all things, I praise You that You hold life and health in Your hands. Give me faith to trust You to do miracles. When I don't know how to pray, teach me how, and show me the things for which I must pray. Amen.

Acts 10

God Sends a Message to Cornelius

1A captain named Cornelius in the Italian regiment of the Roman Army was stationed at the military fortress in Caesarea. 2He was a religious man who led his whole family to worship God {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} and give to the poor, and he prayed constantly. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} 3About 3:00 in the afternoon. Cornelius saw an angel come to him in a vision. As he stared at the angel in fear, {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} 4Cornelius said, "What do you want with me?" The angel answered, "God has heard your prayers, and seen your works for the poor, so now He will answer you. 5Send some men to Joppa to get Simon Peter, 6who is a guest in the home of Simon, the tanner, who lives by the sea." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 7When the angel went away, Cornelius told what happened to two of his servants and a soldier who was religious; 8he then sent them to Joppa to get Peter.

Lord, I'm glad You have compassion on extremely religious people who seek You,

but have never heard the gospel. Thank You for making a way for people like Cornelius to hear the gospel; I pray for the billions of unsaved people who have never heard. Stir their hearts to seek salvation in Christ as You did Cornelius. Amen.

Peter's Vision and His Response

9As they approached Joppa the next day about noon, Peter was praying up on the rooftop while the others were preparing lunch. {97 Daily-Prayer, Acts 2:42} 10Peter was ready to eat. It was then Peter had a vision {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} 11in which he saw heaven opened and a large sheet being lowered by the four corners. 12In it were all kinds of animals, reptiles, and wild birds. 13He heard a voice say, "Get up, Peter, kill and eat." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 14Peter answered, "I can't do that, Lord. I have never eaten anything that was unclean or defiled." {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 15The voice spoke again, "Do not call anything unclean that God has cleansed." 16This happened three times, then the sheet was taken back to heaven. 17As Peter was thinking about what just happened, the men sent by Cornelius arrived at the gate of the house. 18They called out, "Is there a guest here by the name of Simon Peter?" {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} 19Peter was still trying to understand what he saw when the Spirit of God said, "Three men are looking for you. 20Do not hesitate to go with them {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} for I have sent them." 21Then Peter went down and told them, "I am Peter. Why have you come looking for me?" 22They told Peter, "Our leader, Cornelius, sent us to invite you to come to his house so he could hear what you have to say." They also told Peter that Cornelius was a good man who worshiped God, and the Jewish people respected him. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, I'm grateful for those who go to the billions who have never heard. Some go to dangerous situations, some give up riches and positions. Bless those who preach the gospel to those who have never heard; may many hear and believe and be saved. Lord, I'm willing to go where You send me, and I'm willing to do anything You want me to do. Guide me today. Amen.

Peter and Cornelius Exchange Greetings

23Peter invited the men into the house, and they stayed the night with Peter. 24The following day Peter arrived in Caesarea at Cornelius' house where he was waiting for Peter with all his relations and friends. 25As Peter was about to enter, Cornelius met him and bowed at his feet, saying he was unworthy to receive Peter. 26But Peter made him rise, saying, "Stand up, I am only a man." 27Peter went inside with Cornelius where he found a crowd and said, 28"You know that a Jew can't associate with Gentiles." Peter explained, "God has shown me that I must not consider any person ritually unclean or defiled. 29Therefore I came without objection. Now, why did you

send for me?" {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [30]Cornelius explained, "About this time three days ago I was praying in my house when suddenly a man in shining garments appeared to me, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} saying, [31]'God has heard your prayers, and seen your charity. [32]Send your servants to Joppa for a man named Peter, who is a guest at the home of Simon a tanner.' {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [33]Thank you for coming at once, and {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} now we are all here in the presence of God {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} waiting to hear anything God has told you to say to us." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, there are many who are hungry to hear the good news; may I always be willing and ready to tell them about Jesus. Amen.

Peter's Sermon in Cornelius' Home

[34]Then Peter spoke to the gathering, "God does not play favorites, [35]but He accepts people from any nation who do the right things. [36]God sent His message of peace through Jesus Christ to Israel because Jesus is Lord of all. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [37]You know what happened throughout Judea. Beginning in Galilee, after the Baptism of John, [38]God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and power. He went about doing good, healing all that were under the devil's power, because God was with Him. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} [39]We are witnesses of everything Jesus did in Judea and Jerusalem, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} and we saw that they killed Him by hanging Jesus on a tree. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [40]Yet three days later God raised Him from the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [41]and He was seen by witnesses God had chosen. Now we are those witnesses, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} and we have eaten and drunk with Him after He was raised from the dead. [42]Now God has commanded us to tell people everywhere that He has appointed Jesus to judge everyone, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} alive or dead, [43]and the prophets witness to this fact that all who believe in Jesus will have their sins forgiven through His name." {143 Establishing Doctrine by Prayer, Titus 1:5}

Lord, remind me how simple the plan of salvation is. People only have to believe in Jesus to be saved. I praise You that Peter went to people of different cultures and customs; may I always be willing to share the gospel with all people, no matter if they are different from me or not. Amen.

Gentiles Are Baptized with the Holy Spirit and Water

[44]While Peter was speaking, the Holy Spirit was poured out on those who were listening to Peter's sermon. {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} [45]The Jewish Christians who came with

Peter were astonished {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} that the Holy Spirit was poured out on Gentiles {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [46]because they were speaking in unknown languages {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} and praising God. [47]Peter said, "Can anyone refuse water baptism {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} to these who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did on Pentecost?" {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [48]He then gave instructions to baptize them in the name of Jesus Christ. Then Cornelius asked Peter to stay a few days.

Cornelius was an unsaved army officer, yet he was morally good and pious. He "prayed to God always" (Acts 10:2). His prayers didn't get him saved, but they came before God "for a memorial" (Acts 10:4). A "memorial" means a place of remembering, therefore God remembered Cornelius and gave him instructions on how to hear the message of salvation. God does not answer the prayers of a Hindu, Islamic, Buddhist, or a person in any other religion; He especially does not hear prayers offered to idols (1 Cor. 10:20). That is because Jesus is the only access to the Father (John 14:6; Acts 4:12). Yet if a person prays conscientiously to the God of Creation who is greater than all religions, then God will honor that prayer and arrange for him or her to hear the message of salvation. Father, I come to You in the name of Jesus because He is the only way of salvation. Amen.

Acts 11

Peter Explains His Actions to the Jerusalem Church

[1]The apostles and brethren in Judea were critical when they heard that Gentiles had accepted the Word of God and been baptized. [2]When Peter visited Jerusalem, those who still demanded circumcision were critical [3]because Peter visited {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} and ate with Gentiles. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} [4]Peter reported on how it happened. [5]He said, "I was praying in Joppa when I had a vision {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} of a big sheet let down from heaven by its four corners. [6]I saw in it all types of beasts, reptiles, and birds. [7]Then I heard a voice from heaven, 'Get up Peter, kill and eat,' {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [8]but I answered, 'I can't do that, Lord, because I have never eaten anything that was unclean or defiled.' {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [9]Then I heard the voice a second time saying, 'Do not call anything unclean that God has cleansed.' {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [10]This happened three times and then the sheet was taken back to heaven. [11]Just as that happened, three men sent by Cornelius arrived at the gate. They said they were sent from Caesarea to get me, {70 Circumstantial-Prayer, Rom. 8:28} and [12]the Holy Spirit told me not to hesitate to go with them." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Then Peter explained, "These six brothers standing here went with me and we went into Cornelius' home. [13]He told us that while he was praying he saw an angel

who told him, 'Send to Joppa to get Simon Peter [14]who will give you a message that will save you and your household.'" {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [15]Peter continued, "While I was preaching, the Holy Spirit fell on them, as it had fallen on us at Pentecost. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [16]Then I remembered the promise of Jesus, 'John indeed baptized with water, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} but you will be baptized by the Holy Spirit.' [17]Since God has done for Gentiles the exact same gift He did for us when we believed on Him, {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} who was I to stand in God's way of doing things?" [18]Peter's explanation satisfied them and they glorified God. They concluded, "Evidently God has given to the Gentiles repentance to eternal life." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I'm grateful when Christians work out their misunderstandings; I'm especially thankful when they listen to one another before criticizing them. Give me patience when I disagree with others, and help me listen to people before I criticize them. Amen.

The Church at Antioch

[19]Those who fled Jerusalem when Saul persecuted Christians {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} had traveled as far as Phoenicia, Cyprus, and Antioch. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [20]At Antioch, they shared the gospel with Greeks, giving the good news of Jesus Christ to them as well as Jews. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [21]God worked powerfully and a large number of Gentiles turned to the Lord. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [22]When this news reached the church in Jerusalem, they sent Barnabas to check out the church in Antioch. [23]When Barnabas arrived, he rejoiced at what God was doing and he encouraged them to be strong in the faith. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [24]Barnabas was a good man, full of the Holy Spirit and faith, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and as a result a number of people became Christians. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [25]Then Barnabas went to Tarsus to find Saul, [26]and brought Saul back to Antioch where he taught the believers for a year. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} In Antioch believers were first called Christians. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

Lord, I rejoice when the gospel is spread to places where people don't know You. May I do all I can to help plant new churches, to evangelize areas that need the good news. Amen.

Help for the Jerusalem Church

[27]Some prophets came down to Antioch from Jerusalem. [28]And one of them, Agabus, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} predicted that a great famine was coming {57 Calamity-Praying, Hos. 5:15} before the end of the reign of Claudius. [29]The believers at Antioch decided to send

supplies to the church in Jerusalem so each believer gave what they could afford. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 30Barnabas and Saul delivered the supplies to Jerusalem.

The model church is where "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch" (Acts 11:26, KJV). We should not look to a huge megachurch as an example for ministry, nor should we look to a church where a well-known man pastors. We should measure our church by the ministry of the church in Antioch. Lord, I want to live like the Christians in Scripture, and I want my church to minister like the one at Antioch. Amen.

Acts 12

James Killed—Peter Imprisoned

1About this time King Herod began persecuting the church in Jerusalem, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} where 2he had James, the brother of John, put to death with the sword. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13}
3When he saw it pleased the Jews, he arrested Peter and imprisoned him because it was the festival of Passover, and Herod intended to bring Peter to trial after Passover. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} 4Peter was guarded by four squads of four soldiers each and 5as Peter was in prison, the church prayed earnestly for him. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} 6Peter was chained to two soldiers, sleeping between them, and there were two guards at the entrance. 7Suddenly there was a light in the cell and an angel stood next to Peter. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} He had to shake Peter to awaken him. The angel said, "Get up quickly," and the chains fell off Peter. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 8Then the angel said, "Get dressed—don't forget your shoes—and follow me." {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 9Peter thought it was a dream, and he didn't believe it was happening. 10They passed the first and second cells, then came to the iron gate that led to the city. It opened by itself. They walked out into the street, and as they were walking, the angel disappeared. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 11Finally Peter realized, "This is happening! The Lord has sent an angel {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} to rescue me from Herod and all that the Jewish leaders wanted to do to me." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}
12Peter went to the home of Mary, the mother of John Mark, where Christians had gathered to pray for him. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} 13When Peter knocked at the outer gate, Rhoda, a servant girl, looked out and recognized him. 14She got so excited she didn't open the gate {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} but ran to tell everyone. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 15They said, "You're out of your mind," {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} but Rhoda kept saying Peter was at the gate. They thought Peter had been executed and that his angel was at the gate. 16Peter kept knocking, and when they opened the gate, they were amazed that it really

was Peter. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 17Peter raised his hand to stop their talking, and then he told them how the Lord had led him out of the prison. Peter instructed them to tell James, the Lord's brother and others; then he went to a place where Herod couldn't find him. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} 18At dawn, there was a great commotion at the jail over the disappearance of Peter. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 19They searched thoroughly for Peter and when he couldn't be found, Herod ordered the guards executed.

Lord, some of Your servants are martyred like James. If that's my lot, have Your way in my life. Lord, if You deliver me from persecution, like Peter, I'll praise You for an easy life; may I always serve You, no matter what happens to me. Amen.

Herod Judged

20Herod lived at Caesarea in the summer time. While there the people of Tyre and Sidon sought an audience with the king because there was a quarrel between them and Herod. Blastus, a trusted servant of Herod, worked out a compromise because the people needed Herod's permission for their food supply. 21When the day came for the people to meet Herod, he addressed them wearing his crown and royal regalia. 22The people shouted, "This is the voice of a god, not of man," {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} and they gave him a rousing ovation. 23Instantly, an angel from God struck him with a disease, {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} and he was filled with maggots and died, because he accepted the people's worship instead of giving it to God. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}

24The good news was spreading rapidly and many people were saved. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26} 25Barnabas and Saul returned from Jerusalem when they finished their ministry and returned to Antioch, taking John Mark with them.

Lord, what a terrible sin for anyone to receive worship due You; help me deal properly with pride and give You glory for everything. I want to be more godly and I want to walk humbly with You; help me say with believers, "Not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20). Amen.

Acts 13

God Called Barnabas and Saul to Be Missionaries

1The church at Antioch had prophets and teachers: Barnabas, Simeon called Niger, Lucius of Cyrene, Manaen, who was raised with Herod, and Saul. 2While they were worshiping God and fasting, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} the Holy Spirit said, "Send Barnabas and Saul to a special ministry, to which I have called them." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 3So after more fasting and prayer, they laid their hands on them, and sent them out to minister.

Lord, teach me to listen to Your voice for direction to my life, just as the leaders in Antioch sought Your will for their life and ministry. I will seek Your will in my life. When You speak, give me ears to hear what You want me to do and give me strength to choose to do Your will. Amen.

Ministry in Cyprus

4These two men—sent by the Holy Spirit—went to Selucia {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and sailed to the island of Cyprus. 5When they landed in Salamis, they preached the Word of the Lord in the synagogue of the Jews. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} John went along to look after details. 6They traveled the whole length of the island, and came in contact with a Jewish magician named Bar-Jesus. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 7This false prophet was an attendant of Sergius Paulus, the Roman governor of the island, who was extremely intelligent. The governor called for Barnabas and Saul because he wanted to hear the Word of God. 8The Jewish magician, Elymas Magos, the Greek name for Bar-Jesus, tried to stop Barnabas and Saul because it looked like the governor would be converted to the Christian faith. 9Saul, whose name was changed to Paul at this time, was filled with the Holy Spirit to stop the magician; Paul stared angrily at him {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} 10and said, "You son of the devil, you enemy of God, you are opposing God. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 11Now God's hand will judge you, you will be blind!" {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} Instantly his eyes became misty and then everything went dark, {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} and he groped about, seeking someone to lead him by the hand. 12The governor who was watching became a believer {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} for he was astonished by what he saw and what he heard.

Lord, I want to be as courageous in witnessing for You as Paul was when he boldly faced opposition. Teach me how to react when people oppose me for my faith; I want to react properly to attacks and I want people to get saved, as the governor was converted. Amen.

Ministry in Turkey

13Paul and his companions sailed from Paphos to Pergia in modern-day Turkey; here John Mark left {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} them to go back home to Jerusalem. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 14They went on from Pergia to Antioch of Pisidia. On the Sabbath day they went to the synagogue and took a seat. 15After the lesson from the law and the prophets was read, the president of the synagogue asked Paul, "Would you like to give some words of encouragement to the congregation?" {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 16Paul stood, held up his hand for silence, then spoke, "Listen, men of Israel and you Gentiles who worship the God of our nation Israel,

{541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [17]God chose us and made us a large nation when we lived as foreigners in Egypt. Then by supernatural power, God led Israel out of Egypt, [18]and took care of them for 40 years in the wilderness. [19]Then God destroyed seven nations as He put Israel in the Holy Land as their inheritance. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [20]They lived there 450 years. After that God gave them judges until the coming of the prophet Samuel. [21]When our people begged for a king, God gave them Saul of the tribe of Benjamin. He was their king for 40 years. [22]After God disposed of Saul, He raised up David to the throne and God Himself said, 'A man after My own heart, who shall do all My will.' [23]To keep His promise, God brought forth Jesus from the descendants of David to be the Savior of Israel. John the Baptizer came before Him to prepare the way of Jesus, {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [24]preaching the baptism of repentance for all the people of Israel. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [25]John said, 'I'm not the Messiah, but the One coming after me is so great, I'm not fit to loose His shoe strings.'" [26]Paul preached, "Men and brethren, sons of Abraham, and Gentiles who fear God, God has sent you this message of salvation. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [27]The people of Jerusalem and their leaders refused to recognize Jesus even though they read the prophets every Sabbath day that predicted His coming as Messiah. [28]Even though there was nothing to justify the death of Jesus, they asked Pilate to execute Him. [29]When they did everything to Jesus that the Scriptures foretold, they took Him down from the tree and buried Him in a tomb. [30]But God raised Jesus up from the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [31]and for many days He appeared to His followers from Galilee, who are now His witnesses before the world. [32]We have come here to tell you the good news. God made the promises to our ancestors, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [33]but it is to us—their descendants— that He has fulfilled these promises by raising Jesus from the dead. As the Psalms say, 'You are My Son, and today I have become Your Father.' [34]This psalm means that God raised Jesus from the dead, never to return to corruption. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [35]God has given to Jesus the wonderful things he promised David, 'He will not let His Holy One decay.' [36]This was not a reference to David because after he lived 70 years, and served his generation, David died {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} and his body decayed. [37]This was a reference to another person whom God brought back to life, whose body was not touched by the ravages of death. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} This was a reference to Jesus. [38]Brothers, listen, there is forgiveness for your sins in this man Jesus, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [39]and everyone who trusts in Him is free from all guilt. He will declare you righteous, something the law cannot do. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [40]Be careful, brothers, because the words of the prophets apply to you. [41]You mockers, cast your eyes around and be amazed before you perish {127

Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} for I work in your days, a work that you absolutely will not believe if you were to be told of it." [42]As Paul and Barnabas left, many Jews and Gentile converts insisted they return the next Sabbath to speak on this topic. [43]When the congregation had broken up, many of them continued to listen to Paul and Barnabas who persuaded them to continue in the grace of God. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Lord, help me realize many people are hungry for the good news that Jesus forgives sins, gives eternal life, and gives abundant satisfaction. Amen.

[44]The next Sabbath almost the whole city assembled to hear the Word of the Lord. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [45]When the Jews saw the multitude, they were envious, and debated the things Paul said. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [46]Then Paul and Barnabas boldly answered them, "It was our duty to speak the good news to you Jews who have demonstrated yourselves unworthy of eternal life. So now we are turning to the Gentiles, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [47]as the Lord has instructed us to do. 'I have set you as a light to the Gentiles so My salvation will reach to the end of the earth.'" {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19}

[48]The Gentiles were glad to hear this message {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} and thanked God for it. Many of them believed. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [49]The Word of the Lord spread throughout the region, [50]but the Jews stirred up the women and civic leaders against Paul and Barnabas, {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} and threw them out of town. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

[51]But the missionaries shook the dust of that town off their feet and went to the next city of Iconium. [52]The converts were filled with joy and the Holy Spirit. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}

Lord, the disciples counted themselves worthy to suffer for You, so You filled them with joy and the Holy Spirit. I will look for Your joy and the filling of the Holy Spirit when I suffer persecution for my ministry. Amen.

Acts 14

In Antioch

[1]At Iconium, Paul and Barnabas went into the Jewish synagogue as they did in Antioch and spoke so effectively that a great number of Jews became followers of Jesus Christ. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [2]But the Jews who refused to believe stirred up the Gentiles against them, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [3]but Paul and Barnabas stayed there to preach fearlessly. The Lord confirmed the message of grace {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and allowed signs and wonders to be done by them. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} [4]The people of the city were divided, some siding with the apostles

and others supporting the Jews. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [5]But the unbelievers planned to stone them. [6]Paul and Barnabas heard their plot {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} and left for safety reasons. [7]Leaving, they preached the gospel {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} in Lystra and Derbe in the surrounding mountains.

Lord, thank You for every missionary who has gone to dangerous places to preach the gospel. Give me courage to stand against criticism and ridicule when I share the gospel. Amen.

In Derbe and Lystra

[8]A man crippled from birth {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} sat at the city gate listening to Paul. [9]Paul saw him and realized he had faith to be healed. [10]Then Paul said in a loud voice, "Stand up on your feet!" The man jumped up and began to walk. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}

[11]When the crowd saw what happened, they shouted in their language, "The gods have come down to us dressed like men." [12]Barnabas they called Zeus, and Paul they called Hermes since he was the spokesman. [13]The priest of Jupiter, whose temple was outside the gate, brought oxen and flowers {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} to sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas at the city gate in front of the crowd. [14]But Paul and Barnabas ripped their clothes and ran into the crowd, [15]shouting, "Friends, why are you doing this? We are human beings with feelings just as you. We are here to tell you the good news that you should turn from idols to the living God {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} who made heaven and earth and the sea and everything in it. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [16]In the past He let the nations go their own way, [17]but there was always the earth, heaven, and the seas as witness to them. He sent rain giving you crops and food to eat." [18]This speech barely restrained the crowd from offering sacrifices to them.

The Stoning of Paul

[19]Then Jews arrived from Antioch and Iconium and turned the people against the apostles. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} They stoned Paul and dragged him outside the city, thinking he was dead. [20]The Christians gathered around him, but as they did, Paul stood up and went back into the town. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} The next day, Paul and Barnabas departed to Derbe.

It appears Paul was stoned and died in Lystra, because (1) they "suppose[ed] him to be dead" (14:19, NKJV), (2) the anger of the Paul-haters would have driven them to the ultimate, and (3) Paul testifies, "I knew a man in Christ who fourteen years ago [the correct chronology]...such a one was caught up to the third heaven" (2 Cor. 12:2, NKJV). Because God was not finished with Paul, he was raised from the dead to continue his ministry. However, to keep Paul humble, God gave him continuing pain

{341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} from the event, "a thorn in the flesh" (2 Cor. 12:7-9). Lord, thank You for every past miracle in answer to prayer. Be glorified when I'm in danger. If I pray and am delivered, I will glorify You. If I come home to be with You, that's even better. Amen.

21 The next day Paul and Barnabas departed for Derbe where they preached the gospel {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} and many became Christians. They turned back and revisited Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch of Turkey 22 where they strengthened the disciples of Christ {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} in those cities, exhorting them to be strong in the faith and endure many tribulations. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 23 After prayer and fasting, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} they appointed church leaders in every church, commending them to the Lord for their new ministry. {78 Compliment-Blessing Prayer, Luke 6:31} 24 They then crossed over the mountains to Pisidia, going to Pamphylia. 25 After preaching the Word of God in Pergia, they went to Attalia {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 26 and then sailed back to Antioch of Syria. They arrived back at the church that originally commissioned them because they had completed the work they intended to do. 27 They assembled the church together and reported all that God had done, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} especially how He had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 28 They stayed in Antioch a long time.

Lord, I thank You for every missionary who has gone to unreached places to preach the gospel to those who have never heard it. Thank You for those who brought the gospel to my nation and my people; please call more missionaries so every place and ethnic group on earth can hear the gospel at least once. Amen.

Acts 15

The First Church Council

1 Some men came to Antioch from Judea, teaching, "You are not saved unless you have been circumcised according to the practice of Moses." {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 2 A long fierce argument broke out between Paul and Barnabas {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} and those who wanted to add "good works" to salvation. It was arranged for Paul, Barnabas, and others {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} to go to Jerusalem to discuss this issue with the apostles and elders. {143 Establishing Doctrine by Prayer, Titus 1:5} 3 The church gathered to see them off, and they traveled through Lebanon and Samaria telling how Gentiles were saved. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} Christians everywhere rejoiced when they heard this. 4 They were welcomed in Jerusalem by the apostles, elders, and the church. Paul and Barnabas told them what

God had done among the Gentiles. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [5]Some of the converted Pharisees came forward to say the Gentiles must be circumcised and keep the law of Moses. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3}

[6]The apostles and elders called a meeting to discuss the issues. [7]After a long debate Peter stood to address the council. "My friends," he said, "you remember God chose me to preach the gospel to the Gentiles at Cornelius' house so they could believe. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [8]God knows who is genuinely converted so He gave them the Holy Spirit, just as He gave Him to us. {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} [9]God made no distinction between Jew and Gentile because He forgave them by faith, just as He did for us. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} [10]Now you are trying to correct God {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} and impose on the Gentiles a burden that neither we nor our ancestors were able to obey. No one has ever kept the law to be saved. [11]We are saved the same way Gentiles are saved, through faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10}

[12]Peter's argument silenced the assembly, no one could say anything. Then Paul and Barnabas described all the signs and miracles God had done through them among the Gentiles.

[13]Finally James gave his thoughts, "My brothers, [14]Simon Peter has described how God worked to call to Himself those who were saved among the Gentiles. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} [15]This agrees with the words of the prophets since the Scriptures say, [16]'After that I will return and rebuild the fallen house of David. I shall rebuild it from its ruins and restore it, [17]then the rest of the world—the Gentiles—may seek the Lord to be saved.'" {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [18]James stated, "The Lord said this long ago. [19]So I suggest that we should not make things more difficult for Gentiles to be saved." {143 Establishing Doctrine by Prayer, Titus 1:5} [20]James proposed they send a letter {85 Consensus-Prayer, Acts 15:18} telling Gentile Christians, "Abstain from anything polluted by idols, from fornication, from meat of strangled animals, and blood." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [21]James reasoned, "Because there are disciples of Moses in every place, they read Moses every week and faithfully obey him."

[22]Then the apostles and elders decided to choose and send delegates to Antioch with Paul and Barnabas to read the following letter to them. They chose Judas known as Barnabas, and Silas, because both men were leaders in the Jerusalem church. {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} [23]"The apostles and elders, your brothers in Christ, {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} send greetings to the Gentile brothers in Antioch, Syria, and Cilicia. [24]We have heard that some of our members have upset you by demanding that you all be circumcised to be saved. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} They did not have our authorization, [25]so we have unanimously elected these delegates to

go with Paul and Barnabas to deliver this letter to you. [26]We highly respect Paul and Barnabas, who have risked their lives for the name of the Lord Jesus Christ. [27]Therefore we are sending Judas and Silas who will reinforce what this letter says. [28]The Holy Spirit has led us not to burden Gentile believers with keeping the law, {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [29]but we want you to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, and the meat of strangled animals, and from fornication. You will do right to avoid them. Farewell." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

[30]The group left and went to Antioch where they gathered the church and delivered the letter to them. [31]The church read it and was delighted with its conclusions. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [32]Judas and Silas stayed preaching to the Christians in Antioch. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [33]Then the church sent them back to their homes in Jerusalem. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [34]But Silas decided to stay there. [35]Paul and Barnabas stayed in Antioch {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} to help the others who were preaching and teaching to the church.

[36]Paul said to Barnabas, "Let's go back to visit the churches we planted where we preached the Word of God so we can see how they are doing." {396 Rejoicing for Others-Prayer, Phil. 1:4} [37]Barnabas wanted to take John Mark with them, [38]but Paul was not in favor of it because he had deserted them in Pamphylia and refused to go on with them. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [39]Because they disagreed, {122 Distraction to Prayer, Exod. 17:11} they parted ways, and Barnabas took John Mark with him to Cyprus. [40]Paul chose Silas to go with him and the church commended them to God. [41]They traveled through Syria and Turkey visiting the churches. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}

The early church had a deep doctrinal controversy. Some wanted to continue the Old Testament law, "Except ye be circumcised... ye cannot be saved" (Acts 15:1, KJV). Others realized God would save "all the Gentiles, upon whom my name is called" (Acts 15:17, KJV). After the testimony of Peter, the church reached a consensus, {85 Consensus-Prayer, Acts 15:18} "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world" (Acts 15:18, KJV). Lord, help me agree with other believers when conclusions are evident from Scripture. Also, help me correct my brothers when they obviously disagree with Scripture. Lord, I will quickly agree with the obvious teachings of Scripture, and I will study diligently the difficult things of Scripture. Then I will withhold my opinion on things too deep for me, but will trust You for wisdom and insight. Amen.

Acts 16

Paul Recruits Timothy

[1]When Paul and Silas reached Derbe and Lystra, they met Timothy, whose mother was a Jewess but whose father was a Greek. [2]Because Timothy was an outstanding

Christian, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [3]the church recommended him to travel with Paul and Barnabas, but Paul had him circumcised because of the Jews who knew his father was a Greek. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Lord, thank You for the faithfulness of Timothy; may I have a good testimony so that the church would recommend me for Your work. Amen.

The Spirit Guides Their Ministry

[4]They visited many towns, delivering the decision reached by the apostles and elders in Jerusalem. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [5]So the churches were strengthened in the faith as well as growing daily in numbers. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} [6]The Holy Spirit told them not to preach in Asia, so they traveled in Galatia. {209 Guilty-Blocking Prayer, 1 John 3:21} [7]The Holy Spirit wouldn't let them go to the north or south, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [8]so they kept going west till they came to the port city of Troas on the Aegean Sea. [9]That night Paul had a vision {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} of a Macedonian man who said to him, "Come to Macedonia and help us." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [10]Almost immediately they arranged passage to Macedonia, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} convinced God had called them to preach there. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

Lord, You guide in many ways; thank You for guiding Paul by a vision. May I always follow Your directions, no matter how You speak to me. Amen.

First Mission in Europe

[11]Luke joined them [12]and they sailed to Philippi, a Roman city that was the major city of that district. [13]After several days they went to the river's edge where women met for prayer on the Sabbath day. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} There Paul preached to the women. [14]One of them was Lydia, a worshiper of God {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} who had a business selling purple dye. She opened her heart to believe all that Paul was saying. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} [15]Lydia was baptized along with all her household, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} and she asked Paul and his companions to be her guests, saying, "If you think I am a true believer, then come stay in my home," and they did.

Lord, thank You that Paul came west with the gospel for it finally came to America and reached me. May I be as faithful in telling others about Jesus as Paul was in his missionary ministry. Amen.

[16]As Paul was going to the place of prayer, {97 Daily-Prayer, Acts 2:42} he met a slave girl who predicted the future by demon possession; she earned a lot of

money for her master this way. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [17]The girl followed Paul and his companions, shouting, "These men are servants of the Most High God, and they tell us how to be saved." [18]She kept this up until Paul became so irritated that he turned and spoke to the demon, "I command you in the name of Jesus Christ to come out of her." Immediately the demon came out of her. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [19]When her owner saw that his hope of making more money was gone, he seized Paul and Silas [20]and dragged them before the authorities in the market square, where they charged them, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [21]"These men are Jews who are advocating practices that are unlawful for us as Romans to accept or follow." [22]A crowd quickly formed and began yelling against them, so the magistrates had them stripped and flogged. {7 Affliction-Prayer, Ps. 102:2} [23]They were given many lashes, {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} then thrown in prison, and the jailer was told to keep a close watch on them. [24]He followed the instructions, threw them into the inner prison, and locked their feet in stocks. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

[25]That night Paul and Silas were praying {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} and singing psalms to God {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} while the other prisoners listened. [26]Suddenly an earthquake shook the prison, and the doors flew open and the chains fell off all the prisoners. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20}

Lord, as Paul and Silas fellowshipped with You in prayer, and worshiped You with psalms, the doors were opened and the chains fell off their hands. I know this was Your miracle for You came to receive their worship. Jesus said, "You seek worship." I know You don't need doors to open for Your entrance, but it was a nice touch in this situation. Amen.

[27]The jailer awakened and saw the doors open, so he drew his sword and was about to commit suicide, thinking his prisoners had escaped. [28]Paul shouted, "Don't harm yourself; we are all here." [29]The jailer got a light and rushed in. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} When he accounted for all the prisoners, he fell at the feet of Paul and Silas, [30]asking, "What must I do to be saved?" {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} [31]They replied, "Believe in Jesus Christ and you will be saved, you and your household." {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [32]Then Paul explained the Word of the Lord to him and all those in his house. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [33]The jailer washed their wounds, and then he and his family were baptized. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [34]He brought them into his house and fed them a meal. The whole family celebrated their conversion and belief in God. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

[35]When morning came, the magistrates sent a message to the jailers to release them. [36]The keeper of the prison said to Paul, "The magistrates have let you go; therefore

go in peace." [37]Paul said, "No! They have beaten us publicly without a trial despite the fact we are Roman citizens. They can't get rid of us quietly, so let them come and release us themselves." {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [38]The magistrates were frightened when they heard they were Romans, {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} [39]so they came to the jail and begged them to leave the city. [40]Paul and Silas returned to Lydia's home and preached words of encouragement to them before they left the city. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

Lord, thank You for providentially protecting Paul's life; I know a child of God is immortal and death can't touch him until You have finished Your will for him on earth. Amen.

Acts 17

The New Church at Thessalonica and Berea

[1]Paul traveled to Thessalonica and entered the synagogue, [2]as was his custom. He debated with the Jews for three weeks, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [3]explaining and proving that the Messiah must suffer and be resurrected. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Paul explained that the Messiah is Jesus. [4]Some were convinced and joined Paul and Silas, as well as many God-fearing Gentiles; many of these were rich women. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} [5]The unbelieving Jews resented Paul and recruited a gang of thugs from the marketplace to riot against Christians in the city. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} They ran to Jason's home, hoping to find Paul and Silas and bring them before the city officials. [6]When they didn't find them, they dragged Jason and another person to court, charging, "These men who have turned the world upside down, have come here now. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [7]They defy Caesar's decree, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} saying, 'There is another King called Jesus.'" [8]When the authorities heard this, the crowd and city officials were alarmed, and [9]they made Jason post a bond before releasing him.

Lord, help me be faithful in the face of opposition. You've turned my private world upside down. May I become a witness to those I meet in life. Amen.

[10]The Christians immediately sent Paul and Silas inland to Berea, {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} where Paul went into the Jewish synagogue and spoke. [11]The Bereans were more fair-minded than the Thessalonians in that they gave an example of how to listen to the Word of God.

Lord, I will receive the Word of God with an open mind; I will search—daily—every part of Scripture to determine what You have said for me to believe and live. Amen.

[12]Then many of them believed. [13]The Jews from Thessalonica heard that Paul was preaching in Berea, so they went there to stir up a riot. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [14]The Christians arranged for Paul to leave immediately, and Silas and Timothy were left to build up the church. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} [15]An escort went with Paul to Athens, then Paul sent a message for Silas and Timothy to come to him with all speed.

Lord, give me a love and reverence for Your Word. May I study it carefully—every word—to know what You've said. Give me a passion to live a holy productive life for You. May my life be based on the principles I've learned from Your Word. Amen.

Paul Preaching in Athens

[16]While waiting for Silas and Timothy, Paul was upset because the whole city of Athens was worshiping idols. [17]Paul debated in the synagogue with the Jews {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} and God-fearing Gentiles as well as in the city market with those gathered there. [18]While speaking, some Epicurean and stoic philosophers listened to him {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} and they remarked, "What is this babbler trying to say?" They accused Paul of advocating a foreign God because he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [19]They brought Paul to the forum at Mars Hill, asking, "Tell us more about this religion that you're preaching." [20]They accused Paul of saying startling things and they wanted to find out more about it. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [21](The Athenians and foreigners who lived there spent their time discussing the latest new ideas.) [22]So Paul stood to address the whole forum, "Men of Athens, I see that you are very religious, {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [23]because as I walked about this place, I saw many idols. I even saw one with the inscription, 'TO AN UNKNOWN GOD.' This is the God I worship, the One you don't know. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [24]This is the God who created the world and everything in it. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} He does not make His home in shrines built by humans, [25]nor does He need anything humans can do for Him because He is the One who gives everything to everyone, including their life and breath. [26]God created one ancestor; the whole human race comes from one man and they scattered over the whole face of the earth. God has determined the length of their lives, and the limits where they live. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [27]God wants all to search for Him so they might find Him because God is not far from each of us. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [28]For in Him we live and move and exist. Some of your writers have said, 'We are all His children,' so [29]since we are the children of God, we should not think of deity in terms of gold, silver, or a carved statue. [30]God overlooks this sort of mistake when we are ignorant, but now He tells everyone everywhere to repent {399

Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 31because God has set a date when He will judge the world. God appointed a Man to judge rightly, and proved this to us by raising that man from the dead." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 32When they heard about the resurrection of the dead, some laughed, and others said, "We would like to hear about this again." 33At this time Paul left the forum, 34but some joined him and became believers, among them Dionysius a member of the Areopagus, a woman named Damaris, and several others. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3}

Lord, may I have opportunities to tell people what You've done for me. I want to tell people the gospel who've never heard it correctly; I want to be used by You, as You used Paul. Amen.

Acts 18

Paul at Corinth

1Paul left Athens and went to Corinth where he 2stayed in the home of Aquila, the tentmaker. Aquila with his wife, Priscilla, were originally from Turkey, but recently they were thrown out of Rome because all Jews were expelled by Claudius the emperor. 3Paul worked for them, for he was a tentmaker. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

4Every Sabbath day Paul debated in the synagogue, trying to convert Jews as well as Gentiles who attended. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} 5After Silas and Timothy came from Macedonia, Paul spent his full time testifying to the Jews that Jesus is the Messiah. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 6When the Jews threatened Paul, {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} he shook the dust off his robe and said, "Your blood be upon your own hands. From now on I will preach the gospel to the Gentiles with a clear conscience."

7Paul then moved the church into the house of Titius Justus, a believer {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} who lived next to the synagogue. 8Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, became a believer, {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} and a great many Corinthians also believed and were baptized. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 9Therefore the Lord spoke to Paul in a vision at night saying, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} "Don't be afraid of leaving the synagogue to worship in a house. Continue speaking {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 10because I'll be with you, and no one will harm you. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} I have many in this city who will become believers." {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 11So Paul stayed in Corinth for eighteen months, preaching the Scriptures.

Lord, thank You for my church that nourishes me. I'm glad You approved the example of separating the church from the Jewish synagogue. Amen.

[12]When Gallio became governor of the region, the Jews banded together {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} to bring Paul before him for trial. They accused him, saying, [13]"This man persuades people to worship God that breaks our law." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [14]Before Paul could speak, Gallio said, "Listen you Jews! If this were a matter of breaking the law, I would not hesitate to listen to your charges, [15]but you are bickering about words and your religious laws. Settle the matter outside the court room, for I do not intend to make a legal decision about religious matters." [16]Gallio sent them out of the courtroom, [17]and a crowd jumped on Sosthenes, the leader of the synagogue, and beat him in front of the court house. But Gallio paid no attention to it.

Lord, thank You for enabling me to live in a country that has separation of church and state. I will fully support my state as You command; I will fully support my church, which is my Christian duty. Amen.

Paul's Trip to Jerusalem

[18]After this, Paul left Corinth and sailed for Syria accompanied by Aquila and Priscilla. Paul shaved his head according to Jewish custom because his long hair represented a vow he had made. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6}

A vow is a solemn promise that binds the person to do a specific act or behave in a specific way. In the Old Testament a vow was probably a Nazarite vow (Num. 6:1-21). This was probably the vow of Paul, "for he had a vow" (Acts 18:18). Vows in the New Testament may be a fast or other promise of repentance. Vowing may be to seek God's favor (Gen. 28:20) or to express thanksgiving for His blessing (Ps. 116:12-14) or as a part of everyday prayers (Ps. 61:8). Vows must be paid to God (Deut. 12:6; Ps. 22:25). Lord, I vow to be holy to You. I want You to be glorified in my body. Amen.

[19]When they arrived at Ephesus, Paul went into the synagogue to debate with the Jews about Jesus the Messiah. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [20]They asked Paul to stay a few days, but he declined because of his travel schedule. [21]However, he promised, "I will come back if God allows me to do it"; {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} Paul left Aquila and Priscilla there before sailing away. [22]When Paul landed at Caesarea, he went up to Jerusalem to greet the saints there. Then he returned to Antioch at Syria to visit the church that sent him on the missionary trip.

[23]After spending some time in Antioch, Paul began his third missionary trip through Turkey, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} strengthening the churches he had established on his two previous trips. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8}

Lord, help me be sensitive to the leading of the Holy Spirit to follow You obediently, as Paul did. Amen.

[24]An Alexandrian Jew named Apollos came to preach in Ephesus; {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} he was exceptionally eloquent with a firm grasp of Scripture. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [25]Apollos preached boldly and enthusiastically in the synagogue, but he only knew what John the Baptizer said about the coming Christ. [26]When Priscilla and Aquila heard Apollos preach, they invited him to their home to explain to him the way of salvation more fully. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [27]When Apollos left for Turkey, the brethren wrote a letter of introduction to the churches, asking them to receive him. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} When Apollos arrived, he strengthened the Christians there {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [28]and vigorously refuted the Jews in public debate, proving from Scripture that Jesus is the Messiah. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

Lord, thank You for lay people like Aquila and Priscilla who know the Scriptures, and teach others. May I be a faithful teacher like them. Amen.

Acts 19

Paul's Ministry in Ephesus

[1]Apollos continued ministering at Corinth. Paul traveled through Turkey to arrive at Ephesus where he found twelve followers of John the Baptizer who were still preaching baptism of repentance, and were looking forward to the coming of the Messiah. [2]Paul asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} They answered "No, we don't know anything about the Holy Spirit." {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} [3]Then Paul asked, "What did you confess when you were baptized?" {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} They answered, "Belief in the Messiah who is coming." [4]When Paul pointed out that Jesus the Messiah had come, {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [5]they were baptized immediately {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} in the name of Jesus. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]When Paul laid his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, {383 Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 3:14} and they spoke in unknown languages they hadn't learned. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [7]And the men numbered about twelve.

[8]Paul spoke for three months in the synagogue, {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} debating about Jesus and the kingdom of God. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [9]When the attitude of the Jews hardened and they began attacking the Way publicly, {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} Paul took believers out of the synagogue. They met daily in the school of Tyrannus, {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} [10]where believers were instructed in the Word of God, and the gospel spread

throughout the region. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}
11And God used Paul to work miracles {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18}.

Just as Paul produced multiple believers (2 Tim. 2:2), he also established several self-producing multiplying churches. {68 Church-Multiplication Prayer, Acts 19:10} The Ephesus church reproduced itself throughout the adjoining area (Acts 19:10). Lord, I pray that my church will reproduce itself by planting other new churches. That way we'll be part of the Great Commission. Amen.

12Paul's ministry included healing the sick through prayer. His handkerchiefs were taken to the sick and they were healed because of their faith. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 13Some itinerant Jewish evangelist who cast out demons came to Ephesus and spoke the name of "Jesus as preached by Paul." 14The man Sceva, a Jewish priest from the Levitical family, and his seven sons, 15tried to cast out a demon, {159 False-Prayer, Matt. 7:21-23} who answered, "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?" 16The demon-possessed man attacked them and beat them mercilessly, and he ripped their clothes off them, so that they ran out of the house naked. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:16-17} 17When people in Ephesus heard about the episode, both Jews and Gentiles were impressed, and they were afraid to attack Christianity {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} so the gospel spread everywhere. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 18Many new believers came forward to repent of their evil deeds, and {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 19those who practiced magic and sorcery burned their incantation books and charms in a big public fire. Someone estimated their value at 10,000 pieces of silver. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 20As a result the Word of God became more influential and its message was spread widely. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}
21After this happened, Paul decided to visit Greece on his way to Rome, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 22so he sent Timothy and Erastus to prepare the way. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}
23About this time a riot broke out against Christianity in Ephesus. 24It began when Demetrius, a silversmith, 25called together many of the craftsmen who made silver idols of Diana. 26He said, "Paul has persuaded many that our idols are not gods, and our sales are going down. Not only here but in all Turkey, Paul is destroying the idol trade market. 27Paul is also desecrating our temple dedicated to Diana and reducing worship of Diana over the whole world." 28They began to chant, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," 29and the whole town rushed into the amphitheater dragging along the believers, Gaius and Aristarchus. 30Paul wanted to go make an appeal to the crowd, but for safety's sake the Christians wouldn't let him enter. {141 Escape-Prayer, Rev. 6:17} 31Roman officers also sent messages telling Paul not to

go there. [32]The crowd was confused, some shouting one thing, others another; most didn't even know about the "silversmith" controversy. [33]A Jew named Alexander was pushed to the front, but the crowd wouldn't let him speak. [34]They shouted for two hours, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians." [35]The town clerk eventually quieted the crowd and told them, "Everyone knows the greatness of Diana who guards our temple, and who fell from heaven. [36]So as this cannot be spoken against, you must be quiet. [37]For you have brought these men here who have not committed crimes against our goddess. [38]If Demetrius and the craftsmen want to complain, {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} let them take their case to court. [39]We must raise our questions in a regular city council, [40]otherwise Rome will charge us with rioting and send soldiers to investigate or punish us." [41]The clerk then dismissed the crowd and they left.

Lord, help me see Your plan for my life when there is civic turmoil; may I always trust You to protect me in strife. Amen.

Acts 20

Paul's Last Trip to Ephesus

Lord, thank You for protecting Paul's life and giving him wisdom when to be bold, and in this case to avoid confrontation. Amen.

[1]After Paul encouraged the Christians in Ephesus, he said good-bye and left for Macedonia. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [2]He then set sail for Greece and [3]stayed there three months. As Paul was planning to leave by ship, he discovered that the Jews plotted to kill him. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} So he went by land through northern Greece. [4]Paul had many traveling with him for protection: Sopater, Aristarchus, Secundus, Gaius, Timothy, Tychicus, and Trophimus. [5]These men went ahead and waited at Troas.

[6]After celebrating the Passover, Paul left Philippi and boarded a ship for Troas in Turkey. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [7]On Sunday, Paul observed the Lord's Table, {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} and then preached a long sermon that went on into the night. [8]The room was hot because a large number of lamps were burning. [9]Eutychus, a young man sitting on the window sill, fell asleep and then fell three stories to the ground. [10]He was picked up dead, {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} but Paul went down and embraced him saying, "Don't worry, there is life in him." [11]Paul went back upstairs where he ate a meal, {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} then he talked until daybreak, and then left. [12]They took the boy home alive, and all praised God.

Lord, thank You for healing the young man; I know You will take care of me physically. Amen.

[13]Paul traveled overland to Assos, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} and the rest of his party went ahead by ship. [14]They joined together at Assos and Paul went on board the ship and sailed to Mitylene, [15]then sailed by Chios, and the next day they went on shore briefly at Trosyllium, and the next day they went to Miletus. [16]Paul had decided to sail past Ephesus and would not spend time in Asia because he was in a hurry to get to Jerusalem to celebrate the day of Pentecost. [17]Paul had the elders from Ephesus come meet him at the ship in Miletus. {344 Pastor-Prayer, 2 Cor. 1:11} [18]Paul told them, "You know how honestly I lived since I came here, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [19]how I served the Lord in all humility, how I remained faithful, even when the Jews plotted against me. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [20]I never hesitated to tell you the truth, {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4} both publicly and in your homes. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} [21]I have declared to both Jews and Gentiles that they must repent and put their faith in our Lord Jesus. {263 Jesus-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [22]Now you know the Holy Spirit is leading me to Jerusalem, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} but I don't know what will happen to me there [23]except that the Holy Spirit in city after city has let me know that persecution and imprisonment await me in Rome. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [24]But my life will be spent finishing the race that I have been running in the mission the Lord Jesus gave me, and that is spreading the good news of God's grace. {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1} [25]Now I feel sure that none of you will see me again [26]for my conscience is clear concerning my work to you [27]for I have declared the whole gospel among you. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} [28]Guard yourselves and the flock that the Holy Spirit has given you, {186 Goal-Striving Prayer, Phil. 3:10-14} and be a good example in leading them in godliness and feed the church which is bought with Christ's blood. {384 Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Rom. 12:3-8} [29]I know when I have gone, false teachers will come who will not have compassion on the flock. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [30]Also men from among yourselves will distort the truth to draw away disciples to follow them. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [31]So be on your guard, and {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} remember that night and day I kept constant watch care over the flock, shedding many tears for you in prayer. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [32]Now I commit you to God and the word of His grace {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} which will give you an inheritance among the saints. [33]I never asked anyone for money or clothes [34]for you know I worked to earn money to meet my needs. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [35]I did this to be a constant example to the church to help the poor, for I remember the words of Jesus, 'It is more blessed to give than to receive.'" {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [36]When Paul finished speaking, they knelt on the beach {357 Posture in Prayer, 2 Sam. 7:18} and prayed. [37]Then they wept {474 Tears

in Prayer, Luke 6:21} and embraced Paul [38]because he said they wouldn't see him again.

Lord, thank You for friends who pray for me as the elders prayed for the apostle Paul. Raise up prayer supporters who will intercede for me as I live and serve You. Amen.

Acts 21

Paul Goes to Jerusalem

Lord, I see how You protected Paul in many small ways; do the same for me, protecting me through the humdrum of life. Amen.

[1]Paul and his party sailed directly to Cos, then Rhodes, and Patara. [2]They transferred to a different ship and sailed toward Lebanon, [3]sailing to the south of Cyprus, and coming to Tyre, where the ship unloaded its cargo. [4]Paul went on shore, found some believers and stayed with them seven days. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} They told Paul by the Holy Spirit not to go to Jerusalem. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [5]As Paul left, they went with him to the ship and they knelt together to pray. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [6]Paul and his party boarded a ship and continued toward Jerusalem.

[7]Paul sailed from Troas to Lebanon, stopping at several places. The ship landed at Tyre where Paul stayed one day; {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} the Christians kept telling Paul not to go to Jerusalem. [8]Paul then sailed to Caesarea, and stayed with Phillip the evangelist, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [9]who had four daughters in ministry; he was one of the original seven deacons. [10]After several days, {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} Agabus, the prophet, arrived to see Paul; [11]he took the belt on Paul's tunic and tied his hands and feet saying, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} "The owner of this belt will be bound hand and foot in Jerusalem and then handed over to the Gentiles." [12]Everyone who heard this begged Paul not to go to Jerusalem [13]but he replied, "Why are you trying to change my mind? I am ready not only to be bound in Jerusalem, but also to die for the name of the Lord Jesus." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [14]When the crowd saw they couldn't change Paul's mind, they said, "The will of the Lord be done." {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

Lord, give me resolute determination to follow You even when it seems dangerous and life- threatening. Amen.

[15]Paul left to go up to Jerusalem. [16]Christians from Caesarea went with him {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} to the home of Mnason from Cyprus who had been one of the earliest disciples. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

[17]The brothers gave Paul a warm welcome when Paul arrived in Jerusalem. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [18]The next day Paul visited James and the elders, and he [19]gave them a detailed account of what God had

done among the Gentiles through his ministry. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
20 The brothers gave glory to God when they heard it. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} Then the elders told Paul, "There are thousands of Jews who have been saved, who staunchly uphold the law. 21 They have heard that you tell Jewish Christians to break with Moses, and you authorize them not to circumcise their children. 22 They will certainly hear that you are here and will want a meeting with you. 23 Here is what we suggest you do. We have four men who have taken a Nazarite vow. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} 24 You go with them to the temple to be purified with them. You pay the temple expenses connected with shaving their heads. This will let everyone know you keep the law and that there is no truth in the rumors about you. 25 As for Gentile believers, we aren't asking them to observe these temple customs. The only thing they must do is not eat food offered to idols, and not eat the blood in animals that have been strangled, and avoid fornication." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 26 The next day Paul went with the four men to the ceremony to be purified, and announced that in seven days they would offer sacrifices to end the vow. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15}
27 When the seven days were almost over, some Jews from Asia saw Paul in the temple and began a riot, 28 shouting, "Men of Israel! This man preaches to everyone, everywhere that it is wrong to keep the law and worship in the temple. He has profaned the Holy Place by bringing Gentiles here." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 29 But they were wrong. They had seen Trophimus from Ephesus with Paul in the city and thought he brought him into the temple. 30 People came running from every direction, and they grabbed Paul and dragged him out of the temple. The gates were closed behind them. 31 The crowd would have killed Paul but Roman soldiers intervened because their officer heard there was rioting in the city. 32 The soldiers stopped the crowd from beating Paul. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 33 The Roman officer arrested Paul, chained his hands and feet, then asked Paul to identify himself. 34 The crowd called out different things, making it impossible for the officer to get a positive identification of Paul. 35 Paul was carried by the soldiers to the stairs because the crowd was so violent. 36 They were shouting, "Kill him." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 37 When Paul spoke to the officer, {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} he was surprised Paul spoke Greek. Then the officer said, 38 "Aren't you the Egyptian who led an insurrection of 4,000 cutthroats." 39 Paul said, "I am a Jew from Tarsus in Turkey, a Roman citizen. Please let me speak to the people." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
40 The officer gave Paul permission, so he stood on the stairs and lifted his hands for silence. He spoke to them in Hebrew. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4}

Lord, You promised trials and hardship to Your followers. I accept what You send to me. Give me strength equal to pain, give

me usefulness equal to suffering, and give me inner joy equal to outer disappointment. Amen.

Acts 22

Paul Speaks to a Crowd in Jerusalem

1"Men, brethren, and fathers, hear my defense as I stand before you now." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 2When they heard him speak in Hebrew, they became quiet. Then they became even more quiet than before. 3"I am a Jew, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} and was born in Tarsus of Turkey. In this city I studied under Gamaliel and was taught to obey every Jewish law and custom. 4In fact, I was so devoted—as you are today—that I even persecuted Christians, binding them to death, delivering both men and women in chains to prison. 5The high priest or any member of the Sanhedrin will testify to these facts. I asked a letter from them to their brothers in Damascus to do the same there. 6I set off to go to Damascus to bring back prisoners to Jerusalem for punishment. I was nearly to Damascus {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} when at noon a bright light from heaven blinded me. 7I fell to the ground and heard a voice, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' {25 Atheist-Prayer, Ps. 14:1, 2} 8I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' He answered, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 9The people with me saw the light, but didn't understand the voice. 10I said, 'What do You want me to do?' {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} The Lord answered, 'Stand up, go to Damascus, and you will be told what to do.' {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 11The light was so blinding that my companions had to lead me to Damascus by the hand."

Lord, I cannot deny the experiences of life. Thank You for those who brought the gospel to me; thank You for events that led to my conversion. Amen.

12"A man named Ananias, a devout follower of the law, and highly respected by the Jewish community, 13came to pray beside me and said, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} Then he said, 14"God has chosen you to do His will, {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} to see the Messiah, 15and to carry out His message. You will be a witness to all people {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} of what you have seen and heard. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 16Why delay? It's time to be baptized {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} as a sign your sins are forgiven.' {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 17When I got back to Jerusalem, I was praying in the temple, in a trance, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 18I saw the Lord who said, 'Hurry and leave Jerusalem, because they will not receive your testimony.' 19"Lord,' I prayed, 'is it because I arrested and beat those who believed in You? 20When Stephen's blood was being

shed, I gave consent and guarded the coats of those who stoned him.' 21Then the Lord said to me, 'Go, I will send you to the Gentiles.'" {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 22The crowd listened to Paul until he said the word *Gentiles*, then they shouted, "Away with him, for he is not fit to live." 23The Jews yelled, threw dust into the air, and waved their coats. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} Then the officer took Paul into the fortress.

Lord, thank You for Paul's witness in the face of opposition; give me boldness to testify for You when danger comes. Amen.

24He ordered Paul to be examined under the whip to find out the truth. 25When they strapped Paul down, he said to the centurion, "Is it legal for you to scourge an uncondemned Roman citizen?" {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} 26The centurion told his superior, "This man is a Roman citizen." 27The commander asked if Paul were a Roman citizen. 28"I am," was Paul's reply. The commander replied, "It cost me a large amount of money to become a citizen." Paul replied, "I was born free." 29The soldiers who were going to flog Paul quickly left. The commander was frightened {165 Fear-Praying, Rev. 14:7} because he could have been punished for scourging a Roman citizen. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

30The next day the commander took off Paul's chains. He ordered the Sanhedrin to meet with the chief priest, and then brought Paul to stand before them.

Lord, Paul used a legal means to escape punishment; give me wisdom not to be punished needlessly for Your sake, and give me courage to accept punishment when need be. Amen.

Acts 23

Paul before the Jewish Council

1Paul looked intently at the Sanhedrin, then spoke, "My brothers, I have always lived with a perfectly clear conscience." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 2Immediately Ananias the high priest ordered those near Paul to slap him on the mouth. 3Paul responded, "God strike you, you filthy wall that's been whitewashed." Paul asked, "How can you break the law striking me before I am found guilty?" {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 4The men close to Paul said, "You're insulting God's high priest"; 5Paul answered, "I did not realize it was the high priest because Scripture says, 'Don't curse the ruler of the people.'" 6Paul became aware that the Sanhedrin was split between the Sadducees and the Pharisees, so he called out, "I am a Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee, {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} on trial for the hope of the resurrection." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 7Instantly a debate broke out between the two opposing factions {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} and the assembly was evenly split. 8The Sadducees don't believe in the resurrection, angels, or eternal spirits in people, but the

Pharisees believe all these. [9]They shouted loudly at each other, and the Pharisees said, "We find nothing wrong with this man. Perhaps a spirit or angel spoke to him at his conversion." {516 Victory over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [10]The Roman commander, fearing they would physically beat Paul, ordered his troops to enter and take Paul to the fortress. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [11]That night the Lord stood by Paul {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} saying, "Be courageous! {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} You have witnessed for Me in Jerusalem, now you must witness for Me in Rome."

Lord, help me to be more courageous as was Paul because I don't witness for You as did Paul, even when I find myself in peaceful surroundings. Amen.

[12]Early in the morning some of the Jews held a secret meeting and vowed an oath not to eat until they killed Paul, [13]a conspiracy of more than forty men. [14]They told the chief priest and elders, [15]"We have vowed to fast until we kill Paul, now it is your responsibility to ask the commander to return Paul so you can examine him closely. It is our responsibility to kill him in the streets as they bring him to you." [16]The son of Paul's sister heard their plans of ambush and came to the fortress to tell Paul. [17]He immediately had the boy taken to the commander. [18]When the boy was brought to the commander, {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [19]they went to a private room where the boy said, [20]"These Jews will get the Sanhedrin to request you to bring Paul to be questioned more closely. [21]There are 40 Jews who have vowed not to eat until they have killed Paul. They plan to kill him in the streets, and they are awaiting your order to deliver Paul." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [22]The commander let the boy go, warning him, "Don't tell anyone you've given me this information."

[23]The commander commanded two of his centurions, "Get 200 soldiers ready immediately. Leave now in the dark with 200 spearmen and 70 mounted cavalry. [24]Put Paul on a horse, {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and get him safely to Caesarea and Governor Felix." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [25]The commander wrote a letter, [26]sending his greetings to governor Felix. [27]"This man was seized by the Jews as they were attempting to kill him, so I commanded my troops to arrest him. Then I discovered he was a Roman citizen. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [28]I took him to their Sanhedrin to find out what charge could be brought against him. [29]I discovered it was about their Jewish doctrine, nothing worthy of imprisonment. [30]When I was informed of a plot to assassinate him, I decided to send him to you and tell his accusers to bring their charge before you." {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [31]The soldiers carried out their orders {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} and took Paul down from Jerusalem to the Mediterranean Sea. [32]Then the mounted soldiers took Paul the rest of the way to Caesarea, and then returned. [33]After delivering the

letter to the governor, they turned Paul over to him.
[34]When Felix got the letter, he asked Paul where he was born. Hearing it was Turkey, he said, [35]"I will hear your case as soon as your accusers come from Jerusalem." Then Felix ordered Paul held in prison in Herod's Palace.

Lord, I marvel at the way You work in small details, You allowed Paul's nephew to warn the Roman commander. Lord, I thank You that the total might of the Roman Empire was used to protect Your servant so he could preach the gospel in Rome. Thank You for working in little and big ways. Amen.

Acts 24
Paul before Felix

Lord, I see Your hand working through politics and big government. Amen.

[1]After five days the high priest, Ananias, some elders, and the lawyer named Tertullus appeared in court in Caesarea. [2]When Tertullus was called, he brought their case before Felix, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} "Your Excellency, you have given peace and protection to the Jews and changed bad laws that persecuted us. At all times and in all places, [3]we acknowledge what you've done for all Jews, and we are grateful. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} [4]I don't want to take up too much of your time, so let me tell you briefly what this man, Paul, has done. [5]He is a troublemaker, stirring up trouble among the Jews worldwide, and is the ring leader of the sect of the Nazarenes. [6]He attempted to profane the temple. We placed him under arrest by the temple guards and planned to judge him by our laws, [7]but the Roman commander Lysias intervened and used force to take him out of our hands, and then ordered him to appear before you. [8]He will tell you the truth when you ask him." [9]The Jews who came with their lawyer agreed to the charges, so Felix motioned Paul to speak. [10]Paul answered, "I know you have been a fair judge over the Jews for many years. Therefore I defend myself with confidence. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [11]When I made my pilgrimage to Jerusalem only 12 days ago, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [12]I was not arguing with anyone in the temple or their synagogues throughout town. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [13]They can't prove their accusations they made against me. [14]I will admit that I worship the God of my ancestors, {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} according to the Way they call a sect. I firmly believe in Jewish law and everything written in the prophets. [15]I believe, just as my accusers, that there will be a resurrection of the righteous and wicked. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [16]I strive to keep my conscience clear before God and man. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [17]After several years of absence, I came bringing alms for the poor and to present offerings to God. [18]It was in this connection

that the Jews found me in the temple. [19]I was purified and there was no crowd with me and no disturbance. [20]Some Jews from Turkey saw me there—these are the ones who should testify against me—because they said I desecrated the temple by bringing in Gentiles; but the Gentiles were not with me. Therefore I am not guilty of causing a riot. If anything, these Jews were the ones who caused the riot. [21]I am guilty of one thing. When I was brought before the Sanhedrin, I spoke about the resurrection which caused a great argument." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [22]Felix, who knew more about the Way than most people, adjourned the proceedings saying, "When Lysias comes, I will decide this case." [23]Felix ordered the Roman commander to keep Paul under guard, but gave him some freedom {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} and allowed his friends to come see him. [24]A few days later Felix and his wife Drusilla, who was Jewish, sent for Paul for a hearing on the subject of faith in Christ. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [25]As Paul spoke about righteousness and self-discipline and judgment to come, Felix was terrified, saying, "You may go for now. When I have a more convenient time, I'll call for you." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [26]He hoped Paul would pay him money so Felix frequently summoned Paul to talk with him. [27]Felix wanted to gain favor with the Jews, so he left Paul in prison. Then two years went by and Felix was replaced by Festus. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7}

Lord, thank You for Paul's positive witness before government officials; may I always give a clear witness to Your faithfulness. Amen.

Acts 25

Paul before Festus

Lord, I understand government officials represent Your power; thank You for law and order that gives security to my culture. Amen.

[1]When Festus took up his appointment, [2]he visited Jerusalem where the chief priest and Jewish leaders asked him to do something immediately about the case of Paul. [3]They wanted Festus to side with them, and they asked for Paul to be transferred back to Jerusalem because they planned to ambush and murder him on the highway. [4]Festus told them Paul would remain in custody in Caesarea and that he would hold court there shortly. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [5]Festus said, "Send your authorities to Caesarea with me, and if Paul is guilty, you can bring charges against him." {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [6]Festus stayed in Jerusalem for about 10 days, then returned to Caesarea, and the next day he had Paul brought before the tribunal. [7]Almost immediately the Jews surrounded Paul and brought accusations against him, but didn't have any proof. [8]Paul defended

himself, saying, "I have committed no offense against the temple or against Caesar." {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [9]Festus was anxious to please the Jews, so he asked Paul, "Are you willing to go to Jerusalem to stand trial?" [10]But Paul answered, "No! I am standing before the tribunal of Caesar, where I should be tried. I demand my hearing before Caesar himself. [11]I have done the Jews no wrong, as you very well know. I am not guilty of any civil crime. I do not ask to be spared from death, but since there is no substance to their charges, no one has the right to surrender me to them. I appeal to Caesar." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [12]Then Festus conferred with his legal advisers and concluded, "You have appealed to Caesar, so to Caesar you should go."

Lord, I thank You that the government protected Paul from death; and thank You for the protection I have by my government. Amen.

[13]A few days later King Agrippa and Bernice arrived in Caesarea to pay a visit to Festus. [14]They stayed several days. Festus explained Paul's case to them, "I have a man in prison that Felix left there. [15]While I was in Jerusalem, the chief priest and the leader of the Jews demanded his condemnation. [16]I told them Roman law does not surrender a prisoner until the accused has an opportunity to confront his accusers and is given an opportunity to defend himself. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [17]So they came here to Caesarea and I took the tribunal seat and brought the man before me. [18]The accusers did not charge him with any crime. [19]They argued religious doctrine and about a dead man called Jesus whom Paul alleged to be alive. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [20]Not feeling qualified to deal with this question, I asked if he would be willing to go to Jerusalem to be tried on this issue. [21]Paul appealed his case to the judgment seat of Caesar, so I have held him until I could send him to Rome." {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [22]Agrippa said, "I would like to hear the man myself." Festus answered, "Tomorrow you shall hear him."

[23]The next day Agrippa and Bernice arrived, and in great ceremony, entered the courtroom with the officials of the city. [24]Then Festus ordered Paul to be brought in, and Festus said, "King Agrippa and all who are present today, see this man. The whole Jewish community has petitioned me that he should not live. [25]For my part, I'm satisfied he hasn't committed a capital crime. But he appealed to Caesar, so I decided to send him there. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [26]Since I have no definite crime that I can write to Caesar, I am presenting him here before you, King Agrippa, and all these officials so that after you examine him, I will have an accusation against him. [27]It seems pointless to send a prisoner to Caesar without charges against him."

Even though Jesus promised we would be persecuted (John 15:18-25), that doesn't

mean we are to voluntarily accept or seek punishment. No, just the opposite. When persecuted, Jesus told us to flee to another city (Matt. 10:23). Paul used his Roman citizenship to escape a beating (Acts 22:25), and Paul used the Roman law to get a just hearing before Caesar (Acts 25:11). Yet if we stand before our persecutors, God will tell us what to say at that time (Matt. 10:19). Lord, give me wisdom about persecution. Teach me when to flee, and teach me what to say when I face my persecutors. Amen.

Acts 26

Paul before King Agrippa

Lord, I'll be grateful for opportunities to witness in official places for You; if I'm ever given the opportunity, may I do it with power. Amen.

[1]King Agrippa said to Paul, "You may speak in your defense," so Paul gestured for silence, then spoke, [2]"I am fortunate to be able to defend myself before you, King Agrippa, [3]because I know you are an expert on Jewish customs and law. So please listen to my whole defense. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [4]Everyone knows I was trained from my childhood in Jewish tradition and completed my education in Jerusalem. [5]The Jews have known that I lived in the strictest way among them as a Pharisee. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [6]But the reason the Jews have charged me is something else. It is for the promise made to our ancestors. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [7]It is for the promise that the 12 tribes worship God. It is the promise of the resurrection from the dead and eternal life. This is why I have been put on trial by the Jews. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [8]Does it seem incredible that God can raise the dead? {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [9]I did all I could to oppose the name of Jesus of Nazareth, and that is how I spent my time in Jerusalem. [10]I put many saints into prison on the authority of the chief priest. When they voted to stone Stephen, I voted with them. [11]Many times I visited synagogues to punish Christians, trying to force them to renounce their faith. I was so angry against Christians that I pursued them to foreign cities. [12]I was on one of these journeys to Damascus with authority from the chief priest. [13]About midday on the road I saw a light—brighter than the sun—from heaven. It shone brilliantly around me and my fellow travelers, [14]so that we fell to the ground. I heard a voice saying to me in Hebrew, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me? Your kicking is only hurting yourself.' [15]Then I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' The Lord answered me, 'I am Jesus whom you are persecuting. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [16]Get up and stand on your feet {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} for I have a reason for appearing to you—to appoint you to be My servant, and be a witness to tell everyone you have seen Me; [17]I will protect you from your people. I will send you to the Gentiles [18]to open their eyes to their blinded condition so they may turn

from darkness to light, from satan's control to God's service, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} so their sins can be forgiven, {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} and they can receive the inheritance of eternal life.' [19]After that, King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} [20]I began immediately preaching to the people of Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem, and all the countryside of Judea, and also to Gentiles, urging them to repent and turn to God, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} and then prove their repentance by doing good works. [21]The Jews arrested me in the temple for doing this, and tried to kill me, [22]but God has protected me to this very hour. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} Therefore I stand before you to testify to both high officials and the lowest of people alike {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} the same thing the prophets and Moses said would happen: [23]that Christ would first suffer, and then rise from the dead {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} to proclaim the light of salvation to the Jews and also to the Gentiles." {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [24]Festus jumped to his feet and shouted, "Paul, you're mad, and your learning has made you insane." [25]Paul answered, "Festus, Your Excellency, I am not mad. I am speaking the truth." Then Paul turned to King Agrippa, [26]"The King understands these matters. I appeal to him in these matters knowing he understands these issues, because none of these things were done in secret. [27]King Agrippa, do you believe the things the prophets said? I know you do!" {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [28]Then King Agrippa replied, "You almost convinced me to become a Christian." {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [29]Then Paul replied, "I wish you were a Christian, both you and everyone who hears these words. I wish you were the same as I—except these chains." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [30]At this point in Paul's speech, the king arose and the governor and Bernice and other government officials left the room. [31]They talked among themselves, saying, "This man has done nothing that deserves death or imprisonment." [32]Agrippa said to Festus, "You should release this man, except he appealed to Caesar."

Lord, when given the opportunity, may I testify what You have done in my life, rather than talking about myself or my accomplishments. Not I, but Christ. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} Amen.

Acts 27

Paul's Trip to Rome

[1]Arrangements were made to sail for Italy, so they handed Paul and other prisoners over to a centurion named Julius of the Augustine regiment. [2]They boarded a ship that was scheduled to make several stops along the coast of Turkey. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} Aristarchus was with us. [3]When they reached Lebanon, Julius let Paul go ashore to visit

Christians and receive hospitality from them. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 4From there they put out to sea, but because of stormy winds they sailed north of Cyprus near the coast of Turkey, 5and at Myra, 6they changed ships for one heading to Rome. 7The winds were still strong so they sailed under Crete. 8They struggled in the wind until they came to Fair Havens, near the town of Lasea, near Rhodes. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 9They stayed there several days because sailing was hazardous in the winter. So Paul warned the commander, 10"Friends, this is going to be a dangerous voyage and there is a risk that we will lose the cargo, the ship, and also our lives." {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} 11But the centurion listened more to the captain and owner than to Paul. 12Since Fair Havens was an exposed harbor that was a dangerous place to spend the winter, they decided to go farther; then they decided to winter in Phoenix because it was a protected harbor. 13Just then a light wind blew from the south that was perfect for sailing; they took in the anchor and sailed past Crete, 14but before long a hurricane caught them in open waters. 15It was impossible to keep the ship headed into the wind, so they gave up and let it run with the wind. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} 16It was a continual struggle to keep the boat under control. 17They hoisted the small lifeboat being towed behind them, then wrapped ropes around the hull to strengthen it. Then they dropped a sea anchor and let the ship drift.

18The next day when the waves grew higher, they threw cargo overboard. 19The following day they threw out the tackle and ship's gear. 20They couldn't see the sun or moon for several days, {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} so everyone gave up hope of surviving. {130 Dying-Prayer, Acts 7:59} 21When they hadn't eaten for several days, {161 Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} Paul addressed everyone, "If you had listened to me, we wouldn't have this damage. 22Now I ask you not to give up hope. No one will die, only the ship will be lost. 23Last night God, to whom I belong and whom I serve, sent an angel to tell me, 24'Fear not, Paul, you will appear before Caesar. Therefore all who are sailing with you will be safe.' 25So be courageous because it will happen just as God told me. 26We will be stranded on some island." 27On the 14th night the ship was still drifting when the sailors felt land was 28near. They sounded and found the water was 120 feet deep. A little later they sounded again and it was 90 feet deep.29Realizing that they would be driven into rocks, they threw out four anchors, and prayed for daylight. 30Then the sailors planned to abandon the ship, so they lowered an emergency boat as though they were putting out anchors. 31Paul said to the centurion, "We will all die unless the sailors stay aboard." 32The soldiers cut the rope to let the small boat drift away. 33As it began to get light, Paul urged everyone to eat something so they would have strength for the coming emergency. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} Paul said, 34"There's no safety in fasting, and not one of you will lose a hair of your head." {161

Fasting-Prayer, Matt. 6:16-19} [35]Then Paul took bread, gave thanks, {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} broke it, and began to eat. [36]Everyone was encouraged and they ate. [37]There were a total of 276 on board, [38]so then they threw the grain into the sea. [39]When daybreak gave some light, no one recognized the island, but they saw a bay with a beach. They planned to run the ship aground on the beach if possible. [40]They cut the anchors, lowered the rudders, hoisted the top sail, and headed ashore, [41]but the ship hit a sand bar. The bow of the boat stuck in the sand and the pounding waves began to break up the stern. [42]The soldiers planned to kill the prisoners because they were afraid the prisoners would escape. [43]But the centurion was determined to deliver Paul safely to Rome. He wouldn't let them do it. He gave orders for those who could swim to swim to shore. [44]He then directed the others to follow on planks or pieces of wreckage. All escaped safely to the beach. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5}

We will all go through storms in life: financial, social, persecution, family, and physical. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} In a storm remember (1) His presence is with you, (2) you are His child and He has saved you, (3) He knows about your unexpected pressures, and (4) God has a plan for you in the storm and after the storm. Lord, keep me safe when storms strike, and help me say what I should say. Help me testify to others and may I help others get through their storms. Amen.

Acts 28
From Malta to Rome

Lord, when I get through the storms of life, I know You'll soothe and comfort me from my pain; but help me remember to praise You for deliverance. Amen.

[1]When they got on the beach, they discovered it was the island of Malta. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [2]The inhabitants welcomed them and built a huge fire to warm them. [3]Paul had collected a bundle of sticks, and as he placed them in the fire, a viper bit him in the hand. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [4]When the inhabitants saw the snake hanging onto Paul's hand, they waited for him to die, saying, "He's a terrible sinner. The storm didn't kill him but the snake will." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [5]Paul shook the snake into the fire, [6]and his hand didn't swell up, nor did he drop dead. {467 Supernatural-Results Prayer, Acts 14:19-20} They changed their minds and said, "Paul's a god." [7]They were near an estate belonging to Publius, the governor of the island; he fed the survivors for three days. {363 Praise for God's Provision, Ps. 23:1} [8]Plublius' father was in bed suffering from high fever and dysentery. Paul laid his hand on him and prayed for him and the man was healed. {214

Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} When this happened, [9]other sick people came and were cured as well. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} When Paul was ready to leave [10]and set sail for Italy, the people of the island put provisions on board for Paul and his companions. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11}

Lord, just as Paul prayed for the father of Publius, so I pray for the sick that I know. Give me the "prayer of faith" (James 5:15) for healing. Amen.

[11]After staying there three months, Paul and his party sailed on an Alexandrian ship with a figurehead—Twin Brothers—that had wintered on the island. [12]They landed at Syracuse and stayed there three days. [13]They sailed to Rhegium and when the south winds blew, they sailed to Puteoli. [14]They found believers there and stayed there seven days, and then began the trip to Rome overland. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [15]When the believers in Rome heard about Paul's arrival, they came to meet him at the Forum of Appius and the Three Taverns. Paul thanked God and was encouraged when he saw them. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16}
[16]When Paul arrived in Rome, he was allowed to stay in his own rented apartment where soldiers guarded him. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [17]After three days Paul called the leading Jews for a day's discussion. Paul said, "Brothers, although I have done nothing against our people or our customs, I was arrested in Jerusalem, and delivered over to the Romans. [18]They examined me and would have set me free because they found I was not guilty of any crime. [19]But the Jews filed an objection, and I was forced to appeal to Caesar. [20]That is why I asked to see you and talk to you about this matter. It is for the hope of Israel that I wear these chains." {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [21]The Jews answered, "We haven't heard anything against you, we haven't received a letter from Jerusalem, nor have any who have arrived here from Judea said anything about you. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [22]But we want to hear what you believe. All we know about Christians is that they are hated everywhere."

Lord, help me have a positive attitude in life even when I know there are many with negative thoughts about You. Amen.

[23]They set a time so that a large number of Jews could visit Paul at his apartment to discuss Christianity. Paul argued from the law of Moses and the prophets, trying to persuade them about Jesus. They began early in the morning and continued until the evening. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [24]Some were convinced, but others were skeptical, [25]so the Jews disagreed among themselves. Paul had one last thing to say to the Jews, [26]"You Jews will hear the gospel, but not understand. You will see the truth of Jesus, but you are spiritually blinded {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22} [27]for your heart is hardened, your spiritual ears are shut up, your spiritual

eyes are blinded because you refuse to believe what is presented lest your heart receive the gospel and you become convicted and are healed." [28]Paul understood from that experience that salvation was to be sent to the Gentiles, because they will listen to God. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [29]After Paul said these words, the Jews left and reasoned among themselves. [30]Paul spent two years in this rented apartment welcoming all who came to see him, [31]proclaiming the kingdom of God to all, teaching the truth about the Lord Jesus Christ {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} with complete freedom and no hindrance. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}

Lord, thank You for the great influential life of the apostle Paul; I cannot do all Paul could do, so help me to do all that I can do. You don't ask that I do the great accomplishments of others; You only ask me to be faithful to my gifts and obey Your commands. I'll do that. Amen.

Romans

Ch 1: Introduction and the Guilt of the Pagan 1627
Ch 2: The Guilt of Religious People 1630
Ch 3: All Are Lost in Sin 1632
Ch 4: Justification by Faith 1633
Ch 5: The Results of Justification by Faith 1634
Ch 6: Deliverance from Sin in the Believer's Life 1635
Ch 7: The Struggle of the Old and New Natures 1637
Ch 8: The Power of the Holy Spirit in the Believer 1638
Ch 9: Continuing Jewish Unbelief 1641
Ch 10: Salvation Is for Everyone 1643
Ch 11: God's Mercy on the Jews 1644
Ch 12: A Living Sacrifice to Serve God 1646
Ch 13: Respect for Government 1647
Ch 14: Handling Questionable Things 1648
Ch 15: A Believer's Relationship to Others 1649
Ch 16: Greetings to Paul's Friends 1651

ROMANS

Key Word: *Righteousness* (Romans 1:17)

Key Verse: "For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, 'The just shall live by faith'" (Rom. 1:17).

Theme: The book of Romans gives the most systematic approach to theology (what to believe) of all the books in the Bible. Paul makes it clear that He is not "the God of the Jews only" but "of the Gentiles also" (3:29).

Paul began writing: (a) the whole world has sinned and is guilty before God (1:8-3:23); (b) the death and resurrection of Christ provides justification to all who exercise faith (3:24-5:21); (c) believers can be delivered from the power of sin (6:1-7:25); (d) the Holy Spirit gives victory (8:1-39); (e) God has past and future plans for Israel (9:1-11:36); (f) God has given guidelines for the practical Christian life and service (12:1-15:33). *Lord, I will learn the essential doctrines of Christianity and live by them. Amen.*

Romans 1

Introduction and the Guilt of the Pagan

1 Lord, the apostle Paul wrote to the Christians in Rome telling them he was a servant who was chosen to preach the good news, {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 2 which You promised in the Old Testament through the prophets. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

May I always be faithful to my calling, as Paul was to his task. Amen.

3 Lord, thank You for the gospel about Your Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who came as a baby through King David's line, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 4 who was raised from the dead by the Holy Spirit to demonstrate that He is the mighty Son of God. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} 5 Lord, thank You that through Christ all Your mercy has been poured out on me to be a witness to everyone, everywhere about Your grace; {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13} 6 so they too can believe and become Christ followers. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 7 Lord, Paul told his dear friends in Rome

that You loved them and called them. Paul prayed for grace and peace to rest on them from You—God the Father—and from the Lord Jesus Christ. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

May Your grace and peace fill my life, as I walk in Your love and calling. Amen.

[8]Paul thanked You that the faith of the Roman believers in Jesus Christ was known throughout the world {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} [9]and that it was his duty to serve You by continually praying for them. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [10]Paul specifically prayed that he would have the opportunity to have a safe trip to come see them. [11]He wanted to strengthen their spiritual gifts so their church would grow strong spiritually. [12]Lord, Paul wanted to bless the Roman church by sharing his faith with them, and allow them to be a blessing to him. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}

Paul desired to visit Rome to communicate his spiritual gifts to believers because "it will make you strong." When we use our spiritual gifts, we grow as we use them. Lord, give me wisdom to discover and exercise my spiritual gifts so others can get the same kind of gifts and serve You with their unique expression of their spiritual gifts. Amen.

[13]Lord, Paul told the Romans that he planned many times previously to visit them, but was prevented from doing so. He wanted to minister to them just as he had ministered in other Gentile churches. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [14]Lord, I have a debt to carry the gospel to both civilized people, and unreached people groups who have never heard the gospel. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [15]Lord, I am ready to preach to any or to all, just as Paul was ready to preach the gospel to those in Rome and to everyone in the world. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} Lord, I am not ashamed of the good news of Christ, for it is powerful to get people to believe so they can be saved. [16]Lord, I agree with the priority that Paul gave that the gospel must first be preached to the Jews, then to Gentiles.

The good news is God's power to forgive my sins, or God's power to give me eternal life, or God's power to transform a kid who cursed all the time into one who wanted to speak only the words of God. There are great miracles such as walking on water or healing a leper, or feeding five thousand people with five loaves and two small fish. But the greatest miracle for humans—the power of God—is to transform a sinner into a saint. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} Lord, thank You for all I received from You when I got saved. But the greatest power was my transformation from a lost sinner into one who lives for You by faith (1:17). Amen.

The Justified Live by Faith

[17]When a person puts his personal trust in the gospel, You declare him righteous—fit

for heaven. This is what the Old Testament teaches, "The just shall live by faith."

Paul tells us to live by faith (Rom. 1:17); then he adds the phrase, "from faith to faith" (1:17). There are at least 6 different ways to express faith: {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} (1) objective faith is in the Bible, what we believe (content), which we call our statement of faith; (2) saving faith is for the forgiveness of sins; (3) justifying faith is when we act on our new position in Christ because we have been declared righteous; (4) indwelling faith operates in us by the Son of God who lives in our heart (Gal. 2:20); (5) living by faith is obedience to biblical principles; and (6) the gift of faith is a spiritual gift to serve God in extraordinary ways by exercising faith in God, usually to remove barriers. Lord, give me all kinds of faith to serve You in many different ways. Amen.

Why the Pagan Are Lost

[18]Lord, You have revealed that You will punish everyone who trespasses Your commands because they reject the truth given them. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]You have revealed Yourself to everyone's conscience. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [20]Also everyone can plainly learn from nature that it took a powerful Creator to create this vast universe, and that it took an intelligent Creator to put the laws of nature in place to control everything. Lord, now no one can give an excuse when they are judged and condemned because everyone knows You exist and You have eternal power. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [21]Lord, everyone knows You exist, but they won't acknowledge You, or thank You for natural blessings, or worship You. They are controlled by illogical thought patterns because they reject the logic of Your existence. Their minds are blinded and confused. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [22]When they think they are wise, they actually are foolish. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [23]Instead of worshiping Your glorious presence, they worship gods made out of wood, or stones that look like birds, or animals, or snakes, or corrupt people. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [24]Lord, You allowed those who reject You to do all types of sexual sins, so that they could fulfill their lust, degrading their bodies with one another. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [25]Instead of believing the truth they knew about You, they deliberately rejected You, choosing to worship and serve created idols rather than You, the Creator, who could bless them. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [26]Lord, You abandoned them to their passions because their women turned from natural sexual practices to abnormal acts. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [27]Their men turned from normal relations with women and turned to lustful sexual practices with one another, men behaving indecently with men, so that they pay a penalty with their souls for their perversion. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [28]Lord, they refused to acknowledge You so You gave them up to their own irrational and corrupt ideas.

Now they continually try to think up new and sexually stimulating ideas that the depraved mind conceives. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [29]They are controlled by all sorts of evil and greed, and hatred, and fightings, bitterness, and lies; so that they even want to kill those who mistreat them. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [30]They quarrel, hate You, are proud, braggartly and continually think of new ways to sin, and hate their parents. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [31]They don't understand what is right, nor do they know how to do right. They break their promises, are mean, and have no feelings for others. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [32]They know in their hearts You will judge them, but they deny it outwardly. They go ahead and do all these things in rebellion against You, and seek friendship with others who are also against You. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

Lord, I know that You alone are God and that denying Your existence and rejecting Your laws is sin. Give me faith to always trust You, and give me courage to always follow Your plan of living. Amen.

Romans 2

The Guilt of Religious People

[1]Lord, people have no excuse for their personal sin because they criticize others who do the same sin. In judging others, they condemn themselves because they behave no differently than those they condemn. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [2]Lord, You condemn all who rebel against Your laws, and You punish law-breakers impartially. Those who pass judgment on other people will be judged because they do the exact same things. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [3]Lord, You are patient with those who sin against You, since You wait a long time before punishing them. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [4]You are giving them an opportunity to repent and turn to You from their sins; Your goodness should lead them to repentance. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8}

Lord, I will live according to my conscience. I will do those things I know to do, and I will not do those things I know are wrong. Amen.

[5]But no, their stubborn refusal only adds to Your anger toward them. Then one day they will suffer punishment when You punish everyone for their sins just as the Scriptures teach. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2}

[6]"God will repay each as their works deserve." [7]Lord, those who seek Your honor and immortality will earn eternal life from You. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [8]Those who refuse Your truth and do evil, You will punish in Your anger and fury. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10} [9]Both Jews and Gentiles will suffer pain and suffering because they rebelled against You and chased evil. [10]But there will be glory, honor, and peace, to those who seek Your salvation, including both Jews and Gentiles.

[11]Lord, there is no favoritism of persons with You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [12]You will punish Gentiles when they sin even if they never heard of Your written law. You will punish those who have access to Your law, and they will be judged by what is in the law. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} [13]But I realize it is not knowing the law but keeping the law that makes anyone holy. [14]Gentiles who have never heard the law know by their conscience what the law requires. They know by their reason to obey the law, even when they don't possess copies of the law. [15]The substance of the law is written in their hearts, so that they know right from wrong. Their conscience accuses them when they sin, or it excuses them when they do right. Lord, You will punish the Jews when they sin because they disobey the written law that they possess. They know what is right, but don't do it. No one is saved because he knows what is right; he is saved when he does what is right. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [16]Lord, the day is coming when Jesus Christ will judge the secrets of all people. I will be ready to meet You in judgment for I have been saved and I live for You. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Jews Are Just as Guilty as the Gentiles

[17]Lord, those who called themselves Jews should walk according to the law of God, and honor You with their lives. [18]The Jews should know Your will because they know Your law, and they should know what is right and wrong. [19]The Jews should be guides to the blind, and they should be a beacon to those in the dark. [20]They should teach the ignorant and unlearned, because they embody all knowledge and truth. [21]But the Jews do not live by the law. They should teach themselves what they teach others. They preach against stealing, yet they steal. [22]They forbid adultery, yet they commit adultery. They despise idols, yet they make money by idol-making. [23]They boast about the law, yet they break it and thereby dishonor You who gave the law. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [24]As the Scriptures teach, "It is your fault, Jews, that God's name is despised by the Gentiles." [25]Being a Jew is special if people obey God's laws. But if they don't, then being a Jew is no better than being a pagan. [26]When Gentiles obey God's laws, then God will give them the special privileges given to Jews. [27]Then Gentiles will be better off than Jews who have God's laws but don't obey them. [28]A person is not a Jew just because he was born of Jewish parents, or he has been circumcised. [29]A true Jew has his inward heart right with God and he is circumcised in his heart by the Holy Spirit. That person will get praise from God and not from man.

Lord, You require obedience, both by those who are circumcised and those not circumcised. Because You declare righteous those who believe in Jesus Christ, {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} I declare my faith in You. I will live for You. Amen.

Romans 3

All Are Lost in Sin

[1]Lord, Paul asked if there is an advantage of being Jewish, and if circumcision means anything. [2]Paul answered, "Yes, being a Jew has many advantages." They received Your message in the Old Testament. [3]Yet, even when some Jews were unfaithful, their lack of faith didn't cancel Your promises. [4]God, You will always keep Your Word even when everyone else is unfaithful. The book of Psalms says, "The Word of God will always prove to be right, no matter who questions God." [5]Some point out that the sins of the Jews make You demonstrate Your holiness because You always judge sin. The Jews justify their sin, claiming people will say, You, God, are good when they see You punishing our sin. Then the Jews ask, "Is it fair for You to punish us when our sin helps others recognize You?" Paul answers, [6]"That is absurd thinking. It means God could never judge sin if God didn't judge rebellious Jews." Paul continues, [7]"That's like saying my lying makes You demonstrate Your truthfulness. [8]When You judge the Jews' sin, You thus bring glory to Yourself." That's like saying, "We do evil to bring about good." [9]Lord, Paul asked again, "Are Jews better off than Gentiles?" He answers, "No, both are under sin's control." [10]The Scriptures teach there is no good person left in the world, no, not one. [11]There is no one who understands You, and no one is seeking You. [12]All have turned from doing right, there is no good person on earth, no, not one. [13]Their speech is rebellious and filthy, just like an open grave. Their tongue is full of deceit, bitter curses fill their mouth, and their words are deadly like a snake's poison. [14]Their mouth is full of cursing and bitterness. [15]They are quick to kill or stab people in the back, [16]creating misery and strife wherever they go. [17]They know nothing of Your blessing [18]and they don't care what You think of them. [19]Lord, the Jews should know what the law says, and they are responsible to obey what You say. Therefore the Jews stand guilty before You when they see clearly they aren't obeying You, so they know they are sinners. [20]Lord, You have spoken to silence every mouth; now the whole world is guilty before You. Therefore no one can be justified by keeping the law; rather the law makes us conscious of our sin.

Lord, I recognize my sin; I am completely unworthy to stand in Your presence. I sin with my mind; thoughts come that I shouldn't think. I sin with my emotions; I have desires that are wrong. I sin with my will, for I want to do what is wrong. I am a sinner, so transform me by the power of Christ. *{480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}* *I will stand before You in His righteousness, because I trust wholly in Him. Amen.*

Righteousness through Faith

[21]Lord, thank You that we can know Your righteousness through the gospel, and not from knowing the law. [22]Now

there is a way to heaven for all sinners. You will declare us "not guilty" when we trust Christ for salvation. All can be saved—Jews and Gentiles—alike, by believing in Jesus Christ. [23]Lord, I know I am a sinner, because You said all have sinned, and come short of Your glorious benefits. [24]But both Jew and Gentile are declared righteous through Your free gift of grace when they are redeemed by Jesus Christ. [25]Lord, You sent Jesus to take the punishment for our sins, and reconciled us to You. You declared that sins committed before the Cross are forgiven by the blood of Christ, and declared that all sins now committed are forgiven. [26]In this way You make Your righteousness known. Therefore Your wrath against sin is justified, and You become the Justifier of sinners. [27]Lord, I realize I can't boast about anything that has to do with my salvation because my forgiveness is not based on what I do, but is based on what Christ has done for me. [28]Therefore all Christians are justified by faith without keeping the law. [29]You are not saving only Jews—no, You treat everyone the same way, whether they are Jew or Gentile. [30]You treat everyone the same way; all are forgiven if they have faith, it doesn't make any difference if they are circumcised or uncircumcised. [31]Does that mean the law no longer affects us? No! Salvation is based on the law. This does not undermine the law—no! When we realize salvation is by faith alone, this places the law in its proper place.

Romans 4

Justification by Faith

[1]Lord, Paul points out Abraham is the founder from which all Jews descended. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [2]If Abraham were justified by doing something good, he would have had something to boast about. [3]But the Scriptures teach, "Abraham believed God, and God declared him righteous." {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [4]When someone works, he earns wages; he gets what is due to him. [5]However, when a man gets salvation free, he has not worked for it. You have justified him because of his faith. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [6]Lord, David said the same thing, "A man is happy when he is forgiven without doing good works." [7]That man is blessed because his sins are forgiven and his deeds are no longer counted against him. [8]Yes, blessed is the one to whom the Lord will not impute sin.

[9]Is this a blessedness only for the circumcised Jews? Or can Gentiles be justified before You? Look again at Abraham. [10]He was justified by You before he was circumcised. He was declared righteous while he was uncircumcised. [11]When Abraham was later circumcised, it was an outer sign of faith within his heart. In this way Abraham became the spiritual father of all the uncircumcised believers so they might also be justified by God. [12]But Abraham was also a spiritual father to Jews who had been circumcised.

The Promise from Faith

13Your promise to Abraham that he would be the spiritual father to all believers of all times, was based on his faith, not his works. 14If unsaved people can receive Your forgiveness by keeping the law, then our faith is pointless and empty. 15The law teaches we are punished for breaking the law but Christ has fulfilled the law in His death and He has taken it out of the way. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3}

16So we get Your blessings by faith, whether we keep the law or not. You will bless those who belong to the law as well as Gentiles who weren't given the law. As long as we all come to You by faith, we come like Abraham, who is the father of us all. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 17The Scriptures promise, "I have made Abraham the ancestor of many nations." God called the salvation of the Gentiles, as though it had already happened. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24}

Abraham believed that "God could call things that did not exist, as though they existed" (Rom. 4:17). He prayed for a supernatural breakthrough. Lord, I pray that I can be transformed to live supernaturally by Your power. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} I can't do this in myself, so do a miracle for me. Amen

18Lord, when You told Abraham he would have a son and be the father of many nations, he believed Your promises to him; he hoped against any hope of his present circumstances. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 19Abraham did not have weak faith even though his body couldn't reproduce and he was 100 years old. Also Abraham realized Sarah was barren and old, 20but he staggered not at Your promises through unbelief, but was strong in faith giving glory to You. 21Abraham was convinced You had all power to do what You promised. 22Because of Abraham's faith You forgave his sins and declared him righteous. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 23Lord, I know this kind of faith wasn't for Abraham alone, but is for me also. 24You will accept me as You accepted Abraham. I too believe Your promises that just as You brought Jesus back from the dead, {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 25You will forgive all my sins and declare me righteous before You.

Romans 5

The Results of Justification by Faith

1Lord, now that I'm declared right with You by faith, I can experience lasting peace. 2Since my faith in Jesus, I can enter Your grace, and I can boast of looking forward to Your glory.

3Also I can rejoice in my sufferings, knowing they work patience in my life, 4and patience produces endurance and when I endure, I get Your approval which gives me hope. 5My hope does not disappoint me because You have poured Your love into my heart by the Holy Spirit whom You gave me. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12}

Lord, I'm never disappointed in You. Because I've received Your great love, I have great hope. Amen.

6Lord, at the moment when I was helpless,
I realized Christ died for sinful people,
such as me. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal.
2:20} 7I wouldn't expect anyone to die for
a good person, even though that is pos-
sible, {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer,
John 10:10} 8but You demonstrated Your
great love for me by sending Christ to die
for me, while I was a great sinner.
9Since His blood has done all this for me,
He will also declare me completely right-
teous. 10Lord, when Jesus' death reconciled
me to You, I was still not saved, I was still
Your enemy. Now that I am reconciled,
surely I can count on Your blessings by the
life of Your Son living in me. 11I rejoice in
this wonderful new relationship with the
Lord Jesus Christ based on what He did
in saving me.
12Lord, I know when Adam sinned, sin
entered the world for all people sinned and
death spread throughout the human race.
13Sin existed in the world long before the
written law was given. No one could be
accused of breaking the law when there was
no written law. 14Yet all people died from
Adam to Moses, and it was their sin that led
to their death. It was not a matter of their
breaking the written law. 15Lord, Adam was
a contrast to Christ, so the gift of Christ
outweighed the fall of Adam. Through
one man, Adam, many died, through the
gift of one Man, Christ, many lived. The
results of the gift of Christ outweigh the
results of Adam's fall. 16For after the fall
came the judgment of condemnation, and
many committed trespasses because of
the fall, but by the one Man, Jesus Christ,
came abundant life. 17For it is certain that
death reigned over everyone because of one
man's fall. It is even more certain that life
reigns because of one Man, Jesus Christ,
who gives the free gift to those who don't
deserve it. 18Again, Adam's sin brought
punishment on all, but Christ made it pos-
sible for all to be declared righteous. 19By
one man's disobedience, many were made
sinners; by one Man's obedience, many will
be declared righteous. 20Lord, the law was
given to show all how far short they come
in obeying You. The more we see our sins
and failures, the more we realize how much
You have forgiven us. 21Before, sin reigned
over all, bringing death. Now grace reigns
to deliver eternal life to those who are in
Christ Jesus our Lord.

Lord, I know I have a sin nature that tempts me to disobey You. Give me strength to overcome my temptations. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} I look forward to heaven when my time of temptation will be over. Amen.

Romans 6

Deliverance from Sin in the Believer's Life

1Lord, should I keep sinning so You
can keep showing Your grace? {418

Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [2]Absolutely not since sin's power over me is broken! Should I keep sinning when I don't have to? {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [3]Again, no! When I was placed into Christ by spiritual baptism, I was placed into His death. The control of my sin nature over me was broken by His death. [4]In other words when I was baptized into Christ, I died when He died. When Christ was raised up from the dead, I was given new life to live for Him. [5]Lord, I have been united with Christ in death that I might share His new life. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} [6]My old lustful nature was nailed to the cross and it received a death blow so that I might not serve sin in the future. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [7]For when I am dead to sin, I am free from all its power over me. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}

Lord, thank You that I died when Christ died, and that I was buried with Him. I also realize I was raised to new life with Christ in His resurrection. Now give me strength to live my new life. Amen.

[8]I believe that having died with Christ, I now share my new life with Him. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [9]Lord, since Christ has been raised from the dead, He will never again die; death has no power over Him. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [10]Christ died once for all to end sin's control, and now He lives in heaven with You. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [11]So I look on myself as dead to sin's control, but alive to Your will through Jesus Christ. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [12]I will not let sin control my physical body, and I will not obey its sinful lusts. {242 Inner-Desires Prayer, Eph. 4:22 ff.} [13]I will not let any part of my body become an evil tool to be used for sinning. I give myself to You as one who is alive from the dead, and I give all parts of my body to You as instruments of righteousness. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [14]I will not let sin control me since I will be controlled by grace, not the law. {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} [15]Lord, shall I continue to sin because I am not under the law? Absolutely not! {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [16]If I give myself to sin, I become a slave to the one I obey. I cannot be a slave to sin and death, and at the same time be a slave to Christ and life. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [17]Lord, thank You that I'm no longer a slave to sin, but I'm Your slave, having believed Your principles from my heart. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [18]I am free from the mastery of my old nature and I am a slave to righteousness. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [19]Lord, once I was a slave to uncleanliness and self-gratification, but now I am a slave to righteousness and holiness. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [20]When I was a slave to sin, I felt no obligation to obey Your will. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [21]I got nothing from serving sin, and now I am ashamed of what I did because those things lead to death. {303

Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [22]But now I have been set free from sin, and I have become Your slave that will lead to holiness and eternal life. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [23]When I serve sin, I earn the wages of death, but You gave me eternal life through Christ Jesus, my Lord. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10}

Lord, I thank You for the gift of eternal life. I have a new nature, new desires, and new hope. Everything is new. Amen.

Romans 7

The Struggle of the Old and New Natures

[1]Lord, Paul told his saved Jewish brethren that when they died to the law, it no longer held them in its power. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [2]A married woman has legal obligations to her husband while he is alive. But all obligations come to an end when the husband dies. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [3]But if she gives herself to another man while her husband is still alive, she is legally an adulteress. Nevertheless her legal obligations cease when her husband dies, and she can legally marry another. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [4]Lord, Paul said that is why Christians who die to the law in Christ's death can now give themselves to Christ who arose from the dead that they might bring fruit to You. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [5]But when they give themselves to their sinful nature, their lustful passions controlled their bodies so they bear fruit to death. {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2} [6]But now when we die to our lust that once controlled us, we are released from the law so we can serve You in a new way, not by legalistically obeying rules and traditions but by the power of a new life. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}

Lord, thank You for freedom in Christ; now I am free to do what You want me to do. I enjoy Your freedom. Amen.

The Law Cannot Save

[7]Lord, Paul told them the law was not evil, except that no one would have known what sin is except that the law told them. I would have not known that "coveting" was evil, except the law said, "You shall not covet." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [8]The law stirred up my evil desires by reminding me these desires were wrong. Does that mean if there were no laws to break, there would be no sinning? {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [9]No! I felt okay so long as I was ignorant of the law, but when I learned what the law meant, I realized I was a sinner. I learned I was a slave doomed to die. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [10]The law was supposed to lead me to life, but instead it led me to death. {346 Patient-Teaching Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:2} [11]Sin took advantage of me by using the law to give me a death sentence. [12]Lord, I know

the law is holy, and the Ten Commands are good and just. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} 13Does that mean that something that was good was responsible for my death? Absolutely not! But sin is treacherous and deceitful. Something good was used for evil purposes. Thus sin exercised all its lustful powers over me. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 14Lord, I know the law is spiritual but I am unspiritual. I am sold as a slave to sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 15I cannot understand my reaction to things. Such as what I am supposed to do, I don't do, and what I hate to do, I continually go back to doing it. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 16When I act against what I want to do, that means the law is good. 17When I rebel against the law, it is not me that's doing it, but sin that dwells in me. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} 18I know that nothing good lives in me, it's my sinful nature that controls my life. 19I have a desire to do good things, but I cannot carry it out. 20When I try not to do wrong things, I do them anyway. So when I do the things I don't want to do, then it is not my true self doing them. Sin still controls my life. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 21Lord, I've discovered a new law in me: every time I want to do good, I do wrong intentionally. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17}

As long as we live in the flesh, we will be tempted to do evil and rebel against God's commands. If we don't yield to Christ, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} we will be controlled by our old nature, and we will live in bondage to our old nature. What is bondage? It is "doing what we don't want to do, and not being able to do what we desire to do." {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} Lord, I yield my life to You. I will do what You want me to do, because I will do it in Your strength. I will refrain in Your strength from what I know is wrong. Amen.

22I love to keep the law of God, {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 23but I see another law working in me. It fights the logic of my mind, making me a prisoner of the law, working in my body to make me sin; it's my old nature. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} 24What a miserable person I am. Who can rescue me from my slavery to sin? {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 25Thank You, Lord, that You will deliver me through Jesus Christ my Lord. Lord, what is the result of all of this? In my lower nature I am a slave of sin, but in my mind I am Your slave. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

Romans 8

The Power of the Holy Spirit in the Believer

1Lord, now there is no condemnation against me, because I am in Christ Jesus. 2The power of the life-giving Holy Spirit is mine through Christ Jesus. He has released me from the compulsive cycle of sin and the lust of my old nature. 3For the law was powerless to help me obey

because I was a slave to my old nature. But You sent Your Son in a human body to be a sacrificial offering for my sin to destroy sin's domination over me. [4]Now I can obey Your laws by following the leading of the Holy Spirit and refusing the lust of my old nature. [5]Lord, those who are dominated by their sinful nature have made up their minds to sin, but I am dominated by the Holy Spirit because I have made up my mind to do what He desires of me. [6]If I follow the dictates of my old nature, it will lead to death. When I obey the Holy Spirit, He leads me to life and peace. [7]As a result, when I obeyed only my old nature, I have made myself Your enemy. My old nature has never been Your friend, and I can never make it obey You. [8]Those who only please their old nature, never please You.

Lord, I will think the thoughts of Christ who indwells me. I will fill my mind with Scripture so I can think Your thoughts. Amen.

[9]Lord, I am not interested in pleasing the old nature. I am interested in spiritual things, because the Holy Spirit lives in my life. And I know I am Your child because I possess the Holy Spirit. [10]Lord, even when my body is dead because of sin, my spirit is alive because I was declared righteous, [11]and the Holy Spirit who raised Jesus from the dead lives in me to give me life. Therefore after this body is dead, I will live again by the same Holy Spirit who is living within me.

[12]Lord, I know it is not necessary for me to obey the lust of my old nature. [13]If I died physically when obeying my old nature, I'd be doomed to death. But Your Holy Spirit can stop my rebellion by His power that indwells me. [14]Therefore, I will be led by the Spirit of God and I will be Your child. [15]Lord, I am not just a slave who cowers in fear of breaking laws or displeasing You, but I received the Holy Spirit who made me Your child, so I cry to You, "Papa, Father." [16]The Holy Spirit constantly tells my spirit that I am Your child; [17]now if I am Your child, I am also an heir, Your heir, and co-heir with Christ. Because I suffer as a Christian, I will also share in His glory in heaven.

We pray Abba when we don't have words to express our desires. The name Abba is our equivalent to "Papa" or "Daddy," plus other intimate names we use for our earthly father. Abba is the feelings of our heart for our father that can't be expressed in words. Abba, I crawl up into Your lap to tell You, "I love You" and "Thank You for being my Father." Thank You for giving me life, protection, food, clothing, shelter, belongings, and for life itself. I love You. Amen.

[18]Lord, my present sufferings are nothing when compared with the glories that are waiting for me in heaven. [19]As a matter of fact, all creation groans, waiting for the glorification of Your children [20]because creation will lose its thorns, thistles, and the curse You put on it when You send Jesus at the end of time. [21]Creation will be liberated

from its corruption to enjoy the same magnificent redemption You will give to all of Your children. [22]From the beginning until now, animals and plants groan, expecting to be redeemed from the bondage of decadence to enjoy the same redemption as Your children. [23]I too groan while I wait for my body to be transformed, for that is my inward hope. By trusting You, I'm looking forward to getting a new body. [24]Those who are already in heaven don't need hope because they have already received their reward. [25]I continue to trust for something I don't have yet, but I wait patiently and confidently for it. [26]Lord, thank You for the help of the Holy Spirit who comes to assist me in my weakness. I don't know how I ought to pray, but the Holy Spirit intercedes for me. He prays with words I can't understand or express. [27]What the Holy Spirit prays for me is in agreement with You, my heavenly Father.

Lord, I don't always know what to pray for, nor do I know how to pray. I yield to the Holy Spirit and I let Him pray for me. I listen to what the Holy Spirit prays for me. Amen.

[28]Therefore the things that will happen to me are for my good because He prays for me. [29]For when You foreknew me, You predestinated me to be conformed to the image of Your Son, so Your Son will be the firstborn among many children. [30]Lord, You predestined me and called me. Because You called me, You also justified me; and those You justified, You will glorify.

God's Eternal Love

[31]Lord, how shall I respond to Your great plan? If You are for me, who can be against me? [32]Since You did not hold back Your only Son, but You gave Him for us all, I know You will freely give me all things. [33]Who can bring any charge against Your children? Since You justify me, [34]who can condemn me? Christ Jesus who died for me and was raised, stands at Your right hand to intercede for me.

Some for whom we make intercession are believers who need help; others are nonbelievers who need to be saved. But our intercession is based on the intercession of Jesus, who presents our requests to the Father. Why? (1) We pray for the wrong thing; (2) with wrong motivations; (3) in the wrong way, with the wrong words; (4) without faith; and (5) with sin or other things in our lives that block our prayers. Therefore Jesus can: (1) make our prayers right; (2) open the door; (3) urge us to continue; and (4) give us hope that the Father will hear and answer. Lord Jesus, I come praying for others who need to be saved, and for believers who have needs. Hear those prayers that should be heard, and make them acceptable to the Father. Answer according to Your will. Amen.

[35]Who can separate me from Your love? Not trouble, hardship, or persecutors, hunger, nakedness, or danger. [36]The Scriptures teach, "I must be ready to die at any time. I am like sheep awaiting slaughter."

Lord, I rest in Your assurance. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} I know I'll go to heaven, not because of what I've done, but because of what You've done for me. Amen.

37These are all trials over which I must triumph by the power of Christ who loves me, and died for me. 38Lord, I am certain that nothing can separate me from Your love for me. Death can't separate me from You, also angels can't do it; neither can the satanic power of hell, nor things present, or things to come. 39Nothing can separate me from Your love, not height, nor depth, nor any other creature, for I am safe in Christ Jesus my Lord.

Romans 9

Continuing Jewish Unbelief

1Lord, Paul's conscience made him tell everyone that he had a deep desire that his Jewish relatives might be saved. 2Paul had deep sorrow and mental anguish because the Jewish people rejected Christ. 3He was willing to be cut off from Christ for their salvation.

Lord, give me a burden for the salvation of my lost relatives and friends, just as Paul had for the Jews who represented his flesh and blood. Amen.

4Lord, the Jewish people were adopted by You, and were given Your covenants, and Your glory visited them. You gave them the law and principles on how to worship You. They had everything, but rejected You. 5Lord, the Jewish people descended from the patriarchs and Christ came from their flesh and blood. Christ is the One whom they should worship above all, He is the One they should bless.

Lord, Your servant Paul loved the Jews and interceded for them (Rom. 10:1). I join him to pray for Your people, the Jews. The world has an unnatural hatred for Jews because they are Your people, and the world rejects You. But I pray for them. Amen.

6Lord, does this mean You have failed to keep Your promises because the Jews refused to recognize Christ? 7Absolutely not! Not all physical Jews are spiritual Jews, and not all the physical descendants of Abraham have the faith of Abraham. You promised that through Isaac the spiritual promises would be carried out, which means other physical children of Abraham didn't get the privilege of being in the line of Christ. 8That means that not all the physical children of Abraham are his spiritual descendants; only those who are the children of promise are his spiritual descendants. Lord, I believe Your promises to Abraham apply to me, and I have acted on the promises You made. I recognize Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, I have received Him by faith, and I am saved. 9Lord, Paul quoted Your promise, "I will visit you and Sarah will have a son." 10Then later You promised to Rebekah when she was pregnant by Isaac, 11before

her twin sons were born, and before either of them did good or evil, [12]that "The elder shall serve the younger." You chose Jacob before he was born—because Your choice is free—and it didn't depend on human merit. [13]The Scripture said, "Jacob I love, because he is the child of promise." [14]Does this make You unjust? [15]No! Remember what You said to Moses, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I please."
[16]Lord, I know the only thing that counts is Your mercy, not what people desire or try to do. I am saved by Your grace. Lord, thank You for having mercy on me. [17]Lord, You said to Pharaoh, "For this purpose I raised you up, so I might show My great power and that My name may be known throughout the world." [18]Therefore God shows mercy when He wants to show mercy, and He hardens those He wants to harden.

Lord, thank You for sending the Holy Spirit to soften my heart to spiritual things. Thank You for opening my blind eyes and giving me a desire to know You. Amen.

[19]Lord, many will ask, "How can You ever punish anyone since no one can reject Your will?" [20]Therefore You answer them, "What right has any human to question Me?" You created everyone. [21]"The pot has no right to question the potter, 'Why have you made me this shape?'" Every potter, or craftsman, can do what he wills with the clay. He decides whether a lump of clay should be used for an extraordinary pot or an average pot.

Lord, I thank You for making me who I am, and thank You for my special gifts. Help me glorify You through my unique calling, and help me fulfill Your purpose for my life. Amen.

[22]Lord, You have a perfect right to show Your anger at any time against those who rebel against [23]You, even when You were originally patient with them. You put up with rebels so You can show Your mercy and richness of grace. [24]Lord, You are patient with us, both Jews and Gentiles, to reveal Your grace and kindness to us. [25]You said in Scripture, "I will say to a people who are not My people, that you will be Mine. You are My people, [26]I will say to a nation that I have not loved, I love you. They will be called the sons of the living God."
[27]Lord, You said, "Though Israel should have as many descendants as there are grains of sand on the seashore, only a remnant will be saved. [28]For You will swiftly carry out Your punishment once and for all. [29]For the Scriptures said, 'Unless You, the all-powerful Lord, show Your mercy, all Jews would be destroyed, just as You destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah.'"
[30]Lord, then the Gentiles who were not looking for Your righteousness found it. They found Your righteousness that came by faith.
[31]The Jews who were trying to find Your righteousness by keeping the law did not

keep the law and did not find righteousness. [32]Why? Because they relied on their legalism, and not on faith. In other words, they stumbled over the law and it became a stumbling stone to them. [33]The Scriptures say, "You lay in Zion a stumbling stone—a rock to trip people up—that Rock was Jesus Christ. Those who believe in Him will not stumble or fall."

Romans 10

Salvation Is for Everyone

[1]Lord, Paul told the Romans that the longing of his heart was for Jewish people to be saved. [2]Paul knows the enthusiasm they have for You, but it is misdirected zeal. Their passion is based on wrong knowledge. [3]They have never realized Your demands of them for perfect righteousness, so all the while they were trying to keep the law to demonstrate their own righteousness. Therefore all Jews, along with all Gentiles, are not perfect, but are sinners in Your sight. [4]Lord, when I received Christ as my Savior, it was the end of my struggle to be righteous by keeping the law. [5]Moses wrote that if anyone could keep the law perfectly, and hold out against temptation, and never break one law, he could be saved and appear before God, [6]but I could never reach that standard. I found salvation without searching heaven to bring the physical Jesus down to me, [7]nor did I descend into death to find Jesus and raise Him from the dead to give me eternal life. [8]I was saved by trusting Christ and He is within reach of any who look for Him. [9]Everyone can have this salvation, which is as easy as opening one's mouth to call for it, and opening their heart to You. [10]Salvation is obtained by the word of faith, which I received when I believed. When I confessed with my mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believed in my heart that You raised Him from the dead, I was saved! For with my heart, I believed unto righteousness, and with my mouth confession was made to salvation.[11]The Scriptures promise that when I believed in Christ, I would not be disappointed, and that is surely true. [12]Lord, Paul said Jews and Gentiles are the same, and that all must call on You for salvation. You are the same Lord who gives generously to those who call on You. [13]Paul quoted the Old Testament, "Whoever calls on the Lord will be saved." [14]Lord, how can anyone ask You to save him unless he believes in You? How can he believe if he has never heard? How can he hear unless someone tells him? [15]And how will anyone go preach the gospel unless someone else sends him? Paul quotes the Old Testament to prove his point, "How beautiful are the feet of those who bring good tidings of good things!"
[16]Lord, Paul was concerned that not everyone was responding to the gospel. He quoted Isaiah, "Lord, who will believe?"

Lord, help me be a good witness of Jesus Christ to the world. They need to hear; I will tell them. Amen.

[17]Then Paul concluded that faith comes from hearing the gospel—the good news

of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. [18]Lord, Paul was concerned about the Jews being saved. They have heard Your Word because it is preached wherever the Jews live. [19]Paul asked, "Do they understand?" Even back in Moses' time, God told the Jews, "I will use the nation of Gentiles that is devoid of spiritual understanding to provoke you to action." [20]Because Israel refused to preach to non-Jews, You told them, "I will be found by people who weren't looking for Me." [21]Lord, even while Gentiles are being saved, You still reach out Your hands to the Jews—a disobedient people—who refuse to come to You.

Lord, I confess Jesus is Lord with my mouth and by the way I live. Bring glory to Yourself by my confession. Amen.

Romans 11

God's Mercy on the Jews

[1]Lord, Paul asked, "Has God rejected His people?" Absolutely not! Paul was a Jew, an Israelite, a descendant of Abraham, from the tribe of Benjamin. [2]No, it is unthinkable that God has repudiated His unique people, whom He originally chose. Remember what Elijah said in the Scriptures when interceding to You for Israel, [3]"Lord, they have killed Your prophets and broken down Your altars. I am the only one faithful to You, and they seek to kill me." [4]You answered, "No, you are not the only one. I have 7,000 left who have not bowed to Baal." [5]Lord, in the same way, there was a remnant in Paul's day chosen by Your grace. [6]So it was not the Jews' legalism but Your kindness that made them follow You. For if You recognized them for good works, Your grace would no longer be free. [7]Lord, Paul came to this conclusion, but most of the Jews have not been saved. A few have found salvation, but the rest are judicially blinded, so they don't understand the gospel. [8]The Scriptures teach, "God has given Israel a blinded heart to this day, so that their eyes see not, and their ears hear not." [9]David said, "The food God has provided for them has become a trap so that they think everything is well between them and God. [10]Let their eyes be blinded to God's goodness and let them serve sin."

[11]Lord, I realize the Jews lost their divine privileges because of their sin and rejection of Your plan for them. May I ever follow closely Your leading in my life and may I stay close to Your protective grace. Lord, Paul asked the obvious question, "Have the Jews forever lost any hope of recovery? Or, have they just stumbled temporarily?" Your purpose was to make salvation available to the Gentiles, and then the Jews would be envious of what the Gentiles had, and want it for themselves. [12]If all the world becomes rich in Your blessing because the Jews stumble, think of how much greater will be Your blessing when Jews come back to You and join the Gentiles in Christ. [13]Paul said he was addressing this point to Gentiles because he was an apostle to the Gentiles. [14]Lord, You had a special message to the

Gentiles, and Paul constantly told this to the Jews to make them jealous of what the Gentiles have, and thus some Jews will be saved. [15]For if the Jewish rejection means the world is reconciled to You, how much more wonderful will be the return of Israel to You and Christ. It will be like the Jewish nation being resurrected from the dead. [16]If the flour is good, then the bread it makes will be good, and if the root of a tree is good, then it will give good fruit. Since Abraham—the original root—was good, so eventually the nation of Israel will be children of Abraham's faith. [17]Lord, Paul realized the branches of the olive tree called Israel were cut off, and the Gentiles—like wild olive branches—have been grafted into Your tree. The Gentiles now enjoy the life of Your tree that gives blessing. [18]But Gentiles should not think themselves superior, for the branches do not support the root, but the root supports the branches. Those branches, Israel, were cut off because of their unbelief. [19]Gentiles may say, "Those branches were broken off so I could be grafted in," [20]and that is true. Israel was cut off because of unbelief. But that fact should not make Gentiles proud, but fearful. [21]If You didn't spare the natural branches—the Jews—You will not spare the Gentiles when they reject You. [22]I won't forget, You can be severe as well as gracious. You are severe to those who reject You, and You are gracious to those who fear You, [23]for the Jews can repent of their unbelief and be grafted back into the place of Gentiles. [24]Lord, You are eminently able to graft Your people—the Jews—back again. For if Your great power were able to graft wild olive branches into Your eternal plan, then it will be much easier to graft a cultivated olive branch back into its original place.

[25]Lord, I see Your original love for Israel, and I understand Your plan for Your people. Do not forget us who are Gentiles. Remember me, because I love You. Lord, Paul wanted his readers to know the mystery of Your dealing with Israel so they wouldn't be conceited. Israel is now spiritually blinded, but this will last only until the fullness of the Gentiles comes in. [26]Then all Israel will be saved, as it is written, "The Deliverer will come from Zion. He will turn the Jews from ungodliness, [27]and He will take away their sin."

Lord, I look forward to all Israel being saved, I don't know when, where, or how it will happen, but I believe You will fulfill Your promise to the Jews; just remember me in Your total plans for this universe. Amen.

[28]Lord, the Jews are now enemies of the gospel, but they are beloved as far as Your eternal covenant with them is concerned [29]because You will never withdraw Your gifts and calling. [30]Remember, Gentiles were once rebels against You, but when the Jews rejected Jesus Christ, You were merciful to the Gentiles, [31]and in the future, You will be merciful to the Jews. [32]For You have given up on all those who are habitually sinning, but You will also have mercy on any You choose to show mercy.

[33]Lord, how rich are the depths of Your mystery, how deep is Your wisdom and

knowledge. I can't possibly trace Your motives for I don't understand all that You do. [34]Who could ever know Your mind? Who could ever try to tell You what to do? [35]Who could ever give You anything? No one, for You are the supreme God. [36]All that exists comes from You, and is for You. To You be glory forever.

There are many things about God's nature that we as humans can't understand, but even in our limited understanding we must magnify God for what we know of Him, and for what we don't know of Him. There are many things that God does in this world, or things that He allows. We may not understand why certain things happen, but we must worship God, because "All things work together for good to those who love Him" (Rom. 8:28). Lord, I worship You for what I know about You and for what I don't understand about You. I worship You for all You do in my life that I understand, and for all I don't understand. Everything happens because of You, and through You, and for Your glory. Amen.

Romans 12

A Living Sacrifice to Serve God

[1]Lord, I will dedicate my body to You, as Paul pleaded with all believers to do. Because of Your mercy, I offer myself as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to You; this is the first and best spiritual worship to You. [2]I will not allow myself to be conformed to the principles of this world. But I will let my thinking be transformed by the power of the Holy Spirit. Then I will discover Your will for my life, which will glorify You and satisfy my desires.

Lord, I surrender my body to You. May I live holy to please You, and may I serve You with all my strength. Amen.

[3]Lord, because I have received grace from You, I will not exaggerate my value or importance. I will honestly estimate the gifts You've given me by the standards of faith You've given me. [4]Just as each body has many parts, and each part has a separate function, [5]so I am one part of Christ's body who serves in harmonious union with other believers because we belong to each other. [6]My spiritual gifts are different than other believers. I belong to the body, that is, to other believers, and I need all of them to help me serve You. Lord, You've given to each one of us a spiritual gift, which is an ability to do certain things well. Those with the gift of prophecy, that is, speaking for You, should use their gift according to their faith. [7]Those with the gift of helping others should serve people well. Those with the gift of teaching should teach well. [8]Those with the gift of preaching should do a good job delivering sermons. Those who have been given money should use it generously for spiritual projects. Those who have the gift of administration should manage everything to Your glory. Finally let those with the gift of mercy-showing, show compassion and sympathy to the needy.

Thank You for giving me my spiritual gifts. May I discover them, train them, and may I dedicate my abilities to serve You. Amen.

Sharing Christ with Others

9Lord, I will love everyone as You loved me. I will not pretend to love people when I don't. I will seek the good things of life, and I will turn my back on evil things. 10I will love others as Your children should, and have deep respect for others. 11I will serve You with untiring effort, and will be enthusiastic in all I do. 12I will gladly accept all Your plans for me and I will be patient in trouble while always praying to do Your will. 13Lord, when Your saints are in need, I will share with them the things I have and open my home to them. 14Lord, I will always bless those who persecute me, and will never curse them.15I will share the happiness of those who are happy, and I will empathize with those who are sad. 16I will treat everyone with equal kindness, and will not condescend to the poor. I will not allow myself to be self-satisfied, but will show Christ to the world. 17Lord, I will never pay back evil for evil. I want everyone to see my integrity. 18I will try to get along with everyone, and be at peace with them. I will not try to get even when someone wrongs me. 19I will leave revenge to You because the Scriptures teach, "Vengeance belongs to You, and You will pay them back for their evil." Also the Scriptures teach, 20"If your enemy is hungry, you must give him food, and if your enemy is thirsty, you must give him water to drink, and thus heap hot coals on his head." 21I will resist evil and conquer it by doing good.

Lord, I pray for those who hate me or try to harm me. Enable them to do good, and bless them with Your presence. I yield them to You. Amen.

Romans 13

Respect for Government

1Lord, I will submit to government authorities since You have put them into office and all civil authority comes from You. 2Those who resist the laws of the land are rebelling against Your authority over them and You will punish them. 3Those who behave rightly according to Your commands should not be afraid of judges. Only criminals have anything to fear. I will live honestly and correctly so I won't be afraid of punishment. 4You put government in place to serve its citizens and to carry out Your revenge on criminals, punishing them when they break the law. 5I will obey the laws for my conscience's sake, and also because I'm afraid of being punished. 6This is the reason I will pay my taxes, since all officials are Your officers. 7I will give everyone what I owe them, and if I owe taxes, I will pay them. When I'm required to respect officials, I will respect them and honor them.

Lord, I pray for all leaders over me, that is, political, business, family, leaders, and

others. May they make good decisions so I can live and work in peace. Keep them from making bad decisions that would hurt others and me. Amen.

Love Your Neighbor

8 I will avoid getting into debt, except the debt of love I owe to all. When I love others, I fulfill my debt. 9 Lord, all the commands such as, "You shall not commit adultery, you shall not kill, you shall not steal, you shall not covet," are summed up in one command, "You must love your neighbor as yourself." 10 Love is the one act that will not hurt my neighbor and it's the only law I need.

Lord, help me obey all the laws and principles so I can be a good testimony to You, and so I can be healthy and prosperous in my life. Amen.

11 Lord, the time has come for me to wake up because the coming of the Lord Jesus is closer than when I was saved. 12 The night is almost over, and it will soon be daylight. I will repent of anything done under the cover of darkness and put on the armor of light. 13 I will behave because I live in the light. I will not attend wild parties, nor get drunk, nor commit adultery, nor get into fights. 14 Lord, I want You to help me live as I should, so I will not plan to do anything evil.

Lord, I can't repeat the past; help me learn from it. I'm not yet living in the future; help me plan properly for it. I'm living today, give me strength to do my best, and may the present be influenced by what I've learned from the past and what I should do in the future. Amen.

Romans 14

Handling Questionable Things

1 Lord, I will give a warm welcome to those who are weak in the faith. 2 I realize there are degrees of Christian obedience so I won't argue whether or not they eat meat offered to idols. Some believe eating meat offered to idols is all right, others who are weak in faith think it is wrong, so they won't eat meat at all, just vegetables. 3 Those who think it is all right to eat meat, should not look down on those who don't. And those who don't eat meat should not find fault with those who do. You have accepted all believers as Your children, they are Your servants to command. 4 Everyone is responsible to please You, and they are not accountable to other believers. I will let You tell them what is right or wrong because You have the power to straighten out believers. 5 Some treat certain days holier than other days, and yet others treat all days the same. Each believer is free to hold his own convictions. 6 Those who observe special days do so to honor You. The one who eats meat does so to honor You, if he gives thanks first. The one who does not eat meat also is honoring You, if he gives thanks first. 7 I am not my own boss to do anything I please. 8 When I live,

I live for You. When I die, I go to be with You. Whether I am alive or dead, I belong to You. [9]Christ died and was resurrected, so that He might be the Lord of the living and the dead. [10]This is why I will not pass judgment on any, as some have done, because we'll all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. Because of this I realize that each of us must give an account of ourselves to You. [11]For it is written in Scripture, "As I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bow before me, and every tongue will confess Me." [12]So then, every one of us must give an account of ourselves to You. [13]Lord, I will not pass judgment on other believers. Therefore I've made up my mind never to cause my brother to stumble. [14]I know that food is all right to eat, for the Lord Jesus said, "No food is ceremonially unclean in itself." If some think certain food is unclean, then it is unclean to them. [15]If my attitude toward food is upsetting other believers, then I will be guided by love. I will not eat anything I choose if that means the downfall of a believer for whom Christ has died. [16]Lord, I will not flaunt my spiritual privileges to bring harm on another believer. [17]For Your kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. Lord, [18]I will serve Christ with a respectful attitude toward both eating or abstaining from food. Then I will please You and be respected by others. [19]I will adopt any custom that leads to peace and mutual respect by all believers. [20]I will not destroy Your work in believers' lives over the question of eating and drinking. All food is ceremonially clean, but it becomes evil when I eat to make someone fall. [21]Therefore my best course is to abstain from meat and wine so I won't trip up a believer or weaken him.

Lord, I pray for weaker believers; don't let my actions cause them to sin. I pray for stronger believers; may I learn from them. But I will not be controlled by them; I'll follow You. Amen.

[22]Lord, I will hold on to my convictions that are between You and me. I will be careful when I make decisions not to go against my conscience. [23]But any who have doubts but eats anyway, is condemned because he violates his conscience. Anything is sin that violates my faith.

Romans 15

A Believer's Relationship to Others

[1]Lord, I believe I am a strong Christian so I have a duty to bear the burdens of weak Christians lest they fall. [2]I will be considerate of others and help them become stronger Christians. [3]Christ didn't think only of Himself. Christ came to suffer from the insults of those who oppose You. [4]I can learn from everything written in Scripture, for it gives me hope and examples of how to live. [5]Lord, help me keep serving You in many ways; I refuse to give up. Help me tolerate other believers by following the example of Christ who never stopped doing good. [6]May I have one mind and voice, to give glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to praise You, the

God and Father of us all. [7]Lord, help me glorify You by treating others the same way Christ treated other people. [8]Christ became the servant of the circumcised Jews so You could carry out the promises You made to the patriarchs. [9]This was also to get Gentiles saved, thus bringing glory to You because the Scriptures teach, "I will worship You among the Gentiles, and sing praises to Your name." [10]In another place the Scriptures teach, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with His people." [11]And yet in another place, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all people praise Him." [12]And then Isaiah said, "The root of Jesse shall appear, rising up to rule the Gentiles, and in Him the Gentiles will hope."

Lord, I will not sin against You by looking down on any believer. I will accept all believers the way Christ accepted them for salvation. Amen.

[13]Lord, may Your hope give me such power and peace that the Holy Spirit will overflow me and remove all the barriers that hold me back.

[14]Lord, Paul told the readers, "I feel certain you have real Christian character and experience and that you can keep each other on the straight and narrow path." [15]Nevertheless Paul wrote with frankness, to remind them to obey truths they already knew. [16]Lord, Paul reminded his readers he was given a commission by You to be a minister to the Gentiles. This gave Paul a ministerial duty to tell them Your gospel and thus to present them as an offering to You because they are made a sweet smelling offering that You will accept. [17]Lord, Paul said he had a right to be proud of his work of spreading the message of Jesus Christ. [18]Paul does not know how successful others have been, but he says, "I know that I have been used by God to win the Gentiles to Christ, [19]by the power of signs and wonders, and by the power of the Holy Spirit." Paul tells of preaching the good news with all his strength from Jerusalem to Illyricum. [20]Lord, Paul said he had a rule never to preach where Christ's name was already known, lest he build on another man's foundation. [21]Paul's chief purpose was to fulfill Scripture, "Those who have never been told about Him, will see Him, and those who have never heard will understand."

[22]Lord, Paul explained this is why he has been prevented from going to Rome. [23]But since he is no longer needed in Greece, and since he has always wanted to see the believers in Rome, [24]he planned to see them on his way to Spain. He hoped to spend some time with them, and hoped they would speed him on his journey. [25]Lord, Paul explained his next destination was Jerusalem to look after the Christians there. [26]Paul was carrying money to the needy Christians there that he had collected in northern Greece and Achaia.

Paul writes to the Roman church that he intends to visit them on his way to Spain (Rom. 15:23-24). He never reaches Spain, but he goes to Rome in different circumstances than he intended, that is, as a

prisoner awaiting trial. We don't complete everything in life that we intend to do for many interfering reasons. Therefore we should pray about our intentions, "If the Lord will, we shall live, and do this or that" (James 4:15). Lord, guide my intentions, keep them pure and Christ-centered. When my plans materialize, I will praise You. When they don't happen, I will accept Your interferences in my plans and serve You with joy. Amen.

27There Gentile Christians took up a willing offering, even though they owed it to those in Jerusalem for sending the gospel to them in Greece. For since the Gentiles have benefited from the Jews, it is only right that Gentiles should now look after the Jews with material things. 28Lord, Paul explained he would come to them when the gift was safely delivered to Jerusalem. Then he would come see them on his way to Spain.

Lord, help me be generous to all needy Christians as the Christians of Greece were to those in Jerusalem. Help me follow the example of Christ, who gave up everything for those most in need. Amen.

29Lord, Paul was confident that when he got to Rome, he would be a blessing to them. 30Lord, Paul asked his readers to stand behind him in earnest prayer 31that he would not fall into the hands of unbelieving Jews in Jerusalem, and that the Jerusalem Christians would welcome his gift to them. 32Paul asked these requests for the sake of the Lord Jesus Christ, and for the love that they had for each other in the Spirit. 33Lord, I pray for my life what Paul asked for himself, namely, "That the God of peace be with me, Amen!"

Romans 16

Greetings to Paul's Friends

1Lord, Paul commended Phoebe who was coming to visit the church at Rome. She worked diligently in the church at Cenchrea, Greece. 2Paul asked them to receive her as a sister in the Lord and to help her because she had helped many, including Paul. 3Paul sent greetings to Priscilla and Aquila who had been his fellow workers; 4in fact they had risked their lives for Paul. Not only was Paul grateful for them, but he also said all the Gentile churches appreciate them.

5Paul then greeted all who worshiped in their home. Paul sent greetings to Epaenetus, the first to become a Christian in Achaia. 6Next Paul greeted Mary, 7plus Andronicus and Junias, his relatives who were in prison with him. They are respected by the apostles and were saved before Paul's conversion. 8Paul next greeted Ampliatus, 9Urbanus, and Stachys. 10Then Paul greeted Apelles who is approved by Christ and to those who work in the home of Aristobulus. 11Paul sent greetings to Herodion, a relative of his, and to the servants in Narcissus' home. 12He also greeted Tryphena and Tryphosa who labored in the Lord, and also to Persis. 13Paul sent greetings to Rufus, chosen by the Lord,

and his mother who had also been like a mother to Paul. [14]Paul also greeted Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the other Christians who lived with them. [15]Paul sent greetings to Philologus, Julia, Nereus, and his sister, plus Olympas and all the Christians who lived with them. [16]Paul told them to greet one another warmly because all the churches with Paul sent them greetings.

Lord, give me good relationships with all the people I know. Just as Paul greeted many people in this chapter, help me to greet people honestly and warmly. Help me to love all people, and pray for all people. Amen.

[17]Lord, I will be on guard against anyone who causes divisions in the church, and I will avoid them in all possible ways. [18]I will not be like divisive people because they are slaves to their own desires. They are not slaves to Jesus Christ because they confuse people with their arguments. [19]Paul wanted everyone to know of the Roman believers loyal to him. Paul wanted them to remain very loyal to the good and refrain from what is evil. [20]Lord, You are the God of peace and harmony, You will soon crush satan under Your feet. May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ rest on me. [21]Lord, Paul sent his readers greetings from Timothy, as well as greetings from Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater. [22]Tertius, Paul's secretary, also sent greetings. [23]Gaius and the church that meet in his house sent greetings; Erastus the treasurer of the city of Corinth and Quartus also send greetings. [24]Paul prayed this benediction over the Romans: "May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. [25]May you be strong and continually steady so that all glory goes to God the Father. [26]May we understand the mystery of Christ and the church which is now revealed to all but was kept secret in past ages. Now I glory in the preaching of Jesus Christ that brings all nations to obedience of faith. [27]Now may the only wise God be glorified through the Lord Jesus Christ, my Savior."

Lord, I glorify You for all the truth in this book. Help me learn and understand all that's written in Romans. Then help me live the Christian life described by Paul and the Holy Spirit. Amen.

1 Corinthians

Ch 1: Divisions in the Church 1654
Ch 2: Understanding Spiritual Things 1656
Ch 3: Carnal Christians 1657
Ch 4: Judging Christians 1659
Ch 5: Influence of Evil in the Church 1660
Ch 6: Believers Forbidden to Go to Court Against One Another 1661
Ch 7: Instructions about Marriage 1662
Ch 8: Questionable Things 1664
Ch 9: Paul Defends His Apostleship 1665
Ch 10: Purity at the Lord's Table 1667
Ch 11: Instructions about Head Coverings and the Lord's Table 1669
Ch 12: Instruction about Spiritual Gifts 1671
Ch 13: Love Is Greatest 1673
Ch 14: Instructions about Tongues 1674
Ch 15: The Resurrection of Christ 1676
Ch 16: Personal Greetings and Conclusion 1679

1 CORINTHIANS

Key Word: *Wisdom* (1 Corinthians 1:24)

Key Verse: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you?" (1 Cor. 3:16).

Theme: Paul had been informed of the problems in the Corinthian church. The issue was not primarily heresy, but carnality in the lives of leaders and Christians. Paul deals with the issue of marriage (chapter 7) and meats offered to idols (chapter 8). But he also deals with division in the church (chapters 2-3), contentions in the church (chapter 5) and a case of incest that had not been dealt with. There were irregularities and manifestations of sin at the Lord's Table (chapters 10-11). There was confusion over spiritual gifts (chapter 12) and tongues (chapter 14). And there were problems with issues of the resurrection (chapter 15). Yet in the middle of the letter Paul pens one of the loftiest passages ever written on love (chapter 13).

But in the midst of all these problems, Paul doesn't tell the leadership to clean up the mess; but rather Paul holds every believer responsible for proper doctrine and holy living. Hence Paul establishes the church as Christ's body (3:16) and that Christ indwells every believer. They are the ones who are accountable for the church. *Lord, thank You for the indwelling Christ who guides me into holiness. I am accountable to Him and I will live for Him. "For to me, to live is Christ" (Phil. 1:21). Amen.*

1 Corinthians 1

Divisions in the Church

[1]Lord, Paul introduced himself as an apostle, called by the will of God, and Sosthenes, a brother in Christ. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [2]He wrote to Your church in Corinth and to all Christians everywhere. He wrote to those Christ Jesus sanctified, who pray in the name of Jesus Christ. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [3]Paul prays for grace to all who read this letter, from You and from the Lord Jesus Christ. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8}

4Lord, Paul gave thanks to You for the Corinthian Christians because they had been saved by grace 5and they were established by knowing Christ, and witnessing for Him; and they had a full understanding of truth. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:10} {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 6Now they had the inner testimony of Christ, 7and had all the spiritual gifts as they were waiting for the return of Christ. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} 8Paul knew You would keep them firm in faith and their lives would be blameless as they waited for the day of the Lord Jesus Christ {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} 9because You are faithful to keep those You have called to salvation in Christ. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} 10Lord, Paul appealed to them in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to quit fussing among themselves, but live in harmony so the body of Christ wouldn't be ruptured, and there would be one unified mind in the church. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 11Paul had been told by those living in Chloe's house that the church had serious divisions. 12Some are saying, "I follow Paul," others say, "I follow Apollos." Still others maintain, "I follow Peter," and some "super" spiritual believers claim, "I follow Christ." {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} 13Paul asked, "Have you divided Christ into many pieces?" Also "Was Paul crucified for you so that you were baptized in Paul's name?" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 14Then Paul declared, "I'm glad I never baptized any of you except Crispus and Gaius, 15so none of you were baptized in my name." {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 16Paul remembers he baptized the family of Stephanas but that's all he could remember. 17Lord, You did not primarily send me or others to baptize people but to give out the gospel to everyone. You did not tell me to preach philosophy or use "deep" words to explain Christ's death. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20}

Lord, it's so easy to be contentious and to think I am always right and my way is best. Forgive me for my blindness and sin. Help me see things through the eyes of others and give me a deeper burden to pray for others. Amen.

18Lord, I know the language of the cross is foolishness to those who are perishing in sin. But I know it is Your power to save because You have saved me from a purposeless life and gave me understanding of spiritual matters. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} 19Lord, Paul quoted the Scriptures that told what You said, "I will destroy the plans of the wise, even when everyone thinks they are smart. I will confound the intellectuals, then where will the earthly philosophers be? What will happen to those who write books?" {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} 20Lord, Paul explained how average people are blinded spiritually so they can't find You with their wisdom. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11} 21Your plan is to save those who

believe the gospel, which seems a "foolish" message to those who are lost. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [22]The Jews demand miracles before they will believe, while Gentiles are looking for rational answers, {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [23]but I will preach Christ crucified. He is a stumbling block to the Jews, and the gospel is foolishness to the unsaved Gentiles. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15} [24]Now God has opened my eyes, and all who are saved, whether Jew or Gentile, must see Christ as the catalyst of Your plan for salvation. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [25]Lord, Your "foolishness" is wiser than all human wisdom, Your weakness is stronger than all human strength. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

Lord, help me to learn knowledge and acquire understanding. I want to be wise as a Christian. Be my teacher in all things. Amen.

[26]When You called me I was not spiritually wise because I thought after the pattern of ordinary people. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [27]You did not call many influential rich, or highly educated people of the world. Instead You chose people whom the world thinks are "foolish" to confound those the world considers smart. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [28]Also You chose people without influence and those whom the world calls "low class." [29]You chose people hated by the world to show up those the world thinks are brilliant so no one can ever boast of their accomplishments or that they had something to do with their salvation. [30]Lord, from You I have salvation in Christ alone because You have made me a member of His body. And by Your enablement, Christ is my wisdom, my righteousness, my holiness, and my freedom. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [31]As the Scriptures teach, "If anyone wants to boast, let him boast about what the Lord has done." {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}

1 Corinthians 2

Understanding Spiritual Things

[1]Lord, I will not use impressive words or philosophy to give the gospel to others. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [2]I want everyone to know the simple message of Jesus and what His death can do for them. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [3]I will not rely on my ability to convince people because I realize how weak I am. {507 Unknown-Danger Prayer, Gen. 15:1} [4]My speeches or sermons will not be based on debate techniques or philosophy. I want the Holy Spirit to demonstrate His power in transforming the lives of those who hear the gospel. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [5]I don't want anyone's faith relying on human reasoning, [6]but on the power of God. Yet among those who know the Bible I will speak with great wisdom, {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} but not the type of wisdom that comes from philosophers, nor the kind that appeals to

"logical thinkers" whose thinking dooms them to failure. [7]Paul said his wisdom comes from You, telling Your plan for all people throughout the ages. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [8]My wisdom is not understood by the great thinkers for if "great men" understood Your wisdom, they would never have crucified the Lord of glory. {315 Mystery of Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [9]The Scriptures explain, "No man has seen this wisdom nor have they understood God's wonderful plan that He has for those who believe and love Him." {315 Mystery of Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [10]Lord, I understand Your plan for all people because You sent the Holy Spirit to teach it to me. Now the Spirit reaches into the depths of Your purpose to show me the things You hide from the world. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [11]A person is the only one who knows for sure what he is thinking, or what he is really like. No one can know what You are thinking, or what You are really like, unless the Holy Spirit reveals it to him. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [12]Lord, You have given me the Holy Spirit who is different from the spirit of this world so I can understand Your gifts and plans for me. [13]Now I want to tell others about Your plans, not using the phrases of philosophy or logic, but using the Holy Spirit's own words so those in proper fellowship with the Holy Spirit can understand the spiritual meaning of Your message. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [14]Lord, the average unsaved person can't understand Your plans for they sound foolish to him. Nor can the unsaved know what the Holy Spirit is saying for the unsaved are spiritually blinded. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [15]The spiritual person understands spiritual things, yet no one understands them. [16]How could the unsaved understand because the Scripture says, "Who can know what the Lord is thinking? Who can instruct God?" But Paul said he understood because he had the mind of Christ.

Lord, I want to be spiritual, so I yield to the Holy Spirit to make me spiritual. I will read, study, memorize, and live the Scriptures so I can live as closely to Your standard as possible. Amen.

1 Corinthians 3

Carnal Christians

[1]Lord, Paul said he couldn't treat the Corinthians like they were spiritual Christians because they were worldly and babes in Christ. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [2]Paul didn't feed them solid food because babies can't digest solid food. He fed them the milk of the Word—the essentials, not the meat of the Word to make them strong. [3]Paul pointed out when they wrangled over leaders that they were acting like average unsaved people, and they were motivated by the desires of the flesh. [4]Some in the church were proclaiming, "I am for Paul," others were yelling, "I am for Apollos." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[5]Lord, who is Paul and who is Apollos but Your servants who preached Your Word and motivated people to faith. They used different ways of ministering because different spiritual gifts were given them. [6]Paul planted and Apollos watered, but You produced growth; [7]neither the planter nor the waterer counts. Only You matter because You make seeds grow. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [8]Whether they plant or water, they are a team, so each will be rewarded for what each does. [9]We are all Your co-workers. Paul said the Corinthians were God's field, and God's building. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Lord, I will work with You in ministry. You must do what I cannot do, for You do the supernatural. I will do what man can do, and together we will do Your work. Amen.

[10]Lord, Paul was just the builder who laid the foundation on which someone else constructed the building. That means I am building on the original foundation of the gospel and doctrine that was laid by Paul. Therefore I must be careful how I work. {115 Difference-Making Prayer, Jude 22} [11]For no one can lay the foundation because the foundation is Jesus Christ and it has already been laid. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} [12]I will build on the foundation of Jesus Christ, and I will use various materials of gold, silver, and jewels, while some will use sticks, hay, and trash. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} [13]But judgment day is coming where our good works will be revealed. God will use fire to judge our efforts. If our good works are burned up, we will be losers, [14]but if they stand the test, we will be rewarded. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [15]A few Christians will have everything burned up, and the only thing left will be their salvation. [16]Lord, I am Your temple, the Holy Spirit lives in me, and I want to be holy to glorify You. {393 Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer, Gen. 16:13} [17]You will destroy anyone who destroys Your temple because Your temple is sacred. My body is the temple where You dwell. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, come live in my body and make it Your sanctuary. Live Your power and transformation through me. Help me to live today, knowing Your temple is my body. Amen.

[18]Lord, don't let me deceive myself about spirituality. Those who think they are wise by worldly standards have fooled themselves because [19]the world's wisdom is folly in Your sight. The Scriptures say, "You catch those who think they are wise in their own tricks." {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [20]The Scriptures say, "You know men's thoughts, and You know how futile their thoughts are." {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [21]So, I will not boast in human thinking, I will boast in what You've given me. [22]Everything You have has been given to me: Paul, Apollos, Peter, life, death, everything. The present, and the future belong to You and

[23]I belong to Christ, and He belongs to You. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19}

1 Corinthians 4

Judging Christians

[1]Lord, I want people to think of me as Christ's servant, one entrusted with knowledge of You. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [2]Now the most important thing about a servant is that I, as Your servant, be found faithful. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [3]I won't worry about what anyone thinks and I won't even trust my own thinking. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [4]I have a clear conscience, but that is not enough to prove I'm right. You, Lord, alone will tell us what's right. [5]So, I'll not prematurely judge if anyone is good, and I'll leave that until Christ returns. Then all hidden things will be revealed and we'll know what each of us is like and everyone will get the reward he deserves. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Lord, keep me from judging others, but help me to look at people through Your eyes. Amen.

[6]Lord, Paul used himself and Apollos as examples so no one would play favorites; we must not choose one teacher over another. The Scriptures teach, "Live by the rules," and don't elevate one servant above another. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} [7]You didn't make any of us superior to another. You gave us the gifts we have so no one can brag about their gifts as if they were superior to anyone else. Lord, Paul rebuked the Corinthians because they wrongly thought they had all the spiritual things they needed. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [8]They were acting like rich kings who sit contented on their thrones. Paul told them he wished they in fact were reigning, and he was reigning with them, but that was not the fact. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [9]Paul told them he has been appointed an apostle and that apostles will die for the cause of Christ. Like prisoners on death row, apostles are under the sentence of death and the unsaved world will rejoice in their execution. [10]Lord, Paul said he is foolish by the world's standards but the Corinthians are claiming to be wise. {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} [11]Paul said he is weak in the sight of the world, while the Corinthians are claiming to be strong. Paul said the world laughs at him, even as the Corinthians act like celebrities. Lord, Paul said he goes hungry and thirsty, he wears rags, is brutally treated, and homeless, all for the cause of Christ. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [12]Paul says he has to work hard to make money, yet when he is cursed, he blesses his attackers. He is patient with those who injure him. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [13]Paul said he answers quietly when insulted, even when people treat him like dirt. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} [14]Lord, Paul explained he is not writing to embarrass them but to warn them because they act like children. {84 Confronting-Evil

Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [15]They may have a thousand who try to teach them but Paul is their father in the faith. They were saved when he preached the gospel to them. [16]That is why Paul wanted them to copy his example and assume the attitudes he has. [17]Paul plans to send Timothy to help them because Paul won Timothy to Christ, just as he won the Corinthians to Christ. Timothy will teach them what Paul wants them to know, which is the same thing Paul taught in all the churches. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [18]Lord, Paul realized that some seized church leadership when he did not come to them. [19]So he promised to come as soon as the Lord allows him. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [20]Then Paul promised to examine the pretentious leaders to see if they measured up to God's standards because the kingdom of God is not a matter of talking, but it is power, and holiness, and obedience. [21]So Paul told them to decide if they want him to come to punish them, or to come with love and gentleness. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

Lord, I will humble myself under Your authority when I am rebuked. Speak and I will listen. Give me directions and I will follow. Amen.

1 Corinthians 5

Influence of Evil in the Church

[1]Lord, Paul heard reports of sexual immorality in the church. It was so bad that even the unsaved wouldn't tolerate it. A man was living with his father's wife in sexual immorality. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [2]Paul asked, "Are you so proud and blind that you can't see this terrible sin? Shouldn't you be overwhelmed with guilt? You should have cast the man out of the church." {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [3]Lord, Paul said even though he was not present, he already knew what he would do just as if he were there with them. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [4]Call the church together to vote on this matter, and remember the Lord is present when you gather together. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [5]Vote the man out of your fellowship, and place him in satan's hands for punishment in the hopes that his soul will be saved when Jesus returns, even though he dies prematurely. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [6]Lord, Paul rebuked their pride in their accomplishments, reminding them that only a small amount of yeast would influence all the dough. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} [7]Paul told them to get rid of sinful yeast and make the church a completely new loaf of bread, remembering that Christ is our Passover meal. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [8]Paul said to get rid of the sinful man so they could be bread without yeast for the Passover known for sincerity and truth. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [9]Paul reminded them that he wrote a previous letter telling then not to associate with those living immoral lives. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [10]He explains that he didn't mean to have

no contact at all with unsaved people who are sexually immoral, greedy, liars, thieves, and idol worshipers. A Christian can't live in this world without doing business with people like that. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 11What Paul meant was to disassociate with those who claim to be Christians but indulge in sexual sins, including all the sins he just mentioned. Don't even eat a fellowship meal with them. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}

Lord, I do not want to be like those in Corinth who gave themselves to sin. I will be pure in thought so I can remain pure in body. Amen.

12Lord, I know it's not my task to judge those outside the church, but it certainly is the job of believers to hold members of the church accountable when they sin in the above-mentioned ways. 13You alone are the judge of those on the outside of the church, but the Corinthian Christians must deal with the sinning brother who disgraces Christianity, and put him out of the church. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}

1 Corinthians 6

Believers Forbidden to Go to Court against One Another

1Lord, Paul was distraught that a Corinthian believer was taking a Christian matter before a secular court and not before the church. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 2Christians will judge the world in the future and if the world will be judged by us, why are we Christians taking cases to them? {307 Minutia-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} 3Since Christians will one day judge angels, it follows we can judge one another on earth. 4Why are you going to a judge who isn't respected by Christians? {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 5You should be ashamed of yourselves. Isn't there someone in the church who is wise enough to decide these arguments? {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} 6But the Corinthian church had one brother suing another in front of unbelievers. 7It is embarrassing for Christians to file lawsuits. It means you live defeated lives. You ought to accept injustice and let it go at that. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 8But instead you are the ones who are doing wrong and you do an injustice to your fellow believers. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

Lord, the Corinthians were guilty of partiality and judging one another that resulted in law cases in a secular court. I admit I am just as great a sinner as they are, so forgive me. Keep me away from any and all sin. Amen.

9Lord, Paul told the Corinthian believers that immoral people have no share in the kingdom of God. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 10This includes idol worshipers, adulterers, homosexuals, thieves, greedy people, drunkards, slanderers, and swindlers. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23} 11The Corinthians committed all these sins but

now they are washed, cleansed, sanctified, and saved through the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and through Your Holy Spirit. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}
12Lord, Paul said, "I can do anything I want, but these things are not good for me. Even if I am allowed to do them, I will not become an addict to sin. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 13I can eat food that is meant for the stomach, and the stomach is created to eat food. Don't let eating food dominate your life because one day God will do away with food and the stomach." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 14God will raise our bodies from the dead by His transforming power, just as He raised the Lord Jesus from the dead. 15Lord, Paul said sexual sin is never right, since our bodies were not created for sexual sin. They were created as Your dwelling place, and You, Lord, must dwell in the temple of our bodies. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} 16Lord, I know that my body is only one member that makes up the body of Christ. That means I can't take the body of Christ and join it to a prostitute. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 17Never! A man who has sex with a prostitute has become one body with her because the Scripture has stated, "The two shall be one flesh." Anyone who is joined to You is one spirit with You. {217 Hedge-Protection Prayer, Job 1:10} 18Lord, Paul warned, "Keep away from sexual sins." Other sins are outside the body, but sexual sins are against our own body. 19Lord, I will realize that my body is the temple of the Holy Spirit, and so I will let Him be manifested through my body because I received the Holy Spirit from You. My body does not belong to me but it belongs to You, Lord. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} 20You have bought me from sin and You paid for me with the blood of Christ. Therefore I will use my body to glorify You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, keep me from any and all sins of the body. Keep my heart pure so my outward body won't be given to sin. Your Holy Spirit lives in me and I want to be a pure vessel for Your glory. Amen.

1 Corinthians 7

Instructions about Marriage

1Lord, Paul answered the question written to him about relationships between men and women. "It is good for men to have no physical contact with women." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} 2Since immoral sex is always a temptation, each man should have his own wife and each woman should have her own husband. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} 3The husband must attend to the sexual needs of his wife, and the wife must do the same for her husband. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} 4The wife does not have sexual rights over her body; the husband has those privileges. In the same way the husband has no sexual rights over his body; his wife has them. 5Do not refuse sexual privileges to each other except for a limited time by mutual consent. Then

have the same relations as before so satan doesn't get an advantage over one another. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5}

Lord, thank You for the gift of marriage. Be glorified in me, and in my marriage now and in the future. Amen.

6Lord, Paul said no one had to marry, but they could if they wished; Paul wanted all men to live like him. 7But each person is different in needs and desires. God gives some the ability to be a husband or a wife, others have the gift of remaining single, yet being happy. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} 8Lord, Paul told those unmarried and widows to stay unmarried as he is unmarried; 9but if a person can't discipline himself, it is better to get married than suffer. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6}

10Lord, Paul had principles for the married that were not just his advice but were Your rules. 11A wife must not leave her husband, but if she does, she must remain unmarried. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} 12The wife must be reconciled to her husband if possible, and the husband must not divorce his wife. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 13Lord, Paul gave the following suggestions that weren't Your commands: if a Christian has an unbelieving wife, and she lives peacefully with him, then he must not send her away. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} 14If a Christian wife has an unbelieving husband, and he lives peacefully with her, then she must not send him away, because the unbelieving husband may become a Christian through the influence of his wife, and the same thing may happen to the unbelieving wife. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} 15If there were no Christian influences from a parent, then perhaps the children would not be saved, but they can be saved by the influence of a believing parent. But if an unbelieving spouse wants to separate, then the believer is not obligated to the marriage. {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} 16However, if a member of the marriage is a Christian, a believing wife may lead her husband to Christ, and the Christian husband may lead his unbelieving wife to salvation. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

17Paul said his rule for all believers in the churches is to accept the situation in which God puts them. Make sure in deciding matters about getting married that they are living according to God's direction. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 18If a man was circumcised before he was saved, he shouldn't disguise it. And if anyone was uncircumcised when he was saved, he need not be circumcised 19because circumcision or uncircumcision means nothing to God. Obeying God's commands is what counts. 20Paul told Christians to keep on doing the work to which God has called them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 21If a slave becomes a Christian, he should serve God in the place where he was saved. If a person can be free, he should use his new position to serve God. 22Even the slave who becomes a Christian is free in his spirit, but he is a

slave to Christ. [23]Those who were bought with the price of Christ's blood belong to Christ. [24]Let each one serve God happily, no matter what his condition when Christ called him.

[25]Paul said he had no command from God whether young unmarried women should marry, but Paul had an opinion based on the wisdom God had given him. Because Christians faced great danger in Paul's day, [26]he felt it was best for them to remain unmarried. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [27]Of course if a person was already married, they should not separate. But if they are unmarried, Paul did not want them rushing into marriage. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [28]However, if a Christian was going to get married anyway, they should go ahead and do it. Yet marriage will bring extra problems that Paul didn't want them to face at the time. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [29]Lord, I know our remaining time is short so those with wives should remain as free as possible to serve God. Marriage happiness or marriage disappointment should not keep anyone from serving You. [30]Live as though there is no happiness or sadness, and those who live to buy things should live as though they possessed nothing. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} [31]Those who have to do business in the world should not become attached to it because this world is passing away. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [32]Lord, Paul wanted the Corinthians free from all worry because the unmarried person can devote all his time to pleasing the Lord, [33]but the married person has to be concerned with the affairs and business of this life. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [34]They are torn in two directions—between pleasing the Lord and pleasing their spouse. The unmarried woman can devote herself to You since she is concerned about being holy in body and spirit. But the married woman has to be concerned about pleasing You and her husband. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [35]Lord, Paul said these things to help believers be strong, not to keep them from marrying. He wanted them to serve You as best as possible without being distracted by their marriage. [36]If anyone feels they must marry, because they have trouble disciplining their desires, they should marry and it is not a sin. [37]If a person has self-control, and decides not to marry, Paul says they have made a wise choice. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [38]So the one who marries is living in God's will, and the one who doesn't marry can serve God better. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6}

[39]The wife is one with the husband as long as he lives but if he dies, she is free to marry again, only she must marry in the Lord. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [40]In Paul's opinion, he is happier because he's not married and he thinks this is God's will. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

1 Corinthians 8

Questionable Things

[1]Lord, Paul addressed the Corinthians' questions about eating food that was

offered to idols. Everyone thinks they have the right answer because their knowledge makes them feel self-important, but love for others will make the church grow. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 2If anyone says he has all the answers, he is just showing how little he knows. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} 3But the one who loves God and does His will is the one God knows. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} 4Lord, Paul told the Corinthians that idols are just carved images, and they are not really gods. You are the only true God and nothing else is a god. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} 5Some people think there are a great number of gods both in heaven and on earth, 6but I know You are the Father, the only One God, and that Jesus Christ created everything and He gives life to us. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 7Lord, some people don't realize that an image is not God and they think food offered to idols is really offered to a god that lives. So when they eat food that's been offered, they think they are actually worshiping that god. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} 8But You don't care if people eat food that's been offered to an idol because You know the idol is not real or alive. We do not sin if we eat that food, nor are we better off if we refuse that food. Hamburger meat is nothing more than hamburger meat! {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 9But there are some Christians whose consciences are weaker, and they think they are recognizing or worshiping an idol if they eat hamburger meat that's been offered to an idol. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} 10Here's the problem: the Christian with the weaker conscience may see you eat hamburger that was offered to an idol, then they go against their conscience to eat meat offered to idols, and they weaken their faith because they think they have sinned. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 11So the Christian with the stronger conscience who knows that hamburger is just hamburger, causes the weaker Christian to damage himself. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 12It is a sin against Christ to cause a fellow Christian to stumble. 13Therefore if food offered to idols can cause a brother to sin, I'll not eat another hamburger for the rest of my life because I don't want to cause any Christian to sin against his conscience. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}

Lord, there are so many things on the borderline so teach me how to know the difference between right and wrong. I won't walk on the edge of the temptation. Keep me as close to the center of Your will as possible. Amen.

1 Corinthians 9

Paul Defends His Apostleship

1Lord, Paul told the Corinthians, "I am an apostle." When detractors were claiming Paul wasn't an apostle, Paul said he was not responsible to humans and that he actually had seen the resurrected Jesus. {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7}

[2]Paul points out that their changed lives are the results of his ministry and that that certified his apostolate. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [3]Even though some Christians deny Paul is an apostle, Paul claims they prove that he is for he had won most of them to Christ. {104 Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer, Ps. 109:31} [4]Lord, Paul claims he has the right to food that You give, [5]and the right to take a believing wife with him as do other apostles, namely, Jesus' brother and Peter. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8}

Lord, Paul had to defend himself against criticism from some in the church at Corinth. Teach me how to face criticism. Teach me when to defend myself and when not to say anything. Give me wisdom beyond myself. Amen.

[6]Then Paul asked a convicting question, "Must only Barnabas and I work for a living?" [7]Paul said he deserved to be paid because soldiers are paid to serve. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [8]Those who plant a vineyard eat of its fruit, and shepherds drink milk from their flocks. {284 Limitation-Praying, Jude 3} [9]While these are only illustrations, the Scriptures teach, "Don't put a muzzle on the ox plowing the grain." {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [10]The plowman plows, expecting to get fed, and the harvester expects to get his share. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [11]Since Paul has sown spiritual things to them, he expects food, shelter, and clothing in return. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} [12]The Corinthians have given to other ministers but surely Paul's rights are greater, even though he hasn't exercised his rights. Paul says he has never demanded money from them because they might be less interested in the gospel. {336 Organized-Corporate Prayer, Luke 19:46} [13]Those serving in the temple got their food from the temple, and those ministering at the altar kept some of the food. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [14]In the same spirit, those who preach the gospel should be financially supported by their gospel ministry. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23}

[15]Lord, Paul reminded the Corinthians he had not exercised his rights and was not writing to get money from them. Paul said he would rather die than lose the blessings of ministering for free. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [16]But he testified he can't stop preaching the gospel since You have given him that responsibility. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [17]Paul states, "If I preach of my own free will, then I deserve payment. But God called me and has given me the responsibility to preach so I must preach. [18]What is my pay? My greatest joy is preaching the gospel without getting paid by anyone. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [19]Lord, I am not a slave to anyone, but I have made myself a slave to everyone so I could win as many as possible. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [20]When I am with the Jews, I will live like the Jews so I can win the Jews to Christ. {201 Greater-Works Prayer, John 14:12} [21]When I am with Gentiles,

I subject myself to their laws so I can win Gentiles to Christ. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 22When I am with pagans who don't have any laws, I live among them to win them to Christ. I don't offend the weaker Christians' consciences who are bothered about meat sacrificed to idols because I want to win the weak to Christ. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 23I try to find a point of identification with all so I can present the gospel message to them. I do all this to get the gospel to all people so they can come to Christ for salvation. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 24Lord, every runner in a race tries to win, but only one person gets the prize. So I will always try to win the race for Christ. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} 25Every fighter disciplines himself to win his awards. He wins a wreath that will wither. I want to win a prize that will never fade. 26I run the race of life to win, but it is not just to win, it's how I prepare and how I run. {186 Goal-Striving Prayer, Phil. 3:10-14} 27I don't want to be disqualified; I train hard so my body will be prepared. Lord, help me win the race of life." {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46}

Lord, Paul wanted to be the very best to please You and receive the prize. That is my prayer. I will discipline myself to be the very best. I will learn everything to serve You best. I commit myself to excellence for Your glory. Amen.

1 Corinthians 10

Purity at the Lord's Table

1Lord, may I never forget that the Jews followed the Shekinah cloud as they wandered in the wilderness. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} 2You kept guiding them with the glory cloud and they walked safely through the Red Sea. This is called a "baptism" for they followed Moses into the sea and they came out on the other side. 3By a daily miracle, You sent manna to feed them 4and they drank from the rock in the desert; that rock was a picture of Christ to come. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} 5Yet in spite of what You did for all of them, they rebelled against You and many died in the wilderness. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 6Lord, Israel's life in the wilderness is a lesson to me. I will not lust after evil things nor will I worship idols as some did. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 7The Scriptures said not to follow the Jews' bad example for they sat down to eat the food You provided; then they got up to dance and worship the golden calf. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 8I will never give into sexual immorality as some did in the wilderness and 23,000 died in one day. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 9Some of them murmured against You and they died of snakebites. Others were judged by the destroying angel. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} 10Lord, all the things that happened in the wilderness are warnings for me not to follow their example.

Lord, there are many dangers in the world, and I won't see them all. Give me eyes to see dangers and wisdom to avoid them. Protect me when I can't protect myself. Amen.

[11]These negative rebellions were written as a lesson for me as the end of the world approaches. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [12]When I think that I would never do these things, I must take heed lest I fall into their trap. The temptations and trials that the Corinthians faced are no more than I face each day. But [13]Lord, I know You will not let me be tempted with more pressures that I can overcome. The evil desires that entice me are no different from what other Christians have faced. Lord, I know You will not let me be tempted beyond my self-discipline, but with my temptations You'll show me how to overcome temptation's power. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}
[14]Lord, I will avoid any idol worship, [15]and I will use my common sense to avoid any influence of idols in my life. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [16]Lord, I receive a blessing from You when I drink the communion cup that represents the blood of Christ. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [17]And I also receive a blessing when I eat the bread that represents the body of Christ that was broken for me. The single loaf represents the body of Christ that even though I am only one among many, we form a single spiritual body of Christ. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [18]The Jewish people did the same thing in the Old Testament; they were one people when they ate together at the altar. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [19]Does that mean when the unsaved sacrifice food to idols that the idols are real and alive? No! Does their worship have some value? No, not at all! {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [20]Those who offer food to idols are really offering sacrifices to demons, and they are certainly not offering to God. Paul said he didn't want the Corinthians offering anything to demons. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [21]A person cannot drink the communion cup of Christ and the cup of demons at the same time, nor can he eat at the table of the Lord and the table of demons. [22]Lord, don't be angry with me. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} [23]Lord, You permit me to eat all kinds of food but not all food is good for me, nor will all kinds of food make me healthy. {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4} [24]Lord, I'll not spend all my time thinking of myself, I will be conscious of other people and what's best for them. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23} [25]I will buy what I want in the market but I won't ask if it's been offered to idols lest I hurt my conscience or someone else's. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [26]Everything that comes to me from the earth comes from You, and You give it to me. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [27]If a non-Christian invites me to a meal, I'll go eat what is served but I won't ask any questions for conscience's sake. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb.

10:22} [28]But if someone tells me that food was offered to idols, {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [29]I won't eat it out of consideration for the weaker brother who stumbles at this thing. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [30]The scruples of a weaker Christian are not mine, but I won't use my freedom to hurt him, and I won't let his conscience limit me. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} [31]I'll eat everything with thankfulness, eating it to the glory of God. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [32]I'll not cause anyone to stumble, whether they are Jew, Gentile, or Christian. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [33]That will be the principle I follow; I won't do only what pleases me, or what's best for me. I'll do what's best so others will be saved.

Lord, be glorified in all I do and think. I also want everyone else to glorify You, so I'll try not to offend them, but to point them to You. Amen.

1 Corinthians 11

Instructions about Head Coverings and the Lord's Table

[1]Lord, my example in all things is Christ so others should follow my example as I follow Christ. [2]The Corinthians had done well by following the principles Paul taught them, but there is one matter he wanted to re-emphasize. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} [3]The wife is responsible to her husband, the husband is responsible to Christ, and Christ is responsible to You, the Father. [4]Therefore, if a man refuses to remove his hat when he prays or preaches the Scriptures, he dishonors his head—Christ. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [5]However, a woman's hair is her honor so she dishonors her husband if she prays or speaks the Scriptures without covering her head. [6]She might as well have shaved her hair. {22 Appropriate-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 39:5} [7]A man should not wear anything on his head since he is made in the image of God, for a hat or shawl is a sign of rebellion to God. [8]God's glory is the man who is made in His image, and the woman is the glory of man. The man didn't come from the woman, the first woman came from Adam's side. [9]Man was not created for woman, but she was created for him. [10]Because the angels inspect authority in the church, the woman must cover her head as a sign of authority. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25} [11]Lord, I respect Your plan and purpose for men and women; the man and woman need each other. [12]Although the first woman came from Adam's side, every man since then has come from a woman, and both men and women come from You. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [13]Paul asked the Corinthians to use their judgment: is long hair on a woman proper, and shouldn't she have a covering when she prays? [14]And isn't it foolish when men have long hair? [15]And isn't it obvious that a woman's long hair is her pride and joy? [16]If anyone wants to argue about this, this is the custom in all the churches. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [17]Lord, Paul

turned his instructions to another topic. When the Corinthians came together for the communion service, they were doing more harm than good. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [18]First, Paul said there were divisions among them when they came together to the Lord's Table, and their past history of being divisive made Paul believe what he heard about them. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [19]Each person thinks he's right, each thinks he is closer to God than others. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [20]Therefore the Corinthians ate to honor themselves, not to honor the Lord Jesus who instituted this meal. [21]Some quickly eat all they can eat, and they don't wait to share communion with one another. Some go hungry since they don't get enough to eat, while others gorge themselves or they drink so much they get drunk. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [22]Doesn't everyone have a home in which to eat and drink? They have disgraced the church, and embarrassed those who can't bring a lot of food. Do you want me to praise the Corinthian church? Paul said, "I will not do it!" {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [23]Lord, Paul told the Corinthians You gave the following instruction to observe communion, that on the night Jesus was betrayed, He took bread and thanked You for it. [24]Then He broke it and said, "This is My body which is broken for you. Eat it in remembrance of Me." {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [25]In the same way Jesus took the cup and said, "This cup is the new covenant made by God to forgive sins. Whenever you drink this cup, you remember Me." {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [26]Therefore every time a believer eats this bread and drinks this cup, he relives the truth of the gospel. The Lord's Table is a memorial until He comes. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [27]Anyone who eats the bread and drinks the cup in an unworthy manner is guilty of sin against the Lord's body and blood. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [28]Lord, I will therefore examine myself thoroughly before eating the bread or drinking from the cup {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [29]because any who eats or drinks in an unworthily manner, not meditating on the body and blood of Christ, is contributing to his own condemnation. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [30]That is why some Corinthians are weak or ill, and some have died prematurely under Your judgment. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [31]Lord, I will carefully examine myself before communion so I'll not be punished or judged by You. {428 Self-Denying Prayer, Mark 8:34} [32]Yet when a Christian is judged or punished, it's so he won't be condemned with the unsaved. [33]Lord, Paul gave them this final exhortation about communion that when they gather for the Lord's Table, they should wait for one another. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [34]If any one is hungry, let them eat at home, then the communion service will not lead to anyone's punishment or judgment. Paul said he would discuss other matters with them when he arrived in Corinth.

Lord, I will eat and drink communion to obey You and bring glory to You. Help me do so rightly, and receive me when I worship You properly through communion. Forgive me if I come in an improper way. Be honored in all I do. Amen.

1 Corinthians 12

Instructions about Spiritual Gifts

[1]Lord, Paul wanted the Corinthians to know about their spiritual gifts that the Holy Spirit gave to each of them. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [2]Before they were saved, they chose different idols that couldn't say a single word. Now there are people in the church who claim they are speaking messages from the Spirit of God. How can I know if their messages come from You, or if they are just making up what they say? {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [3]Paul gave the first test—they can't claim to speak messages from You if they curse Jesus. The second test is that when they proclaim "Jesus is Lord," they are speaking Your message. {496 True-Worshipers Prayer, Ps. 15:1} [4]Lord, You have given many different spiritual gifts but they all come from the Spirit of God. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [5]These spiritual gifts are exercised in different ways, but it's the same Spirit of God working in people. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [6]Also our spiritual gifts have different influences on different people because the Spirit of God uses people according to how much they yield to You. But You are the same God working through each believer. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [7]Lord, You give different spiritual gifts to different people for Your own divine purposes. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [8]You give to one the ability to preach with great wisdom so people understand Your message. To another, You give the ability to teach from great knowledge so people will see many things in the Word of God. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [9]To another, You give faith to move mountains, and to another You give the prayer of faith to heal the sick of their pain and sickness. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [10]To another, You give the ability to do miracles, {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} and to someone else the power to preach and teach. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} Some have the ability to recognize false spirits, {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} another has the spiritual gift of speaking in a language they haven't learned, {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} still someone else can interpret tongues. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [11]The Holy Spirit gives all these different spiritual gifts to different people just as He decides; so believers have the ability to use these gifts to get results in the lives of others. {447 Spiritual-Blessing Prayer, Eph. 1:3}

Lord, help me discover my spiritual gifts and use them properly. Teach me my strong gifts

and use them effectively. Be patient when I use my weak gifts, and be glorified by the intent of my heart, and overlook my inabilities. Amen.

12 Lord, just as a human body has many parts, but all the parts make up one body, so is the church—the body of Christ. Though it has many different members, it is one body. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 13 We have all been baptized into the body of Christ, some Jews and some Gentiles; some slaves and some free. The Holy Spirit baptized us all into Christ and we all drink of the same salvation. {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} 14 Lord, I know the body has many parts; 15 if the foot says, "I am not a part of the body because I'm not the head," that does not make any difference and that does not make him less a part of the body. 16 If the ear were to say, "I am not the eye, so I'm not a part of the body," that would mean nothing. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} 17 If the body were all eye, how could it hear anything? If the body were all ears, how could it smell anything? 18 But You have designed the different parts in the body. 19 If all the parts were the same, how could the body function? 20 As it is, there are many parts of the body but it is still one body. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 21 The eye cannot say to the hand, "I do not need you." Nor can the head say to the feet, "I do not need you." 22 Lord, I know every part of the body is necessary but it seems the parts that are the weakest are the ones that are the most indispensable, 23 and the parts that seem to be less admirable, their function seems to be among the most necessary. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 24 And the parts that are the most beautiful seem to be the least essential in life. So You have arranged to give the parts which lack importance more dignity than the others. 25 So the body works together as a whole, all the parts having the same care for others as they have for themselves. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} 26 If one part suffers, all parts suffer with it, and if one part is honored, all parts enjoy it. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 27 Lord, I am a member of Christ's body but I am gifted differently from everyone else. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 28 The first place was given to apostles, second to prophets, third to teachers, and after them those who do miracles. Next comes the gift of healing, helps, and leadership, and last on the list is speaking foreign languages. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 29 Is everyone an apostle? Is everyone a prophet? Is everyone a teacher, or miracle worker, or a healer? 30 Can everyone speak in a foreign language without having learned it? And can everyone interpret them? The answer to these questions is "No!" 31 Lord, I will eagerly seek the best gifts but I know love is the best gift of all. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1}

Lord, I pray for Your body, the church. Help me find my place in Your body, and fill it properly. Help me honor those who are different from me, and do things I can't do.

Help me glorify You through all I do in Your body. Amen.

1 Corinthians 13

Love Is Greatest

[1]Lord, if I speak with the eloquence of great speakers, or if I speak in the languages of angels, but I didn't love others, I'm simply making noise like cymbals clashing or a gong that rings. {236 Inadequate Words-Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [2]If I can predict the future, or understand Your mysteries, or if I know everything, or have faith to move mountains, but I don't love others, I've accomplished nothing in life. {89 Convergence-Faith Praying, 1 Cor. 13:2} [3]If I gave everything I possess to the poor, and even sacrificed my body, but I didn't have love, it would be of no value. [4]Lord, help me always patiently express love, and I will find ways to be kind. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

Lord, give me love that I don't have. Give me more love for people, so I can help them find Christ. Give me more love to serve You in the church. Give me more love so I can pray more effectively. Help me love as You love. Amen.

[5]Help me never be jealous of others, nor be conceited or boastful. [6]Help me not be irritable or resentful, I want my love to overlook the mistakes of others and I want to rejoice when others do well. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8} [7]Help me love others no matter the circumstances, keep my hope strong and may my love never wilt. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [8]May my love outlast everything in life because I know true love never fails. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [9]Lord, I know the gift of prophecy will end, and the gift of speaking languages I haven't learned will cease, also knowledge will pass away, for my knowledge is finite and imperfect; also we only prophesy in part on this earth. {236 Inadequate Words-Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [10]But when I am made perfect and complete in heaven, these gifts will no longer be needed. {32 Basic-Praying, Heb. 6:1} [11]When I was a child, I thought like a child, talked like a child, and my world was as small as a child's world. {236 Inadequate Words-Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [12]In the same way, I only see things darkly through a stained-glass window. But when I see Jesus face to face, I shall understand all things fully. Now my knowledge is partial and imperfect, but then I shall know Jesus as He perfectly knows me. [13]Lord, there are only three things on this earth that will last: faith, hope, and love, and the greatest is love. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

The King James Version richly states, "We see through a glass darkly." These images remind us we indeed use inadequate words in fragmented sentences to attempt to describe the reality of the God we know in our hearts. Words are profoundly weak to voice the depths of our prayers. Lord,

the words "I love You" seem so shallow and childish when I realize You are the infinitely powerful Creator whose hand reaches across a trillion light years of the universe. When I say, "Thank You for saving me," it seems I am speaking childish words I barely understand. I think as a child and I understand as a child. Help me become mature in my understanding and worship. Amen.

1 Corinthians 14

Instructions about Tongues

[1]Lord, I want love to be my greatest spiritual gift, but I also want the other spiritual gifts, especially the gift of prophecy. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} [2]Those with the gift of tongues speak to God, but those who prophesy speak to others. No one understands those who speak in tongues because they speak the mysterious things of the Spirit. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [3]However, those who prophesy help others grow in Christ by motivating and instructing them. {39 Bible-Bless Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [4]Those with the gift of tongues benefit only themselves, and those who prophesy, benefit the church. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} [5]While Paul wanted all the Corinthians to have the gift of tongues, he would rather they be able to prophesy. Unless the gift of interpretation followed tongues, no one could benefit. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Paul gives principles about languages and he seems to place them in an order of importance. Not everyone agrees with my order of importance, and you may also disagree. First, use a language that you understand so you can be rational and sane (14:14). Second, use a language that others understand so you can communicate with them (14:11). Third, your language in the assembly must be understandable so people can be edified (14:16). Fourth, your language must be understandable to you so you can fellowship with God and He with you (14:15). Lord, control all of my speech, so I can glorify You and edify believers. Use my words to bring unsaved people to You. May all the words of my mouth reflect the intent of my heart. Amen.

[6]Lord, Paul told the Corinthians that if he only spoke in tongues, they would learn nothing new, and neither would they be inspired or instructed. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} [7]Paul used a musical instrument as an illustration. If a harp or flute could play only one note, listeners couldn't appreciate one note from another and they couldn't tell what was being played. {315 Mystery of Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [8]If no one can understand a bugle's sound, who would be ready for battle? {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} [9]If tongues do not produce an intelligible message, can anyone know what is being said? He might as well be talking to the wind. {80 Conditional-Praying, Matt. 8:2} [10]There are

many different languages in the world that are helpful to those who understand them, but they didn't help Paul. {236 Inadequate Words-Prayer, 1 Cor. 13:12} [11]He said those speaking in a different language were foreigners to him, and he to them. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [12]Paul wanted the same principles for the Corinthians. "Concentrate on gifts that will benefit the church." {461 Stir Up Your Spiritual Gift-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:6} [13]Lord, Paul told them that if they use tongues, they should pray for someone to interpret what is being said. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [14]Paul said if he used tongues in his prayers, his Spirit was praying to God but he didn't know what he was saying. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [15]To solve this problem, Paul said he would pray in tongues and he would pray in ordinary languages so that everyone understood and prayed with him. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [16]Paul worshiped God in tongues, but also with ordinary languages so everyone understood what he was doing. How could the church join you in worship if they did not understand what you are saying? {190 God-Hunger Prayer, Matt. 5:6} [17]No matter how well you speak, the church receives no benefit. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1} [18]Paul thanked God that he had a greater gift of tongues than all of them, [19]but in the church he would rather speak meaningful words than speak ten thousand words that no one understood. {16 Anointed-Praying, Zech. 12:10} [20]He exhorts them not to be childish but to be adults in this matter. {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [21]Lord, the Scriptures say, "Through men speaking strange languages, and through the lips of foreigners, You will talk to the Gentiles and still they will not listen to You." [22]Therefore strange languages are a sign for unbelievers, not for believers. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} [23]Prophecy is a sign for believers and not for unbelievers. Otherwise a visitor coming to a church meeting would think everyone was mad because they were speaking unintelligible words. {80 Conditional-Praying, Matt. 8:2} [24]But if a visitor heard everyone speaking a message he could understand, he can be convicted by what he hears. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [25]The visitor will have his secret thoughts exposed, then he will fall on his knees crying out to You, saying, "God indeed is among the church." {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [26]Lord, Paul drew some conclusions from the above explanations: when the church comes together, some will sing, another will preach, another will share what God said to them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [27]Some will use their gift of tongues, others will interpret, but they must do what is most beneficial to all and build everyone up spiritually; some will disagree with what Paul told them. [28]If someone with the gift of interpretation is not present, the tongues speaker must keep quiet and speak only to God in private. [29]Let two or three preach in sequence, and let the church listen to understand what is said. [30]If someone is preaching and another person receives something special

from the Lord, the preacher shall allow them to speak. [31]Then all who preach will have a turn to speak, and the whole church will learn from God and be encouraged. [32]The one preaching is in control of his ministry, so those preaching can take turns. [33]God does all things orderly; He doesn't confuse His people. He wants His people to worship orderly in the assembly. [34]Women must not ask questions or disrupt sermons, or speak out when another is preaching, but must be submissive to protocol. [35]When a woman has a question, she should ask her husband at home. It is improper for her to disrupt a church assembly. [36]He asked, "Do you think the knowledge of God begins and ends with you?" Absolutely not! [37]Those who claim to have the gift of prophecy or any other special gift from the Holy Spirit, should realize Paul is giving the church Your command. [38]Paul said if anyone disagrees with this conclusion, he should not be recognized by the church. {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [39]In conclusion on this matter Paul told the Corinthians to desire the gift of prophecy so they could explain the Word of God carefully. {384 Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Rom. 12:3-8} Do not suppress the gift of tongues; [40]do everything decently and in order.

Lord, keep me from being belligerent when I disagree with others. Help me see conflicting issues from the other person's point of view. Then help me see the issue from Your point of view in Scripture. Help me be true to my convictions, while I remain loving to those with a different point of view. Amen.

1 Corinthians 15

The Resurrection of Christ

[1]Lord, Paul reminded the Corinthians that the content of the gospel is the same good news he preached to them. They received it and became firmly established in it. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [2]This is the gospel that saved them unless they never originally believed it. {289 Lordship Salvation-Prayer, Acts 9:6}

[3]The first aspect of the gospel is that Christ died for our sins, just as the Scriptures teach. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [4]He was buried and after three days He arose just as the Scriptures predicted. {3 Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, John 15:7}

The Appearance on a Mountain

[5]He was seen by Peter, then by the twelve, [6]and next He appeared to five hundred at the same time. Many are still alive and will attest to having seen Him. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [7]Then He appeared to James, and later to all the apostles, [8]and finally He appeared to Paul. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [9]Lord, Paul said he was the least of the apostles. Since he persecuted the church, he felt unworthy to be called an apostle. {390 Questionable-Praying, Acts 1:24} [10]But by God's grace Paul knew he was an apostle and his ministry had been fruitful. Paul said he had worked harder than the

other apostles, but it was Your grace, not his doing it. {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} [11]What was important? Paul preached what the apostles preached: the gospel that saved the Corinthians. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

Lord, help me clearly understand the reason for Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. Thank You for the forgiveness of sins because He died for my sins. Thank You for new life because I was in Jesus when He rose from the grave (Eph. 2:5). Amen.

[12]Lord, Paul argued that if Christ were raised from the dead, how could anyone say there is no resurrection? {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [13]If there is no resurrection from the dead, then Christ could not have been raised and [14]if Christ was not raised from the dead, then Paul's preaching accomplished nothing and the faith of the Corinthians would be useless. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [15]Indeed, Paul has committed perjury against You, and the God of heaven, because he swore that You raised him from the dead. [16]For if the dead are not raised, then Christ was not raised from the dead. [17]And if Christ did not rise, the Corinthians are still in their sins [18]and those in Christ who previously died have perished. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [19]If our Christian benefits are in this life only, we have a miserable life. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}

Absurdum is a Latin word that means pushing an argument to its furthest opposite conclusion to make someone see the reverse truth. If Christ didn't rise: (1) our faith is vain or useless (15:14); (2) we are yet in our sins (15:17); (3) we are hopeless (15:18); (4) we are miserable (15:18); (5) our witnessing to others is vain (15:14); (6) all those who died in Jesus have perished (15:18); and (7) the Bible's promises are not true (15:20). Lord, I know You arose from the dead and are alive in the world because You live in my heart. Amen.

[20]But in fact Christ *has* been raised from the dead, and He is the first of millions who will live again. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [21]Lord, Paul taught that death comes through one man and resurrection from the dead came through one man. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} [22]Just as all people died in Adam, so all believers will be brought to life through Christ. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3} [23]However, there is an order to the resurrection: Christ rose first, then when He returns, all believers who have died will be raised. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [24]After that, the end will come and Christ will turn the kingdom over to God the Father, having abolished all kingdoms, authorities, and rulers. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [25]He will destroy every one of His enemies of every kind, [26]including the last enemy, death. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [27]Then the unsaved

will be raised to meet their judge, Jesus Christ, who will punish them according to their sins. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [28]When Christ finally becomes victorious over everything, He will put Himself under Your authority so that You will be supreme over everything. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[29]Lord, if the dead will not be raised in the future, what is the point of our getting the same baptism they got? {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12}
[30]Why would anyone be baptized if they didn't believe they would be raised? {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [31]Lord, Paul said he wouldn't continually risk himself if there wasn't a resurrection. {112 Desperate-Prayer, Matt. 14:30}
[32]He said he wouldn't face death daily, and fight wild beasts there in Ephesus if all he got was some reward down here on earth. If there is no resurrection, we might as well eat and drink because eventually we will all die. {4 Absurd-Praying, 1 Cor. 15:19}
[33]Lord, Paul warned them against being led astray. Paul said, "Bad company corrupts good living." {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [34]Paul said some of them are not even Christians and they should be ashamed that he had to say it. {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13}
[35]Lord, Paul addressed their questions, "How will they be brought back to life?" and "What kind of bodies will they have?"
[36]Paul said the answer is in nature; first a seed must be planted and then die in the ground; then new life shall appear. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [37]The thing that is sown is not what comes up, a dry little seed is planted in the ground, and a new abundant plant comes out of the earth. [38]The new bush is God's plan, the new plant has the same life as the seed that was planted. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [39]Not all flesh is the same kind of flesh; there is human flesh, animal flesh, fish have flesh, and so do birds. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [40]The angels in heaven have believed but their body differs from ours. The splendor of their heavenly bodies differs vastly from a human body. [41]The sun, moon, and stars each has its splendor, and each one is different from the others. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [42]These are all illustrations of our earthly body, that is planted in the earth to die or decay. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [43]But it will be raised never to decay again; what is planted is ugly and sickly, but it will be raised in glory and immortality. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [44]Yes, the weak, earthly body will be buried, but it will be powerful and spiritual when raised. Just as the soul is embodied in this earthly flesh, Your eternal Spirit will live in our new bodies. {457 Spiritual-Victory Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [45]The first man—Adam—had a life-giving soul; the last Adam—Christ—became a living-giving Spirit. [46]The first one—Adam—had a soul, the last one—Christ—made us eternal spirits. {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} [47]The first man was made from the dust of the earth, the second man came from heaven. [48]Every human with a body like Adam's is made of earthly dust. Every human who is born

again by Christ shall have an eternal body like that of Christ in heaven. [49]Just as we are like Adam, one day we will be like Christ. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [50]Lord, I know flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom of God because our perishable bodies will not last forever. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

[51]The wonderful mystery is that we shall not all die, but all believers will be transformed. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [52]It will happen instantly, in the twinkling of an eye. When the last trumpet will sound, the dead in Christ will suddenly be raised, and the living will all be transformed. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [53]Our present perishable bodies will become imperishable and our mortal nature will be immortal. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [54]Then the Scriptures will be fulfilled: {518 Vindication-Praise Prayer, Ps. 20:7} [55]"Death is swallowed up in victory. Death, where is your victory? Death, where is your sting?" {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [56]Lord, sin is the sting that causes death, and that sting is revealed by Your law. [57]So, I thank You for victory over sin through my Lord Jesus Christ. [58]Lord, I will do what Paul tells the Corinthians. I will never give in and never admit defeat. I will keep on diligently doing Your work, knowing my labor is not in vain, and You will keep me safe to the resurrection. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13}

The resurrection of Christ is a fact on which we base our entire Christian experience. "God... hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:4, 6). Therefore, we must base our prayer-relationship with God on the resurrection. Lord, I come to You through the resurrected Christ, and I have faith because the living Christ dwells within my heart. I ask for things based on His power that resulted from the resurrection. Amen.

1 Corinthians 16

Personal Greetings and Conclusion

Lord, I rejoice that You will answer with small things in my life, such as reassurance from friends, safety in travel, and our need for recognition. Amen.

[1]Lord, Paul wrote to the Corinthians about needy Christians, telling the readers to take up a collection for them; this is the same thing he told the churches in Galatia. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [2]Each Sunday set aside some money according to their financial prosperity so Paul wouldn't need to take a collection. [3]Paul planned to send their offering to Jerusalem by those the Corinthians approved. [4]Those taking the offering could travel with Paul if they chose to do so. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

[5]Paul told them he would go to Corinth and stay with them for the winter after

he visited Northern Greece. [6]Paul didn't want to just "pop" in for a visit, [7]but he wanted to spend time with them if it was the Lord's will. {118 Directional Answer-Prayer, 1 Kings 17:9} [8]In the meantime Paul planned to stay in Ephesus. [9]Lord, a big door of opportunity was opened to Paul in Ephesus, so he planned to stay there until Pentecost, but he was also aware of much opposition. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [10]Lord, Paul asked the Corinthians to graciously receive Timothy when he visited Corinth so he could do Your work. {532 Widow's Fast and Prayer, Isa. 58:7} [11]Paul urged no one to despise Timothy but to bless him and send him back to Paul. {20 Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Gen. 49:28} [12]Paul begged Apollos to go to Corinth but Apollos adamantly refused to go at the present, but he would go to Corinth in the future. {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4} [13]Lord, I will be aware of dangers to my faith and I will courageously face them. {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} [14]I determine to let love motivate me in everything that I do. [15]Lord, Paul reminded the Corinthians how Stephanas' family, who were the first believers in Corinth, had looked after the Christian brothers. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} [16]Paul wanted the Corinthians to help families who have this type of ministry. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [17]Paul told that Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus had arrived in Corinth. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7} [18]They had all encouraged Paul in Ephesus, and Paul wanted them to appreciate these men, too. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

[19]Lord, Paul sent the Corinthians greetings from Aquila and Priscilla and the church that met in their house, [20]and all the believers in Ephesus sent greetings. [21]Paul sent them his warmest greetings, wishing he could be there to embrace them. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [22]Paul said if anyone does not love You, the Father, a curse should fall on them. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [23]Paul prayed, "May you experience the grace of the Lord Jesus. [24]My love to all in Christ Jesus. *Maranatha*, come quickly, Lord." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

2 Corinthians

Ch 1: Greetings to the Church 1683
Ch 2: Forgive the Sinner 1685
Ch 3: Instruction about Ministry 1686
Ch 4: Instruction about Ministry (Continued) 1687
Ch 5: Our Bodies Now and in Heaven 1688
Ch 6: Hardship in Ministry 1690
Ch 7: About the Repentant Sinner 1691
Ch 8: Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem 1692
Ch 9: More about the Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem 1694
Ch 10: Paul Defends His Apostolic Authority .. 1695
Ch 11: False Apostles 1696
Ch 12: Paul's Thorn in the Flesh 1698
Ch 13: Final Exhortation and Conclusion 1699

2 CORINTHIANS

Key Words: *Comfort* and *encourage* (2 Corinthians 1:3, 4)

Key Verse: "Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies and God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort those who are in any trouble, with the comfort with which we ourselves are comforted by God" (2 Cor. 1:3, 4).

Theme: Paul wrote a previous severe letter to the church in Corinth that rebuked their sin and told them to "put away from among yourselves that wicked person" (1 Cor. 5:13). When the church repented (and the individual repented), Paul wrote a letter to comfort and encourage them in Christ.

This letter also reflects Paul's weariness, pain, and deep burden for the churches. First, Paul was anguished over Jews (anti-grace teachers) who opposed the churches; and second, over the Jewish Christian legalizers who denied his apostleship. In this letter Paul makes one of the strongest defenses of his apostleship. *Lord, the world makes it difficult to live the Christian life, yet You give comfort to me internally. Thank You for the confidence and assurance that You give. Amen.*

2 Corinthians 1

Greetings to the Church

[1]Lord, it was Your will for Paul and Timothy to write to the believers in the Corinthian church and to all Christians in the surrounding area. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [2]May I experience grace and peace in my life from You, heavenly Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [3]Lord, I bless You for encouraging me because You are the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, and You are the God of mercies and encouragement. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [4]I want to encourage others who are in trouble with the same encouragement You gave me. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [5]When I am deeply hurting in every area of life, Your promises greatly encourage me. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [6]Lord, Paul said his suffering was for the Corinthians, so they could be saved and grow in grace. Paul was hurting at the same time the Corinthians had great pain. And as God was encouraging Paul to continue in ministry, so God would encourage the Corinthians to

remain strong in their faith. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 7Paul was confident the Corinthians would remain steadfast, even though they were now suffering because they were encouraged by You. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

God allows trouble in our lives to keep us dependent on Him. Those who disobey God's principles of life and reject Him personally, usually have difficult lives, because rejection of God has its own consequences. So trouble is the centripetal force that draws us to God. Lord, when trouble comes I need You to get me out of trouble, or at least I need You to help me endure trouble and get through it. Give me wisdom to solve my problems, and help me when I don't realize You're helping me. Then, Lord, keep me from future trouble and evil. Amen.

8Lord, Paul didn't want to withhold his troubles from them, so they would not be ignorant of what was happening. In Asia he had intense pressures, greater than he had ever experienced in his life, so much so that Paul thought he would die. 9Paul knew that he might be killed, but he was not trusting in earthly deliverance. Paul trusted You to raise him if he died. 10Paul rejoiced that You delivered him from the threat of death, and Paul knew that You would deliver the Corinthians. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 11Paul recognized that the gift of his deliverance came through the prayers of many Corinthians and now they deserve credit for their intercession. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}

12Lord, I will always follow the leading of my conscience to treat everyone kindly and above board without any selfish ulterior motives. I depend on You to help me; that's the way Paul acted toward the Corinthians. {513 Victorious-Results in Prayer, James 1:12} 13Paul's letters have been straight to the point. He hasn't used worldly wisdom with them and he hasn't written anything they can't understand. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} 14Paul realizes they don't know him well, but he wants them to accept him because when the Lord Jesus returns, they will be glad they know Christ, just as Paul will be glad he knows Him. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} 15Lord, Paul told them his original plan was to visit them before going to northern Greece and then return to them after leaving northern Greece. 16Paul wanted to bless them with his ministry, and then go on his way to Judea. 17So Paul thought they may doubt his intentions because he did not come to them. Paul didn't want them to think that he can't make up his mind. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} 18Paul reminded them that "God means what He says. God doesn't say 'Yes' when He means, 'No,'" and Paul knew what You wanted him to do. 19Lord, You have a plan for my life: You faithfully fulfill Your promises to me, no matter how many promises there are. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 20I will tell everyone that You are faithful. Amen, glory to Your name. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} 21Lord, You have helped

me be a faithful believer and given me the responsibility to spread the gospel. [22]You have set Your seal—Your brand of ownership—on me, and You gave me the indwelling Holy Spirit as a pledge of blessings to come. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}

[23]Lord, Paul swore to You that he did not come to Corinth because he didn't want to rebuke them to their face, or to sadden or embarrass them. [24]Paul said he is not their dictator to tell them what they must do. Rather, he is their fellow-worker to make them happy and firm in the faith. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

2 Corinthians 2

Forgive the Sinner

[1]Lord, Paul told the Corinthians he decided not to visit them because it would be painful to them. [2]He felt it wasn't smart to make the people miserable who gave him joy, and he couldn't be happy if they weren't happy. [3]Paul explained he hated to write the previous letter, because it grieved him deeply to expose their sins. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [4]He didn't write to hurt them, but he had to deal with their sins because he loved them so much. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

[5]The men Paul wrote about caused great sorrow, so Paul had to rebuke them all because they allowed sin to exist in their midst. [6]Paul told them one man's punishment was enough. [7]He wanted them to forgive and receive him back; otherwise that man may become bitter and give up. [8]Paul pleaded with them to show the man that they still loved him. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [9]Lord, Paul explained that his previous letter tested them to see if they were completely obedient. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [10]Paul said he forgave anyone they forgave, based on the authority of Christ's teachings. [11]When I forgive, satan doesn't have an advantage over me, for I am not ignorant of his strategy. Satan wants to discourage and defeat me. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

We should forgive those who sin, and those who sin against us, because (1) we are commanded to do so; (2) our prayers will be answered; (3) they will heal and grow in Christ (Matt. 6:12); (4) this will be a testimony to the world; and (5) it is for our own good (Mark 11:25-26). Lord, teach me to forgive others as You forgave me. Keep that bitter spirit of revenge and anger from me. Teach me to love those whom I don't love. Amen.

[12]Lord, Paul told them about the open door in Troas to preach the gospel, but Titus was not there with him. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} [13]Because Paul was worried about Titus' welfare, he went looking for him in northern Greece.

[14]Lord, I thank You for helping me triumph in Christ, and for using me as I spread the gospel like a sweet fragrance to motivate people to be saved. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [15]I want to be Your fragrance everywhere I go, both

to those who are being saved and to those who refuse salvation. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 16Because sin has the smell of death that leads to judgment, and the sweet fragrance of the gospel leads to life, Lord, help me spread Your influence everywhere. Therefore I will go everywhere to spread the gospel, and I will speak with integrity and power. 17I won't serve You, Lord, for money, as some are in the ministry for a salary, because You send me to speak for You, I will minister in Your sight. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

Lord, thank You for every victory I enjoy. Every triumph I have comes from You who were victorious over the ultimate enemy of death. Amen.

2 Corinthians 3

Instruction about Ministry

1Lord, Paul said he didn't need to commend himself as other people needed a letter of recommendation when they go to meet new people. 2The change in the hearts of the Corinthians was Paul's letter of recommendation. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 3The Corinthian church is a letter written by Christ, not penned with ink, nor engraved on stone, but written by the Spirit of the living God. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 4Paul was confident of this because of his great trust in God through Christ. 5Lord, none of us should brag about the results of our ministry, but we should have our confidence in Christ because our ability comes from You.

Lord, my life is an open book for all to read. Forgive me my sins and mistakes, and may I and others learn from them. Use the victories You've accomplished through me as a testimony to others. Amen.

6You have made me a minister of the new covenant, which is not a written legal contract, but is the inner transformation of the Holy Spirit. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} 7Your written command tells me I will die if I try to keep the law to be saved, but the Spirit gives me eternal life. Yet the face of Moses shone when he was given the command that led to death. His face had such a brilliant brightness that the Israelites couldn't look on him. 8I'll experience a far greater brightness when I give out the gospel by the Holy Spirit. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} 9If the gift of the law was glorious, how much more glorious the giving of the grace of God? Actually the law that we thought had such great splendor now seems to have none compared to the splendor of Jesus Christ. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 10And if the law that was temporary had some splendor, how much more glorious is our heavenly hope in Your eternal plan of salvation? 11Since I know this new splendor will never cease, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

Lord, I rest in the comfort of Your forgiveness. Your grace is glorious. But teach me

more about Yourself, and help me grow to enjoy more glorious grace. Amen.

12how much more boldly can I speak for
You? {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus
1:2} 13Lord, Moses had to put a veil over
his face so the Israelites wouldn't see his
shining face.
14But the Israelites' minds were hard-
ened and even to this day whenever the
Old Testament is read, a veil covers their
minds so they cannot understand the
truth, but the veil is taken away by believ-
ing in Christ. 15To this day, the same veil
is over the minds of Jews everywhere so
that when the Old Testament is read, they
can't understand what they are reading.
{490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}
16But when any Jew turns to You, the
veil is lifted from their hearts so they can
understand Your message. 17Now, Lord,
Your Holy Spirit is working in hearts, and
when the Spirit works in my life there is
freedom to understand Your truth. {224
Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 18Now I,
with unveiled face, look at Christ to see
His brightness reflected in the mirror of
the Word of God. And constantly I am
transformed into the image of Jesus Christ
by the work of the Spirit, who is the Lord.
{490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29}

Lord, I want to live in liberty given by the Spirit of God. Forgive my legalism, which is bondage to the law. Forgive my rebellion, which is bondage to sin and self. Give me freedom to follow Your Spirit. Amen.

2 Corinthians 4

Instruction about Ministry (Continued)

1Lord, because You have given me a great
ministry that I didn't deserve, I will not
falsely represent myself nor will I hide
the truth. {87 Continual-Prayer, 1 Thess.
3:10} 2I will not use tricks nor interpret
the Bible according to my own inclina-
tion. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
3But I will declare Your truth to everyone
so they can understand Your Word. 4Lord,
I know lost people are spiritually blinded;
they cannot understand the gospel. Satan
has blinded their spiritual understanding
to prevent them from understanding the
glorious gospel. They cannot see Jesus
Christ in Scripture, who is Your image.
{147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 5I
will not advance myself or my reputation,
I will preach Christ Jesus, the Lord and I
will serve those I'm trying to help. {431
Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 6For You,
who commanded light to shine out of
darkness, have shined Your light into my
heart so I see Your glory in Jesus Christ.
{283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}

Satan has blinded unsaved people so they can't appreciate Jesus, who is the Light of the world (John 8:12). But God sends the Holy Spirit to enlighten our darkened hearts so we can see Christ and believe in Him. Lord, give me more light to learn more about Jesus; turn the light up ever brighter. Then too, I pray for my unsaved friends and relatives who are blinded by sin and satan.

Open their eyes to see Jesus, then give them strength to say "Yes" to Him. Amen.

7Lord, I have the treasure of Jesus Christ in my frail human body so that outsiders will see Your power and know it doesn't come from my weakness.
8I have troubles everywhere I go, but I am not distressed, and I don't give up. I am persecuted, but not forsaken by You. I am knocked down, but not knocked out. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 9I face death daily, but I serve Christ Jesus who went to death for sinners like me. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} 10My life is renewed daily so others can see the life of Christ shining through me. 11I always faced the threat of death so that others can see the life of Jesus in me. 12So we live in the face of death so that others can have eternal life. 13I want the faith that is described in Scripture, "I speak what I believe"; may my life reflect what I speak. May I say what I believe. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} 14Because You raised up the Lord Jesus from the dead, You'll raise me up in the last days. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 15Lord, Paul said he suffered so they could be saved, and when more are won to Christ, Paul will thank You more and glorify You more. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} 16That is why Paul didn't give up even when his outward body was hurting; his inward desire was strong to serve You. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 17Paul said his little troubles will pass away, but this short time of suffering will result in Your blessing on him and them. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 18Lord, I will not look at my present sufferings, but I will look forward to being happy in heaven because things I see on earth last only for a short time, but the things I can't see with my physical eyes are eternal—they last forever. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}

Lord, there are difficulties in the church and in the world, but I will not give up. There are trials and temptations, but they only make me try harder. I get frustrated with the things I can't do, and I get tired; but I will not give up. Amen.

2 Corinthians 5

Our Bodies Now and in Heaven

1Lord, I know if my earthly body dies, You have a spiritual body for me in heaven, an eternal body made by You alone. {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} 2In this present body I groan as I wait for my spiritual body, {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} 3for I am not merely a spirit without a body because every person has a physical body. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 4Yet I groan and get weary in this body, but it's better than not having a body at all. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} 5Yet when I get to heaven I'll have a new body, and I won't lose this present body, but it will be transformed into an eternal body. This is Your plan for me and You guarantee it

by giving me the Holy Spirit to live within this body. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} 6Therefore I am absolutely confident knowing that while I live in this earthly body, I am not yet in Your presence. {353 Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer, 1 Cor. 15:46} 7In this present body I must live by faith, which is obeying Your principles, not living to please the body. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} 8Lord, I am not afraid to die, because when this body dies, I'll immediately go to be with You in heaven. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

9Therefore, my aim is to please You in everything, whether I'm in an earthly body or a heavenly body. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 10I know one day I'll stand before You to be judged and everything I've done will be examined, and I'll get what my actions and thoughts deserve for the good or bad deeds I've done. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Lord, I am limited and I get tired; help me go on. I yearn to be with You in glory, but I know I have work to do on earth. Use me as long as I have strength; then take me home. Amen.

11Lord, because I know You will judge me, I work hard to win people to Christ. You know my intents and actions and Paul added that he hoped the Corinthians also correctly knew his motives. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 12Paul was not making another attempt to commend himself to the Corinthians, but giving them reasons to support his ministry. Then they would have an answer to those who constantly criticize Paul. 13Paul said if he was "out of place" defending himself, it was only to bring You glory. And if he is making a reasonable case, it was for the Corinthians' sake. 14Lord, the love of Christ overwhelms me when I think of His death, that Christ died for all sinners. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 15Then if He died for all, then all died with Him, so that I should no longer live for myself but for Him who died and was raised to new life. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 16Therefore I will stop judging Christians by what the world thinks of them. Before Paul's conversion he judged Christ only as a human, but now he knows Christ differently. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10}

17Because I have received Christ into my life, You have created me a new person in Christ; the old life is gone, now I have a new life in Him. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} 18My transformation is Your work, and I am reconciled to You through Christ; now I must get others reconciled to You. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} 19I know You worked through Christ's death to get the world reconciled back to You, now You will not punish people for their sin, but You accept them in Christ. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} 20Now I am Your ambassador to spread the message of reconciliation, asking people to be "reconciled to God," {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} 21because You placed my sins on Christ, the Sinless One, and You put

His righteousness on me so I stand perfect before You. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31}

Lord, You promised new things when I got saved. Thank You for a new nature and a new hope in heaven. Thank You for a new indwelling by Christ, and thank You for a new access to You in prayer. May I never take for granted the new things You have given me. Amen.

2 Corinthians 6

Hardship in Ministry

[1]Lord, I want to be Your partner in ministry, and I want everyone to take advantage of Your grace that is available to all believers. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [2]The Scriptures teach, "I, the Lord, have listened to My people, and when they needed salvation, I came to them and helped them." Now this is a good time for all people to be saved, today is the day of salvation. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [3]Lord, I will not do anything to discredit myself so that I make it hard for people to get saved. [4]Actually I will do the opposite; I will do everything I can to bring people to Christ. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [5]Lord, I will patiently go through sufferings and difficulties and pressures for You. I am willing to be beaten and imprisoned, and will face angry rioters for You. I am willing to work hard, go without sleep, or go without food for You. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [6]Lord, I want to be pure, patient, kind, loving, and knowledgeable of Your principles. [7]Thus I can minister in the Holy Spirit's power, according to the Word of God, clothed in the armor of righteousness. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

Lord, there are many challenges in life and ministry; help me face the good times and bad things with Your optimism and power. Help me remain pure in heart, fervent in Spirit, and aggressive in serving. Amen.

[8]Therefore I will stand true on the right hand and on the left, prepared for honor or dishonor, whether good reports or bad reports. I will continue ministering if I'm accused of lying or if people accept my honest presentation. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [9]It doesn't make any difference if I'm ignored, or if I'm well known. Also I'll continue in ministry if I narrowly escape death, or if I have a safe environment. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [10]Lord, people think my life is miserable, yet I always rejoice. They treat me like I'm poor and have nothing, but compared to all people I'm rich and have everything. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12}

[11]Lord, Paul spoke very frankly to the Corinthians. He didn't hide anything from them. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8} [12]The conviction they felt came from their hearts; it didn't come from Paul. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [13]Paul said he spoke to them as children, and now he wants them to respond with

childish enthusiasm and obedience. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
14Lord, I will not tie my life to the decisions of unsaved people who will lead me astray. Good intentions can't tolerate an evil agenda. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 15There is no common agreement between light and darkness, just as Christ and the devil do not agree on anything. 16There is no agreement between Your temple and idols, so I won't let unbelievers control my life. I want You to live in the body of my temple because You said, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 17"I will dwell in My people, just as I dwelt in the Old Testament temple. I will walk with them and they will be My people." {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}
18Lord, You want me to separate myself from unsaved people and not touch dirty things, so You can welcome me and be my Father, and all believers will be Your sons and daughters as You have promised.

When God tells us to be holy, He means for us to be separate from any and all influences of sin in our lives. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} When God tells us to "Come out from among them, and be ye separate" (6:17, KJV), He is telling us to keep apart from those who would negatively influence us with evil. Lord, give me spiritual eyes to see the influence that some people have on my life. Then give me wisdom to know how to detach myself from them, even as I pray for them. I will not let some drag me down, nor will I allow them to influence my life and testimony. Amen.

2 Corinthians 7

About the Repentant Sinner

1Lord, with promises as great as these, I will separate myself from evil, whether it touches my body or spirit, and I will be completely holy unto You, living in reverence to You. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}
2Lord, Paul asked them to keep their minds open about him and to realize that he had not exploited anyone, hurt anyone, or ruined anyone's reputation. 3He was not fussing at them or blaming them because they were always on his mind. They succeeded or failed together with him. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} 4Paul had the highest confidence in them, and was encouraged by them, and they made Paul happy in spite of his suffering. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} 5Lord, Paul explained that he didn't get any physical rest, even when he got to northern Greece. There he found trouble everywhere he turned for there were fightings within and fears without. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 6But You who encourage those who are depressed, encouraged Paul when Titus arrived. 7Titus told how the Corinthians received him, and were sorry for their sin, and were concerned for Paul. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
8Lord, Paul was not sorry he sent them a letter, but he was sorry that the letter

pained them. Thankfully they hurt only a short time. 9Now Paul is glad he sent the letter, not because he hurt them, but because their pain drove them back to You. They had a beneficial sorrow, the sorrow sent by You to draw Your people to Yourself. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} 10For godly sorrow leads to repentance for salvation, and I will never regret this type of sorrow that drives me back to You. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 11But worldly sorrow leads not to repentance but to discouragement, despondency, and death. Paul pointed out how good was their sorrow. They are now diligent to serve You and they were also quick to get rid of sin. He notes the Corinthians have completely cleaned themselves of their wrongdoings. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, sometimes I've been wrongly accused of things I didn't do; You know my heart. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} Help me remain strong in the face of criticism to always do the right thing. Help me deal with criticism and learn from it how to live more godly. If there is anything in me that is worthy of criticism, give me strength to confess it and seek Your help to live worthy for Your love. Amen.

12Therefore Paul explains he didn't write to blame the offender or comfort the offended, but to make them responsible to You. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 13Titus encouraged Paul when he arrived to tell of their love for Paul, and Titus was happy to bring the news. Before Titus left to bring the letter to them, Paul told Titus they would repent of their sin, and they did not disappoint Paul. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 14Paul said he always told the truth, and his boastings of them proved true. 15Paul told how Titus loved the Corinthians because when he read them the letter, the Corinthians willingly received it with deep concern. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} 16This made Paul happy that there was no barrier between them and him, and now Paul has great confidence in them. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}

2 Corinthians 8

Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem

1Lord, Paul wanted the Corinthians to know what Your grace accomplished in northern Greece. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 2Those in Macedonia have had difficult times and they have been tested with disappointments, but they were extremely generous in giving money even though they didn't have much. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 3Paul assured the Corinthians that the Macedonians gave as much as they possibly could, even more than they should. 4They begged Paul to receive their offering 5so they could rejoice in helping the poor saints in Jerusalem. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 6They did more than Paul expected, by first giving themselves to God, then giving money to Paul for Jerusalem. So Paul encouraged

Titus to visit them and finish the collection of money that he began on a previous visit. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

7Lord, Paul reminded the Corinthians that they had good leaders and they had strong faith, good preaching, much knowledge, and enthusiasm. Also the Corinthians had a deep love for Paul, and now he wanted them to be leaders in giving joyfully to the Jerusalem project. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

Lord, teach me the proper ways to give my time, talent, and treasure to You. Take the gifts I offer and use them for Your glory. Amen.

8Paul reminded them he was not giving a command, but he's reminding them what others have done. {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} 9Lord, Paul reminded them of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ that when He had all the riches of heaven, He gave up everything to help others so all believers could be spiritually rich because of His poverty. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

10Therefore, Paul only suggested that the Corinthians finish the project, because it was they who first suggested it to him. 11Having begun so enthusiastically, Paul wanted them to finish the financial project with zeal, giving whatever money they could. 12Paul reminded them that God wanted them to give from what resources they had, not from what they didn't have. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 13Paul also reminded them they shouldn't give so much money that they suffer when they give to relieve the suffering of others. 14Paul said suffering should be shared by all believers. Since the Jerusalem Christians are suffering now, the Corinthians can do something about it. In the future the Corinthians may have sufferings and the Jerusalem Christians will help them. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 15The Scriptures say, "He who gathered much had nothing left over, and he who gathered only a little bit had enough to meet his needs."

16Lord, Paul was thankful that Titus had the same concern for the Corinthians as he had. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} 17Titus would visit them again at Paul's suggestion, but Titus would have gone anyway because he had deep concern for them. 18Paul also sent another brother with Titus who was recognized as a good preacher of the gospel among all churches. Paul told them this brother was elected to travel with Paul to take the money to Jerusalem. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 19His election would prove to all the churches his eagerness to help the Jerusalem Christians and that God's grace overcomes difficulties. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 20By traveling together, the two would overcome any rumor about how this large offering would be used in Jerusalem. 21Paul said, "I am trying to do right in the sight of all men and of God." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 22To accomplish this, Paul sent a third brother who was well known to Paul, and the brother wanted to visit the Corinthians

because Paul had told him about them. 23Lord, Paul said, "Tell everyone Titus is my partner and he is coming to help you. Also tell everyone the other two brothers are outstanding Christians and represent the churches and Paul." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 24Finally Paul said, "Show your love to these men, and do for them what I promised you would do." {468 Support-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

Lord, thank You for the privilege of serving with other believers who encourage and motivate me to greater service. Bless them as they have blessed me. Use us together in Your work. Amen.

2 Corinthians 9

More about the Collection for the Saints in Jerusalem

1Lord, Paul said he didn't need to write to the Corinthians about giving to needy saints, because they were eager to help. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 2He had been boasting to the believers in Achaia that the Corinthians were eager to help. That motivated the believers in Achaia to give. 3But Paul is sending the three brothers to make sure they give as they pledged they would. 4Because if the Macedonians went with Paul and the Corinthians didn't give what they pledged, both Paul and the Macedonians would be embarrassed. 5So Paul urged the three brothers to visit Corinth to make sure the gift is ready and waiting. Lord, Paul wants the money to be a real gift, not something that is given under pressure. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} 6Remember, "If you give little, God's blessing will be small, similar to the farmer who plants a few seeds, and he gets only a few plants. {368 Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Ps. 137:1-4} 7When the farmer plants a lot of seeds, he gets a big harvest." {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

8Everyone must decide the budget they need to live on, so they will always have enough for their needs and some left over to give to others. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} 9As the Scriptures say, "He who gives to the poor, his gift will be remembered by God." 10God, You who give seed to the farmers, and bread to the hungry, will also give me what I need and make my harvest great. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} 11When You make me richer in every way, I will be able to give generously and cause others to thank You. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} 12As I give money in a Christian way, You supply my needs and the needs of the needy. For this I give thanks to You. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 13By giving a generous gift, the Corinthians demonstrate their Christian integrity, and those receiving the gift praise You. 14Then they will pray fervently for the Corinthians because they receive Your grace through them. {44 Blessing Expectation-Prayer, Rom. 2:4} 15Lord, Paul concluded, "Thank You, Lord, for Your gift beyond words, the gift of Jesus Christ."{483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

Paul says our harvest will be according to our planting or investment. Therefore we must: (1) pray for big results; (2) plan for big results; (3) work for big results; and (4) trust God to bless our endeavors according to our "seed planting" or investment. {312 Mountain-Moving Prayer, Mark 11:23, 24} *Lord, give me faith to believe great results for the investment of my time, talent, or treasures. Amen.*

2 Corinthians 10

Paul Defends His Apostolic Authority

1Lord, Paul appealed gently to the Corinthians about these matters, as compassionate as Christ would plead. Yet the Corinthians are saying he is timid when he is with them, but bold in his letters. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1} 2Paul wants them to do what he asks so he won't have to be harsh when he comes. Some in Corinth think Paul is an ordinary man, so they don't want to do what he asks or says. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 3Paul said, "Yes, I live as an ordinary man in the flesh, but I don't use the strength of an ordinary man to win battles." {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 4Paul didn't use the weapons of the world, Paul used Your power to tear down strongholds to demolish arguments and every barrier against knowledge about You that keeps people from finding You. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} 5With these weapons I can capture people and bring them back to You so they become obedient to Christ. 6Once the Corinthians are fully obedient to Christ, then Paul is ready to punish disobedience. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Lord, the enemy is stronger than I am, and his weapons are stronger than I naturally have. I need help or I'll be overwhelmed and defeated. I will use Your weapons and I will intercede against the enemy. I pray for victory by the Holy Spirit. Amen.

7Lord, Paul said the Corinthians were looking on outward things; to them Paul seems weak and powerless, but Paul tells them not to look at just the surface. 8Yet, if anyone can claim the power of Christ, Paul says it's he. Paul is sorry for talking too much about having the authority of Christ, but he says the Lord gave it to him, not to pull down, but to build up the saints so he'll not apologize for using it. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 9Paul says he is not trying to frighten them, even though some say his letters are forceful, but he is unimpressive in person. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 10They criticize Paul for being a poor preacher, and they say there's nothing authoritative about him. 11Paul says those who criticize him should remember that what Paul is like in his letters will be what he is like in person. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 12Paul said he is not comparing himself with people who write their own "brag sheet", because their ego is their

standard. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} 13Rather, Paul said his standard for achievement is Your divine yardstick for measuring faithfulness, which he followed in Corinth. 14Paul said he was not overstepping his commission when he brought the gospel to the Corinthians, or when he exercised authority over them. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 15Paul said he is not taking credit for ministry others have done in Corinth. Instead, Paul hopes their faith will grow, and then others will appreciate what he has done. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} 16Paul said he will be carrying the gospel in the future to unreached fields, so no one will criticize him for working in someone else's field. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 17If anyone wants to boast, let him boast in You, our Father. 18Then it's not a matter of self-approval but of having Your approval. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

2 Corinthians 11

False Apostles

1Lord, Paul asked the Corinthians to put up with his foolishness 2because he is jealous over them with the right kind of jealousy. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 3Paul said, "I am concerned that the Corinthians have a deep love for Christ alone, as a virgin bride has for her groom." {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 4But Paul is concerned they will be led away from their pure love for Christ, as Eve was deceived by satan. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}

Lord, satan deceived Eve and she fell to temptation because of his lie. I know there are false apostles just as there is perverted preaching, and a distorted gospel. Deliver me from imitation Christianity and sham promises. Open my eyes by the Holy Spirit, and help me see Christianity clearly in Scripture. I want to believe the truth, and only the truth. Amen.

5Paul said they were gullible about their faith because if anyone preached about another Jesus that was different from the one Paul preached, they would quickly embrace any false teacher. Also they would quickly embrace a false spirit, different from the One they got at salvation. Paul said those who claimed to be apostles were no better than he was. 6If Paul were a poor speaker, at least he knew the message he was presenting, and he had preached it many times. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 7Lord, Paul asked if he did wrong by not taking money from the Corinthians when he preached to them. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 8Paul was taking money from other churches to live on so he could preach to them. 9When Paul ran out of money in Corinth, he didn't take money from them; those who came from Philippi brought him money. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 10Paul said he was very careful not to burden them. Paul said he'd tell everyone the same thing in Greece, 11not to embarrass the

Corinthians but [12]to cut the ground out from under those who say they minister just as Paul does. [13]God never sent those false ministers, but they have fooled the Corinthians into thinking they are Jesus' apostles. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [14]This didn't surprise Paul because satan can change himself into an apostle of light, so that those who serve the devil actually appear to be godly ministers. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [15]In the final judgment they'll get the punishment their evil deeds deserve. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20}

[16]Lord, Paul asked them not to think he is a fool, but if the Corinthians take him as a fool Paul wants to brag as a fool boasts. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [17]Paul said the following bragging is not prompted by God, but is said because he has something to brag about. [18]The false teachers have been bragging of their worldly achievements, so Paul will brag about his spiritual achievements. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [19]Paul said the Corinthians had tolerated fools; they tolerated false teachers who made them slaves. [20]The false teachers made the Corinthians feed them, obey them, and give them all their money. They were slapping the Corinthians in the face. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [21]Paul never demanded things like that. Yet, whatever the false teachers brag about, Paul has more to boast about. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [22]Are they Hebrews? So was Paul. Are they Israelites? So was Paul. Are they descendants of Abraham? So was Paul. [23]Are they ministers of Christ? Paul said he was foolish to even compare himself to them because he was called by Christ Himself. [24]"I have served more time in prison, I have been beaten more times, I have faced death time and again. I have received 39 lashes, five times from the Jews. [25]I have been beaten with rods five times, I have been stoned once. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [26]I have been shipwrecked three times. I drifted 24 hours in the sea. I have been in danger while crossing rivers, from thieves, from Jews, and from Gentiles. I have been in danger in city streets, in the desert, on the sea, and by false teachers. [27]I have experienced hard work, exhaustion, sleepless nights, hunger, thirst, fastings, cold, and exposure." [28]Finally Paul said, "I have had the constant responsibility of the churches. Every time someone sins, I have to deal with it. {56 Burden-Prayer, Rom. 10:1} [29]When Christians fail, I pick them up. When they are hurt, I comfort them."

Lord, Paul suffered many different ways, yet he remained true to You. Be with me when I go through suffering; keep my faith strong and use my testimony for Your glory. Amen.

[30]Paul said, "I'd rather brag about my weaknesses than my accomplishments. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} [31]God, the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, knows I am telling the truth and let all praise go to Him forever." {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [32]Paul told how the governor of King Aretas of Damascus tried to arrest him at the city gates, [33]but

he was let down by a basket on a rope to escape through a window in the wall.

2 Corinthians 12

Paul's Thorn in the Flesh

1Lord, Paul said it was foolish to boast about accomplishments, but he has had visions and revelations from You, Lord. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 2"Fourteen years ago I was taken to heaven and only God knows whether it was physically or spiritually. All I know is that I was caught up into Paradise (let me repeat, 3I don't know if it was in my body or in my spirit). 4I heard things that I cannot repeat. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} 5I'll not brag of that experience, and I'll brag only in my weaknesses. 6I have plenty to brag about, but I won't do it because people will think I am a fool. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

7"I don't want people to think more highly of me than they ought to think." Lord, because Paul had this extraordinary revelation, You gave him a thorn in the flesh to keep him from getting puffed up. {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} 8Three times Paul pleaded for You to relieve him from that pain, but You told Paul, {323 "No" Answers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2} 9"My grace is sufficient for you; My power will be evident in your weakness." So Paul said, "I'll be happy to boast of my weakness so the power of Christ will rest on me. Since it is for the cause of Christ, I am happy to live with my thorn in the flesh. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 10I will be happy to suffer insults, hardships, difficulties, and poverty for when I am weak, I am strong." {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1}

Lord, there are many reasons why You don't answer prayer. Sometimes I've asked for the wrong thing, or asked at the wrong time, or asked with a wrong attitude or with sin in my life. Teach me to focus on You and the prayers You've answered in the past, not the unanswered prayers. Amen.

11Lord, Paul said the Corinthians were making him look foolish. They should be bragging on him, not Paul bragging on himself. Paul said he was not behind the first apostles in second place. 12The things that characterize an apostle are signs, wonders, and miracles, which he did among the Corinthians. These miraculous gifts meant the Corinthians were not inferior to other churches. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} 13The only thing lacking in the Corinthian church was the fact that they didn't pay Paul a salary. He asks forgiveness in this exception. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

14Lord, Paul told the Corinthians he was coming to them a third time, and Paul said he will not take money from them. Instead, he wants their love, not their money. Children don't take care of their parents, parents take care of their children. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} 15Paul said, "I am willing to spend my money on you. I will even be spent for you because I love you more than

any other teacher." {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 16Paul notes, "Some of you argue that I didn't receive money from you, but you think I tricked you. You think I made money off you some other way." 17Paul asked them, "How did I make money?" Titus and the others sent Paul money; he didn't take money from them. 18Paul noted, "We all live by the Holy Spirit, which is by the same standard." {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Lord, Paul had a deep burden for the believers in Corinth; this is evident in his writings. Give me the same prayer burden for others. Teach me the principles of intercession and hear the prayer I make for others. Amen.

19Paul explained, "You think I'm telling you these things to justify myself. Actually, I speak the truth in Christ before God. I say this so God will know I did everything for your spiritual growth." {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 20Lord, when Paul got to Corinth, he was afraid that he would not find what he wanted to find, and that they would not see in him what they expected of him. Paul was afraid he'd find arguments, jealousy, hatred, divided-allegiances, slander, expressions of ego, and disharmony. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 21Paul asked them, "When I come again, will I be embarrassed by your behavior? Shall I grieve over any who have sinned, and are guilty of impurity yet have not repented of their evil?" {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

2 Corinthians 13

Final Exhortation and Conclusion

1Lord, Paul said this on his third trip to Corinth, and it was the same thing he said on the second visit. Now Paul is absent from them but he still told them the same things. 2He repeated his authority, "At the mouth of two or three witnesses every word shall be established. I have already warned everyone, and especially those who are sinning, that I will punish them severely when I come. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 3I will give you all proof that Christ speaks through me and He will not be weak in dealing with You. 4His weakened body was crucified, but now He has the mighty power of God. I am weak in my human body as He, but through His power I will be strong." {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} 5Lord, Paul told everyone, "Examine yourselves by asking am I actually a Christian? Test yourself with this question: Do you have the presence of Jesus Christ living in your lives? {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} 6I have not failed the test; I have passed the test, and I belong to Jesus Christ." 7Lord, Paul prayed they would live godly lives, not to make him look successful, but that God may be glorified. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} 8Paul said his responsibility is to encourage them to live right at all times and not do evil. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 9He was glad to be weak and despised, if it meant they would become strong. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7} 10Lord, Paul said he hoped he wouldn't need to use his

apostolic authority to break them, but to lift them up. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6}

Lord, I examine my faith just as Paul told me to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith" (13:5). I know I am a Christian because Christ lives in my heart. Once I was spiritually blind, but now I see and understand scriptural things. Thank You for inner assurance. Amen.

[11]Lord, Paul concluded, "Rejoice, grow in Christ, live in unity and peace, and may the God of love and peace be with you. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [12]Greet one another warmly, [13]as you should. All the saints greet you. [14]May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the presence of the Holy Spirit be with all of you always." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Galatians

Ch 1: The Galatians Have Departed from the True Gospel 1702
Ch 2: The Out-Living of the In-Dwelling Christ 1704
Ch 3: The Law Condemns Us but Faith Saves us . 1706
Ch 4: Legalism Is an Enemy of Faith 1708
Ch 5: Characteristics of the Life of Faith 1711
Ch 6: The Faith-Life Is a Brotherhood 1714

GALATIANS

Key Word: *Law* (Galatians 2:16)

Key Verse: "For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, 'Cursed *is* everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them.' But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God *is* evident, for 'the just shall live by faith'" (Gal. 3:10, 11).

Theme: Paul received news that the Galatians (in modern Turkey) had been influenced by Jewish "missionaries" who were legalizers, and had invaded the area to bring new Christian believers under the law, that is, to make Gentile Christians Jews. Their teaching was twofold: first, that obedience to Old Testament law—mingled with faith in Christ—was the basis of salvation; and second, that justified believers were made perfect before God by keeping the law.

Paul has a fivefold rebuttal: (a) Paul received his revelation of grace and apostleship from God (1:6-2:14); (b) justification is by faith without the law (2:15-3:24); (c) the believer lives by faith, not the law (3:25-5:15); (d) sanctification comes from the Holy Spirit, not the law (5:16-26); (e) the new life is a brotherhood (6:1-18).

Lord, keep my faith based on the Word of God; keep my eyes on Jesus as my example. Keep my life filled with the Holy Spirit. Keep my prayers based on Your promises. Keep me in Your church so this brotherhood can watch over me spiritually. Amen.

Galatians 1

The Galatians Have Departed from the True Gospel

[1]Lord, Paul wrote a letter to the Galatians, reminding them that he was an apostle by divine commission of Jesus Christ and God the Father. He was not appointed by any individual or by any group; therefore they should not reject his clear teaching on salvation {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} by grace through faith alone. [2]Paul sent greetings to all the churches of Galatia, from all those who were with him. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [3]Paul prays for You the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ to give them grace and peace. Lord, I want the same grace and peace in my life that comes only from You, the Lord Jesus Christ. {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer,

Num. 6:23-26} [4]Thank You for sending Jesus to die for my sins, to deliver me from this present evil world according to Your eternal plans. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [5]I give all glory to You, my heavenly Father, and will continue to do so throughout the eternal ages.

[6]Lord, Paul was startled that the Galatians had turned away so quickly from the teaching of grace to follow a different gospel of works. They no longer followed the gospel of salvation by faith alone. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [7]They were being blinded by those who twisted the truth of Christ into legalism. [8]Lord, Paul wanted Your curse on anyone who preached that salvation comes by works. He said, "Even if an angel preached works, it should be cursed." {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [9]Then Paul repeated the point, "If anyone preaches a gospel contrary to what the Galatians received, let him be under a curse forever." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[10]Lord, Paul didn't want to please people. He wanted Your approval. If he catered to people, he'd not be Christ's servant.

When Paul rebuked the Galatians because they are being drawn away from the gospel, he reminded them the issue is not about them or him, "For do I now persuade men, or God or do I seek to please men? For if I yet please men, I should not be the servant of Christ." (1:10). That should be our prayer, that God may be pleased in all we do. Lord, I want You to be pleased in all I think and do. When I displease You, convict me of wrong thinking or actions. Draw me to Yourself. May I please You in every way, and everything I say, and every day of my life. Amen.

[11]Lord, the good news that Paul preached didn't come from human thought or logic. [12]He didn't think it up nor did anyone teach it to him. It came by a direct revelation from Jesus Christ. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [13]Before Paul was saved, he persecuted Christians and tried to destroy Christianity. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [14]Paul was more zealous than most Jews his age, and tried as diligently as possible to follow all the Jewish traditions. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [15]But You called Paul before he was born, and chose him to be Your apostle. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [16]Your Son was revealed to Paul {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} so that he might preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} When Paul was saved, he didn't consult with anyone, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} [17]and he didn't go to Jerusalem to consult with the apostles. Immediately after Paul was saved, he went to Arabia (the desert) where You revealed to him the doctrine of salvation by grace through faith, apart from works. Then he returned to Damascus. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12}

There are several reasons why God calls people. First, He calls us to salvation (1 Thess. 5:24). Second, God calls us to preach Christ

to the world (Gal. 1:15). Third, some are called to full-time vocational service (Heb. 5:4; Luke 3:2). Fourth, God calls us to be separate from sin (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2). Fifth, God calls us to fellowship with Christ (1 Cor. 1:9). When God calls, we should respond in a prayer, "Here am I; send me" (Isa. 6:8). Lord, I'm listening for Your voice; call me. I will do what You want; call me. I will be what You want me to be; call me. Amen.

18 Three years later, Paul went to Jerusalem
to meet Peter and stayed there 15 days.
19 The only other apostle Paul met was
James, our Lord's brother. 20 (Paul affirmed
before God this was the way it happened.
He was not lying.) 21 Then Paul went to
minister in the provinces of southern Tur-
key and then Antioch of Syria. {111 Des-
ert-Praying, Mark 1:12} 22 The churches
in the Holy Land didn't even know what
Paul looked like. 23 All they knew was, "The
one who used to persecute Christians now
preaches the faith he formerly tried to
destroy." {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim.
3:12} 24 They praised God for saving Paul.

Galatians 2

The Out-Living of the In-Dwelling Christ

1 Lord, Paul returned to Jerusalem 14 years
later accompanied by Barnabas and Titus
{253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20}
2 with definite orders from God to con-
front the leaders about their false teaching
that a person must be circumcised to be
saved. Paul talked privately to the leaders,
telling them that in his ministry Gentiles
were being saved without circumcision.
{250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations,
Matt. 28:19} 3 The leaders agreed with
Paul, and did not demand that Titus who
was with him be circumcised, even though
Titus was a Gentile. 4 Lord, Paul said the
issue of Titus would not have come up,
except some false brothers had infiltrated
the meeting to spy on what was discussed.
They wanted to make everyone a slave to
the Old Testament, taking away the free-
dom we all have in Christ. {282 Light
Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor.
4:3-4}

Lord, I thank You that I am saved by grace, and that my faith is not measured by keeping the law. Amen.

5 Lord, Paul did not give in to those spying
on him. He established the truth of the
gospel for all. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer,
Heb. 1:6} 6 The leaders didn't add anything
to what Paul had said to them, or what
Paul was preaching to the Gentiles. {192
God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
7 "Just as God used Peter to win circum-
cised Jews, He used me to win uncircum-
cised Gentiles. 8 Each of us had our unique
calling and special gifts to do our task.
{199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke
24:49} 9 When Peter, James, and John
realized the special grace given to them,
they shook hands with Barnabas and me
and encouraged us to keep on preach-
ing to Gentiles and they would preach to

the Jews." {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [10]The only thing they added was to help the poor, which was what Paul was already doing.

[11]When Peter later came to Antioch, Paul accused him of hypocrisy. [12]Peter ate with Gentile believers, but when a delegation of legalists came from James in Jerusalem, Peter separated himself from the Gentile believers because he was intimidated by the Jews. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [13]Then some other Jewish believers followed Peter's example by discriminating against Gentile believers. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} Even Barnabas was caught up in this compromise for a while. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5}

When we face heresy or compromise with the truth, we must stand strong for God. Notice Paul's obstinacy, "To whom we gave place by subjection, no, not for an hour" (2:5). But it was more than internal resistance, "I withstood him [Peter] to the face" (2:11). Lord, give me a deep commitment to the truth of Your Word; give me courage to stand up openly in opposition to their heresy. While I will pray for heretics privately, I will oppose them openly. Amen.

[14]Lord, when Paul realized what was happening, he said to Peter in front of everyone, "If you are a Jew who lives like a Gentile, why do you try to make Gentiles live like Jews?" Lord, Paul explained: {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} [15]"A Jew becomes a Jew by birth. A Christian becomes a child of God by being born again. [16]No one becomes a child of God by keeping the law, but a person is saved by faith in Jesus Christ. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} Jews who believe in Christ become a child of God by faith in Christ and not by obeying the law." {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} Lord, no one can be saved and justified by keeping the law. The Jews who keep the law are as much sinners as Gentiles who do not keep the law. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} [17]Does that mean Christ allows us to sin? No! That is absurd teaching. {40 Bible-Comforting Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:18} [18]Paul did not try to rebuild a new system for Christians to keep the law, because he taught that the legalistic system of the law was abolished by the death of Christ. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [19]"I died because the law condemns all to death, but in Christ I now live with new life." {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}

To be justified means we are declared perfect in God's sight. It does not mean we are made perfect; it means we are declared perfect. We stand before the Father "in Jesus Christ" (2:16). We are clothed in the righteousness of the Son and we are as perfect as Jesus the Righteous One. Lord, I don't deserve heaven, nor do I have the right to stand before You. I come to You in the perfection of Jesus and there is nothing more perfect than Him. Amen.

20"I was crucified with Christ; I died when He died on the cross, so I no longer try to live for God in the flesh. Now Christ lives within me to give me new life. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} The Christian life is the outliving of the indwelling Christ. I live by the faith {151 Faith-Based Praying, Gal. 3:10} of the Son of God who loves me and gave Himself for me. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 21Lord, if I could be saved by keeping the law then there was no need for Christ to die, and the death of Your Son was worthless." {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

Paul tells us, "I was crucified with Christ" (2:20). This is a past completed action. I don't have to do anything to "crucify myself," nor do I put myself to death with extended times of prayer or self-mortification. The crucifixion prayer is when I act on the accomplishments of Christ on the cross; I apply the cleansing and the power of the cross to my life. Lord, thank You for what Jesus did for me on the cross; His crucifixion death saved me and gave me power to live victoriously over sin. So I tell the world, "I was crucified with Christ" (2:20). Amen. The great strength of believers is that Christ indwells them. "Christ lives within me" (2:20). They live by His strength and they can move mountains by faith, "the faith of the Son of God" (2:20). To get this power we must yield to Him and allow His strength to live through us. Lord, I surrender myself to You, including my selfish dreams, my habits, and my way of doing things. I will do things Your way. Let Your power and purpose flow through me. Amen.

Galatians 3

The Law Condemns Us but Faith Saves Us

1Lord, Paul said the Galatians were foolish because someone had blinded them to the truth of the death of Jesus Christ. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} 2Paul asked them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit by obeying the law?" 3The obvious answer is, "Of course not!" Then he asked, "Are you now trying to live the Christian life by the law after having been saved by the Holy Spirit?" {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 4Lord, Paul reminded the Galatians that they suffered many things for the gospel, and now they were throwing it out. 5They were getting nothing in return for legalism. Lord, I want the power of the Holy Spirit to work miracles in my life. I know You don't do the supernatural for those living by the law; You give miraculous power to live for You to those living by faith. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

6Lord, I know Abraham believed in You, and it was credited to him for righteousness. You looked on Abraham as though he were perfect. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} 7I want to be a child of Abraham, I want to live by faith and I want to wholly trust You for everything. 8Lord, You predicted the Gentiles would be saved by faith when You said, "In

Abraham all the nations will be blessed." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [9]So I want the blessing You promised to all and I want You to enrich my faith. {152 Faith-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

[10]Lord, I know those who try to keep the law are under the curse that comes with the law, for legalists who don't keep all the law will be judged by the curse promised in Scripture. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [11]No one ever got saved by obeying the law. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} Only those living by faith will be justified. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}

The Bible declares, "The just shall live by faith" (3:11), which means we are not legalists who live by the law (3:12), but our faith makes us members of God's family; so we live by a higher standard. We live as children of God. We don't come praying to the Father because we keep the law. No! We come as children to a loving Father who wants to give blessings to His children. Lord, I come to You confessing I am not perfect; I'm sorry for my sin. Forgive me. I come as Your child; accept me because of Your grace and because Jesus died to bring me close to You. Amen.

[12]I remember what the Scriptures teach about the law: you must obey every law without exception, otherwise you are cursed by the law. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} [13]But Christ took me out from under the curse of the law when He was made a curse for me. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} The Scriptures teach, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree." {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [14]Lord, the blessings You promised Abraham come to me through faith in Jesus Christ, and I receive the promises of the Holy Spirit. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26}

[15]Now in this life a man must do what he promises and he cannot change his mind after he pledges his word. God, [16]You promised to save those who exercise faith, so You cannot change or cancel that promise. God, You gave this promise to Abraham and to his seed. One seed—Christ, received Your promise, so Christ is the One who is saving me. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [17]Four hundred and thirty years later You gave the Ten Commands, [18]but keeping these commands did not save anyone {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} because You promised Abraham salvation by faith. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

[19]Lord, You added the law to teach us the existence of sin, until the Seed came to fulfill Your promise; then You forgive the sin of those who exercise faith. You gave us the law by angels. The very fact that You used angels {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} proved that the law did not fulfill the promises You made to Abraham, because Your promise does not depend on angels. [20]It depends on Christ alone who fulfilled that promise because Christ alone took away our sin. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [21]Lord, does the law contradict Your promise? No, for if the law gave anyone spiritual life, then the law would produce righteousness. {270

Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [22]But the Scriptures teach that all are prisoners of sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} The only escape is by faith in Jesus Christ by which I am rescued and made a son of God. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} [23]Before Christ came, we were all prisoners of the law until the coming of Christ who freed us. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [24]The law was like a strict drill sergeant showing us our weaknesses until we went to the school of Christ and learned to be justified by faith. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [25]Once we have faith in Christ to free us, we don't need the law's authority. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [26]Now that we have faith in Christ Jesus, we are the children of God. [27]When we were baptized into Christ, we became a part of His family; we put on Christ and became like Him. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19}

We can pray as a result of our spiritual baptism into Christ's death and resurrection. We are all "baptized into Christ" (3:26). As a result we have all the benefits, which include forgiveness, righteousness, access to the Father, and assurance of salvation. We also have all the benefits of His resurrection, which includes a new nature, eternal life, and membership in God's family. Therefore we can ask with the authority of a child asking of his father. Then we can have intimacy with the Father and the Son. Lord, I come into Your presence because I am Your child and I come in the righteousness of Your Son, Jesus. You hear and answer because I offer them in the perfection of the Perfect One—Jesus Christ. Amen.

[28]We are no longer known as a Jew or Gentile, a slave or free person, or even men or women. We are all equal in Christ. [29]Since I belong to Christ, I am a spiritual descendant of Abraham, and I am a true heir to the promises made to him. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}

We come to the Father in faith, which means we believe in the existence of God and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6). By faith we accepted Christ into our hearts who transformed us and gave us access to pray to the Father. Therefore when we pray by faith, we go to the Father in our new relationship to Him and ask accordingly. Lord, I come to You as Your child; thank You for accepting me in Christ Jesus. I ask for things based on my new relationship to You. Thank You for hearing and answering my prayers. Amen.

Galatians 4

Legalism Is an Enemy of Faith

[1]Lord, as long as the son of a rich father is a child, he doesn't have the use of the wealth that his father has left him. The child is no better than a servant in the house. [2]When the father dies and leaves the child an inheritance, the child has to do what his guardian or manager tells him to do. Lord, I know I am Your child and one day I'll

enjoy the riches of heaven and perfect fellowship with You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 3But now I'll live as a slave in this present world, and I'll obey every command You give me. Lord, before Christ came into the world, Your people were slaves to the Jewish law that only covered over sins. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 4But in the fullness of time, You sent Your Son to be born of a woman—born as a Jew—to purchase freedom for those who were slaves to the law. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} 5Now You have adopted us as Your children. Lord, I thank You that Christ Jesus was born as a Jew, and that He perfectly kept the law, and He nailed the law to the cross, satisfying its claims to free me; so that I am now free from its demands. 6Lord, because I am Your child, You have sent the Spirit of Christ into my heart so I can talk to You, saying, "Papa, Father." 7I am no longer a slave, but Your very own child. And since I am Your child, all spiritual blessings belong to me. {2 Abba-Prayer, Rom. 8:15}

God has sent the Holy Spirit into our hearts so we can cry out "Abba, Father" (4:6). No one can legally call God his Father until he is born again by the Holy Spirit. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} Then he is "a son" and "an heir of God through Christ" (4:7). Lord, I call You Father because the Holy Spirit has given me the new birth and made me a member of Your family. As Your child I ask for Your guidance this day and Your protection from evil. I ask for an inheritance with You in glory. Amen.

8Lord, before Gentiles were saved, they were slaves to idols and their man-made gods. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 9When they found You—or You found them—how can they want to go back to a weak and beggarly religion and try to please You by obeying laws? {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 10They are observing special days, months, and seasons to establish favor with You. 11They are canceling the preaching of the gospel that they once believed. Lord, may I never try to please You by keeping laws, for I am not perfect {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.}—nor can I ever be perfect. My only plea is the blood of Christ who has forgiven my sin and given me access to You.

The act of salvation is described as "ye have known God" (4:9). It begins with initial knowledge that saves us, and continues with a growing knowledge that ends with an intimate understanding of God. But there is a second action; God knows you, as Paul says, "Or rather are known by God" (4:9). Lord, I come to know You in salvation, but now I want to know You more intimately. I pray with Paul, "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). Amen.

12Lord, the legalist should feel as Paul did about the law. 13They should be as free from the chains of the law as was Paul. 14The Galatians did not despise Paul when he

first preached to them, even though he was sick at the time. {435 Sick Person's-Prayer, Ps. 41:3, 4} They welcomed Paul as though he were an angel sent from God, as though he were Christ Jesus Himself. {344 Pastor-Prayer, 2 Cor. 1:11} [15]Paul wants to know what happened to their gracious spirit. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} Lord, may I have a good spirit about new converts as Paul had for the Galatians. May I love them and pray compassionately for them so they will be encouraged to grow in Christ. Lord, because of Paul's illness the Galatians originally would have given their eyes to him. [16]Now Paul wants to know why they have become his enemy. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} [17]Legalists have taught the Galatians to live by the law, but they are wrong. The legalists are attacking Paul so they can win the Galatians to their point of view. {139 Enemy-Strategy Praying, John 8:44} [18]Paul is glad if people take an interest in the Galatians when their motives are good, but the legalists would make them slaves again to the law. Lord, there are some Christians who live by the law, and they try to make others slaves to the law. Thank You that Christ has freed me from the law and now I live free in the kingdom of Your Son. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} [19]Lord, Paul says his children in Christ are hurting him, as though he is going through childbirth again for them. He is suffering till Christ is formed in them. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [20]Paul tells them if he were with them, he could change their opinion. He does not like to deal with this issue by a letter. He is perplexed and doesn't know what to do. Lord, give me grace to understand those who are misguided, and teach me how to relate to them. Keep me as near to the truth as I can be, and may Christ always be seen in me. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

Paul's desire for the Galatians was that "Christ be formed in them" (4:19). He wanted Jesus Christ to dwell in each one individually. Christianity is not about rules, doctrinal statements, worship programs, or other outward expressions. The essence of Christianity is that Christ be formed in us, that He live in us, and that He shine through us to the world. Lord, I pray that Christ be perfectly formed in me, and that His love in my life will control all I do. I pray that Christ shines through me to others. Amen.

[21]Lord, Paul asked the Galatians if they really understood what the law requires of them. They were not able to keep all of the law, so why should they want to be under it? Lord, I know I live in the flesh and cannot be perfect. I realize I cannot keep the law. Thank You for satisfying the demands of the law in Your death, so I will now live to please Christ. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} [22]Lord, Abraham had two sons, one born of a slave girl, the other born to a free woman. [23]The son born to the slave had a natural birth, the other one was born supernaturally according to Your promise. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} [24]The first woman—a

slave—represented Mount Sinai, in Arabia, the land of Ishmael, the son of the slave woman. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} 25The second woman—a free woman—represented Mount Zion in Jerusalem. 26This one typifies the heavenly Jerusalem and is "spiritually" free from the law. Lord, when I was born again by the Spirit of God, You gave me a new nature to obey You, which is a much greater motive to do the right things than trying to keep the law to please You. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17} 27Lord, Paul quoted Isaiah to illustrate his point, "Shout for joy, you barren one who bore no children, break into shouts of joy and gladness you who were never in labor. For there are more sons of the forsaken one than sons of the wedded wife." {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} 28Lord, Paul told the Galatians they were like Isaac, children born of the promise. 29The legalists are like the child born of Hagar. Then Ishmael persecuted Isaac, which is what the Galatians are now doing to him. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 30Paul reminded them of the Scripture, "Drive away the slave girl and her son because she should not have an inheritance with Isaac." {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} 31Paul exhorts the Galatians to be children born of the free woman and not become children born to the slave woman. {361 Praise for Forgiveness, Ps. 103:3}

Those who are born again are the children "born of the promise" (4:28) which means (1) God promised life to those who believe in Christ, (2) the promises of God are applicable to His children, and (3) we must claim the promises of God to receive God's blessings. Lord, I have claimed Your promise of eternal life (John 5:24) and I am saved. Thank You for every promise You have made. I believe they are applicable for me; I claim them now because I am Your child. Amen.

Galatians 5

Characteristics of the Life of Faith

1Lord, thank You that Christ freed me from the law. I won't be chained again to Jewish legalism. I won't be a slave to the law. I won't consent again to religious laws, and I want Christ to be my freedom. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} 2Circumcision will get no one favor with God, for if any think he must keep one law, {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 3then he must obey all the other laws. 4If anyone tries to be justified by keeping the law, he cuts himself off from the life of Christ and he has fallen from grace. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 5For by faith we have the hope of being righteous, and the Holy Spirit works in us to make it happen. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 6For in Christ circumcision or uncircumcision means nothing. So I must have faith which expresses itself in love. {523 Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Ps. 42:7} 7Lord, Paul said the Galatians were growing in Christ until someone stopped them from obeying the truth. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} 8This

wasn't from You because You originally called them. The Judaizers had corrupted them. [9]It only takes a little yeast to influence the whole lump of dough. [10]Paul had confidence the Galatians wouldn't fall to legalism and that the Judaizers would be punished. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

All believers are running a race to please Christ, so we should pray that we will run well. We should pray for strength, determination, and discipline to finish well. Lord, I pray that I may run my race with strength and discipline. Keep me from discouragement. Give me will power to finish well. Amen.

[11]Lord, some said Paul was preaching that circumcision was necessary for salvation. But if that was what Paul was doing, he wouldn't be persecuted. The fact that Paul was being persecuted proves he was preaching salvation by grace through the cross alone. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [12]Paul wanted the Judaizers to be cut off altogether from the Galatians. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11}

The cross is offensive to the world because they want to do "good works" to be saved. Also the message of the cross rejects their good works. The cross rejects the world's desire to fulfill the lust of the flesh, to enjoy the thrills of the world, and fulfill the desire to make self "number one" in all things. Lord, I accepted the "offense of the cross" when I accepted Christ as my Savior. Help me take up "my cross" and follow You. May I glory in the cross (1 Cor. 1:18). Amen.

[13]Lord, I have been called to freedom in Christ, not freedom to follow my sinful nature {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} but free to serve others in love. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [14]The law is summed up in one command, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [15]Freedom does not mean freedom to attack others and tear them down and ruin any fellowship with them. {309 Model-Church Prayer, Acts 11:26}

[16]Lord, I will live in the Spirit and not satisfy the lust of my sinful nature. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [17]All the energy of my sinful nature fights against the Spirit's control, {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} and all the energy of the Spirit fights against being controlled by my sinful nature. These two forces are constantly fighting to control my life, and I feel constant pressure from both of them. [18]When I am controlled by the Holy Spirit, I am no longer a legalist. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25}

God has promised to give the Holy Spirit to all who believe in Jesus Christ. When the Holy Spirit comes into our lives He gives us (1) eternal life (Eph. 4:30), (2) indwells us (John 7:39), (3) illuminates spiritual truth (1 Cor. 2:13), (4) guides us (Gal. 5:16, 25), (5) seals us (Eph. 1:13), (6) becomes

the earnest of future blessing (Eph. 1:14), and (7) prays for us (Rom. 8:26-27). Lord, I want the Holy Spirit to do everything in my life that was promised to us in Scripture. Empower me by the Holy Spirit. Fill me with the Spirit to serve You more effectively (Eph. 3:16). Amen.

[19]Lord, the fruit of the sinful nature is sexual immorality, impure thoughts, sensuality, worship of false gods, {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [20]spiritism (contacting demons), {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} hating people, attacking people, [21]jealousy of others, and anger at everything, drunkenness, wild parties, and things like these. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} Those who indulge in these things will not see the kingdom of God. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [22]Lord, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, a generous spirit, faithfulness to one's word, [23]gentleness and self-control. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} This is completely different from trying to live by the law.

Father, I pray for You to change me, for prayer is change. You've promised to give fruit in my life, and You promised to give it to me by the Holy Spirit. I accept Your love; now make me love others as You do. I want Your joy to make me happy. Let Your peace take over my confused mind. Teach me to be patient as You are at all times. Change my hard heart into a kind heart, and may I be good to the core. I want to be as faithful to others as You are to me, treating them gently. I ask You to help me discipline myself so I can be like Christ who was focused on pleasing You. Amen.

[24]Lord, I will put to death—crucify—the lust that came from my sinful nature that tries to control my life. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [25]I will live by the direction of the Spirit so I can produce the fruit of the Spirit.

The believer is commanded to "walk in the Spirit" (5:16, 25) which means we are to let the Holy Spirit strengthen us to do what He commands. When we do that, the Spirit glorifies God through us, and uses us to produce the fruit of the Spirit (5:22-23). Lord, I will walk as the Holy Spirit tells me to walk; give me strength to walk above sin, and wisdom to obey Your Word. Be glorified in my daily walk. I now yield to the Holy Spirit to empower me to walk clean and straight. Amen.

[26]I will not be ambitious for my own reputation so that I won't be making others jealous, but Christ will be the passion of my life. {186 Goal-Striving Prayer, Phil. 3:10-14}

As we wait for the Lord's return, we must pray (1) to be true to Him, (2) to be kept from sin, (3) to serve Christ faithfully, (4) to love one another, and (5) to anticipate His return. If we eagerly anticipate Christ's return, it will influence all our thoughts, actions, and service. Lord, I wait eagerly for Your return from

heaven. My belief in Your return influences all I do and think. Amen.

Galatians 6

The Faith-Life Is a Brotherhood

[1]Lord, when I see a fellow Christian overtaken by sin, I will humbly try to get him on the right path. I will not feel superior to him, but will guard myself against all temptations. {403 Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer, Gal. 6:1} [2]I will bear the burden of other believers so I can obey Your commands. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8} [3]Lord, when people think they are important, but they are really nobody, they end up deceiving themselves. {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [4]May every one of us do our very best in all things, so we can have personal satisfaction. When we do something worthwhile, then we won't have to depend on the approval of others. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [5]Each of us is responsible for our faults and sins, for none of us is perfect. {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7}

We should attempt to restore a fellow brother "in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted" (6:1, KJV). We should pray for his restoration as we pray for ourselves to be strong in temptation. We should pray for the Holy Spirit to convict him of his sin and give him a desire to live a holy life. Lord, I pray for fallen believers that they may realize the seriousness of their sin and that they may have a desire to walk again in fellowship with You. Give me grace, wisdom, and tenderness to help them back to Yourself. Amen.

[6]Lord, those who teach the Word of God should be paid by those who learn from them. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [7]Lord, no one should be deceived by ignoring what You want them to do. Everyone will reap the kind of crop they sow. {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} [8]When someone sows to their sinful nature, their harvest will be death and destruction, but when they sow to the Holy Spirit, their harvest will be everlasting life. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} [9]I will not get tired of doing good things {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} because I will reap a good harvest if I don't give up. [10]I will do good to others every opportunity I have, especially to those in the household of faith. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Paul tells the Galatians not to sow to the flesh, but to the Holy Spirit. This is a picture of sowing seeds for a harvest. "Whatsoever a man soweth, that he shall also reap" (6:7, KJV). So when we please the Spirit, then we "shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting" (6:8). Lord, I will do the things written in the Scriptures, and I will seek to please the Holy Spirit. I want all the blessings of eternal life that You promise. Amen.

[11]Lord, Paul wrote with large letters because he had eye problems. {478 Testimony- Prayer,

Acts 22:3} [12]He warned the Galatians that the legalists were trying to become popular by getting them under the law. The legalists would be persecuted if they admitted that salvation comes only by the cross of Christ. {28 Avoid-Persecution Prayer, Acts 25:11} [13]Even the legalists who teach circumcision do not try to keep the rest of the law. The legalists want to boast that the Galatians were their disciples. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3}
[14]Lord, far be it for me to give glory except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. By the cross I have put to death—crucified—the world's attractions, and by the cross I have crucified my attraction to it. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20}

We have been crucified with Christ (a past action) so we identify with Christ to get the benefits of His death. Self-crucifixion is not something we do to ourselves. It is not starving ourselves of food, nor is it imprisoning ourselves in a cell or self-flagellation. We don't even nail ourselves to a physical cross thinking this is a way to identify with Christ's cross. The prayer of crucifixion is accepting all the accomplishments of Christ's death, namely, forgiveness of sins, redemption, justification, and reconciliation with God. Lord, thank You that Christ died for me and gave me all the benefits of salvation. I ask for all the power You have to help me overcome sin and live a holy life. Amen.

[15]Now, it doesn't make any difference if I have been circumcised. All that matters is my new desire to please You. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} [16]Lord, may Your peace and mercy be on all believers who live by the power of the Spirit and on all who belong to You. {187 God's Prosperity-Prayer, Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23} [17]Lord, Paul didn't want anyone to bother him with this issue any more. He had been persecuted enough with scars to prove it. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [18]Paul prayed for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be on the Galatian believers. {35 Benediction-Bless Prayer, Num. 6:24-26}

Ephesians

Ch 1: Your New Standing in Grace 1717
Ch 2: Your New Salvation 1719
Ch 3: Our New Place in the Church 1721
Ch 4: Walk Worthy of Your New Position 1722
Ch 5: Walk Worthy as Children of God 1725
Ch 6: Your Spiritual Warfare as a Believer 1726

EPHESIANS

Key Words: *Heavenly places* (Ephesians 2:6)

Key Verse: "And raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:6).

Theme: The book of Ephesians is the most impersonal letters of Paul because he wanted it read in other churches (Colossians 4:16 may refer to the book of Ephesians). He doesn't attempt to correct false doctrine or sinful living. Rather Paul emphasizes that Christ is "the head over all things to the church," which is "His body" (Eph. 1:22-23). The world has called the body of Christ the universal church, the mystical body, the triumphant church, the glorified church. The body of Christ contains all saved believers on earth (regardless of their denominational affiliations or lack of affiliation) and all believers in heaven who are "in Christ."

All believers walk among sin and temptation in their *state* on earth, but they *stand* perfect in heaven "in Christ." They are "in Christ" in the heavenlies because they *stand* in Christ at the right hand of God the Father. Because of this exalted *position* in the heavenlies, they should live godly in their *place* on earth.

Ephesians has a fourfold division: (a) Paul's greetings, 1:1-2; (b) the believer's wealth in the heavenlies "in Christ" (1:3-3:21); (c) the believer's walk and service (4:1-5:17); (d) spiritual warfare (5:18-6:23). *Lord, I only partly realize how wealthy I am in Christ. Open my eyes to see all the things You have done for me. Then help me to walk on this earth according to my standing in heaven. Then protect me from the evil one for I can't protect myself. Amen.*

Ephesians 1

Your New Standing in Grace

[1]Lord, Paul, Your ambassador, wrote this letter to believers in Ephesus who trusted You to give them spiritual victory in every part of their lives. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [2]I also want the same victory in Christ. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}

[3]Lord, I want grace that comes from You the Father, and from Jesus Christ, my Savior and Lord of my life. Bless me with every spiritual blessing that comes from heaven. {447

Spiritual-Blessing Prayer, Eph. 1:3} [4]Lord, thank You for choosing me in love before the creation of the universe so that I can be holy—set aside from sin and imperfection. You chose me to enter Your presence to worship and praise You. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [5]Lord, thank You for choosing me to be Your child according to Your plan of salvation. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [6]May I bring praise to You, Father, and commensurate with the glory You already have. Christ has made me accepted by You in the grace of Your love. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6}

[7]Lord, my sins are forgiven through the shedding of Christ's blood. {385 Propitiation Intercession-Prayer, 1 John 2:2} [8]This redemption comes by the greatness of Your grace that has been lavished on all believers. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [9]Lord, I praise You for the plan which You designed before Creation to accomplish Your will in my life and the life of every believer, {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} [10]so that everything in heaven and earth will come together for the salvation of the lost. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [11]Lord, I receive the great spiritual inheritance that You planned according to Your infinite purpose that You have for me and for each one who puts his trust in Your salvation. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [12]May I bring praise to You that is equal to glory You already have. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19}

[13]Lord, when I heard the message of Your truth—the gospel—that delivered me, {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [14]I put my trust in You and was sealed by the Holy Spirit who guaranteed my eternal life until I come into possession of it at the rapture or death and thus bring You glory. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [15]Lord, ever since I trusted in You, I've had a love for all of Your people. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6} [16]I have continually given thanks to You in my prayers, asking that You would give me full wisdom and understanding so I can have full knowledge of You. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}

Paul was continually thankful for everything God let him do, and for all the people he reached with the gospel. He prayed, "I...cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers" (1:16, KJV). Lord, give me a continuous attitude of gratitude for everything I have and for all that I am. May I never lose a positive appreciation for all that Christianity has done for me. Amen.

[17]Lord, I ask that You open the eyes of my heart to understand the hope to which You call me, {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4}

Paul prays that the Ephesians will have spiritual insight to know God better, and wisdom to direct their lives according to what they have learned about God. Lord, I want to know You better and understand Your plan for my life. Give me wisdom to live according to all I know. Amen.

[18]and to see the glorious riches of my inheritance that You have given me, {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}

Paul prays that the Ephesians will have great hope for the future because they have been saved. Lord, open my eyes to the power of hope that is mine because I belong to You. Amen.

[19]and to experience the greatness of Your power working in me. {185 Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer, Rom. 12:1} [20]It's the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at Your right hand, my heavenly Father, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

Paul prays for the Ephesians to have spiritual power available to them that comes from "His mighty power" (1:19, KJV). Lord, give me spiritual ability to do all the things for You that I want to do. It's not worldly power I want; I want Your power transforming me. Amen.

[21]far above earthly rulers, authorities, and power in this world or in the world to come. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [22]Lord, all things were put under Christ's feet and He was given authority over everything to benefit the church, {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [23]which is His body, the full expression of His life. Christ fills everything and Your presence is everywhere. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10}

Ephesians 2

Your New Salvation

[1]Lord, even when I was dead in my sins, You gave me spiritual life in Christ. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [2]Before I was a Christian, my life was influenced by the world, and I was tempted by satanic powers, and I was jerked around by the rebellious spirit of people around me. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [3]Lord, I confess I lived to fulfill the lust of the flesh, and self-advancement, and I was as rebellious as other people who are angry against You. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23}

The Christian should thank God that he is delivered from his depravity and sins. "In time past ye walked according to the course of this world" (2:2, KJV). That means the unsaved are controlled by evil spirits (v. 2) and inner evil desires (v. 3). Lord, I thank You for freeing me from the control of evil spirits and from my internal sinful nature. Thank You for the relief I find in Christ. Amen.

[4]By You, Lord, I am rich in mercy because of Your great love for me. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [5]When I was dead in sins, You made me alive with Christ—this is Your grace that saved me—{313 Mourning the Dead-Prayer, Gen. 23:1-3} [6]and You raised me up together with Christ, and You made me sit together with Christ in heavenly places. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3} [7]Then

in ages to come, You will continually show me the exceeding riches of Your grace through Christ Jesus. {193 Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer, Ps. 92:15}

The key thought in Ephesians is that Christians are placed in Christ in the heavenlies (2:6). That is their spiritual position before God while they continue to live on this earth. In the heavenlies (2:6, 3:9) means being (1) made alive in Christ (v. 5); (2) raised from spiritual death with Christ (v. 5); (3) seated with Christ (v. 6); and (4) shown the riches of God's grace. Lord, thank You for forgiveness of sin, and identification with Christ. Thank You for the riches I have in Christ. Amen.

[8]Lord, I am saved by grace because I put my faith in You; it was not my own doing, but Your gift to me. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [9]I cannot boast that I had anything to do with it. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} [10]You have made me what I am, a new person created in Christ Jesus to serve You by doing good works, which You planned for me to do. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

Christians don't deserve salvation because of their past sins (vv. 1-3, 11-13), but God gave them the greatest free gift of all—salvation. Then God equipped them to serve Him in good works. Lord, thank You for the gift of salvation. Because You have done everything for me, I will serve You. Amen.

[11]Lord, I remember that at one time I was a slave to my sinful desires—the Jews who circumcised their outward flesh were no better—because we were both separated from You, heavenly Father. [12]I was not a part of Your family, and I was not an heir to Your covenants but addicted to worldly pleasures, without hope, and without Your salvation. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [13]But now, Lord, I am united with the Lord Jesus Christ. I was far away but now I am one with Christ by His death which gave me Your peace which brought me along with all other believers into His body. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [14]It was Christ's physical death that tore down the wall that separated people from You, the heavenly Father. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [15]Christ, Your death satisfied the legal charges against me, and brought all believers into union with Yourself, giving me the peace of God. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [16]Christ, by Your death on the cross, You united everyone into one body and brought us all back to the Father. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [17]Christ, You brought peace to those who were far away in rebellion and to those who were close but in self-righteous works. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [18]Only through You are we all able to come into the Father's presence by the Holy Spirit. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [19]Christ, those who once were rebellious in sin are no longer foreigners or strangers, but are fellow members of Your body with those who previously tried to

save themselves by keeping the law. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} [20]Both are now one building built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, the cornerstone being You Yourself. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [21]Christ, You hold the building together and make it grow. It is a sanctuary where Your presence dwells. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [22]Those who are Your followers are being built with other believers into a building—a sanctuary—where the Father lives by the Holy Spirit. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17}

The greatest part of salvation is that we are placed in Christ's body (1:23), also called a building and a sanctuary (2:21, 22). A sanctuary is where God dwells, so this means Christ comes to live in us. Lord, the greatest thing in my life is that Christ lives in me and I get to live for Him by my daily service. Amen.

Ephesians 3

Our New Place in the Church

[1]Lord, Paul became a prisoner of Rome because he was first captured by Christ, the Messiah of the Jews. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [2]Paul was given this special task of evangelizing the Gentiles, and he was arrested because he persisted in preaching to Gentiles. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [3]Lord, You gave Paul a revelation of his ministry to the Gentiles. [4]When other people understood Paul's new task, they understood the mystery of Christ, [5]which was not revealed in previous generations, but now by the Holy Spirit You have revealed this task to Paul and to Your apostles and prophets. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [6]Lord, in Your mysterious secret plan, You intended the Gentiles to share equally with the Jews in all spiritual riches that are available to Your children. The Jews and Gentiles are now one body in Christ. Now because of what You accomplished in Your sacrificial death, both are joint heirs and joint partakers of the same body—the church—because of their belief in the gospel. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [7]This is the message of grace that You gave to Paul to give to the world. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [8]Lord, Your message was given to Paul, the least deserving person in the world. Before Paul was saved, he blindly caused people to be put to death in his zeal to keep the Old Testament law. But You chose Paul to tell Gentiles about the spiritual treasures now available to them. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} [9]Paul was chosen to tell everyone Your mysterious secret plan that You the Creator had hidden from the beginning. Now the riches of Your plan are seen by all, that Jews and Gentiles are joined together in Your body, the church. [10]This plan was carried out through Your grace and now redemption is offered for all. Lord, Paul has suffered because of this truth. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} [11]I am not discouraged when I have to go through troubles and persecutions. [12]Rather I am honored and encouraged

that I can be a testimony to the truth. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 13Lord, because of my faith in You, I can come fearlessly into Your presence, knowing You will receive me and listen to my request. {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8}
14Lord, because everyone is accepted in You because of Christ, I fall on my knees before You, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} 15the Father, the Creator of heaven and earth, 16praying that Your power will give me inner strength through the Holy Spirit so that {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} 17Christ can make His home in my heart by faith and that I'll be rooted and grounded in His love. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17}

Paul prays that "He would grant you...to be strengthened with might by His Spirit in the inner man" (3:16, KJV). Isn't that what most of us need—inner strength? Lord, help me realize what You've done for me, and make me strong inwardly. Amen.

18Lord, I also pray for the ability to understand—as all of Your children should understand—how broad, how long, how high, and how deep is Your love. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 19Lord, I again pray to fully experience Your love—even though it is beyond understanding—so that I can be filled with all the fullness that comes only from You. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} 20Lord, I pray for You to work Your mighty power in me to do exceeding abundantly above all I dare to ask or think. {508 Unlimited-Prayer, Phil. 4:13} 21Now to You be all glory from ages to ages and forever! {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

Paul prays that his readers would completely understand Christ's love (v. 18). He says it is wide, high, long, and deep; and Christ's love goes beyond comprehension (v. 19). Lord, I want to know the unknowable, so do a miracle in me to remove spiritual blindness. Help me understand Your complete unselfish love for me, and break my heart because of my selfishness. Amen.

Ephesians 4

Walk Worthy of Your New Position

1Lord, I want to be Your prisoner, just as was Paul. Help me live a life worthy of the calling You have given me. Lord, {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 2I want to be humble, gentle, and patient with people, tolerating their faults; because of Your love for them and acceptance of them. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 3Help me preserve the unity of the Holy Spirit and live peaceably with other believers. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10}
4Lord, I recognize all believers are in one body, placed there by one baptism and we all have the same calling to the one same hope. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}

Paul exhorts us to be humble, gentle, patient, and to keep the unity of the Spirit. Lord, I want to be humble, gentle, and patient with people, tolerating their faults, because of Your love for them. Help me preserve the unity of the Spirit and live peaceably with others. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8} Amen.

5You are the One Lord over us, we share the same one faith, one baptism, 6and You are the only One God and Father who is in each of us, and lives through each of us. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}

7Lord, You have given a spiritual gift to each of us according to Your generous Spirit. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 8This is why the Scriptures say, "After You ascended up into the heights of heaven, You led those You captured, and gave spiritual gifts to all Your followers." {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} 9The phrase, "You ascended up" means You returned to heaven after You first came down to live and die on earth. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} 10Then You descended into the lower parts of the earth—hell—to lead Old Testament saints to heaven. Now You rule heaven and the entire universe. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 11Lord, You gave spiritual gifts to Your followers; some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some shepherd-teachers. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10}

12Their duty is to equip Your people to do Your work and build up the body, Your church, {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} 13until we all become united in faith and knowledge of Your will, so that each of us grows to full maturity, according to the standard You have set up. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} 14Lord, I know my standard is to become like Christ. Lord, I don't want to be like a child, always changing my mind about what I believe because someone tells me different things, or because someone misleads me. 15Instead, help me hold on to the truth in love, growing more like You every day, because You are the head of all of us, You are over the body in which we are members. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} 16Under Your direction, each part of the body will help others grow so that all of us become mature believers, and the whole body becomes mature in love for one another. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

Paul didn't want the Ephesians to be swayed by false doctrines or any other trick of satan to pull them from Jesus Christ. It's the same with us. We should be solid Christians. Lord, You gave spiritual gifts to Your followers; some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some shepherd-teachers. Their duty is to equip Your people to do Your work and build up the body, Your church. Lord, unite us in faith and knowledge of Your will, so that each of us grows to full maturity, according to the standard You have set up. Amen.

[17]Lord, I will no longer live the way the ungodly live, because they do not understand Your ways. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [18]Their minds are spiritually blinded and they are far away from You the Father because they have shut their minds to the truth and resisted Your will. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [19]They don't care about doing right but have given themselves to immorality. Their lives are filled with filthiness and greed. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [20]Lord, that is not the way You taught me to live. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [21]You told me to put off the old evil nature, because it is thoroughly filled with lust and lying. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [22]Lord, I will put away lying, and I will tell everyone the truth because we are related to one another in Your body. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [23]You told me to be spiritually renewed in my thoughts and attitudes so that {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [24]I put on the new nature which You created to be godly, righteous, and holy. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}

We must recognize we have an old nature that constantly tempts us to sin. Lord, You told me to put off the old evil nature, because it is thoroughly filled with lust and lying. You told me to be spiritually renewed in my thoughts and attitudes so that I put on the new nature which You created to be godly, righteous, and holy. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} ***Amen.***

[25]I will stop being angry and sinning against others, [26]and I will not let the sun go down on my wrath {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [27]because anger gives room for the enemy to get into my life. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [28]Lord, the thief must stop stealing and work for an honest living and then give to those who have needs. [29]Lord, the curser must stop using foul language. He must allow only good words to come from his mouth that are helpful to those who hear him. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [30]Lord, I will not give grief to the Holy Spirit by living a sinful life, because He has sealed me with the authority of His presence that will keep me until the final day of redemption. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [31]Lord, I will get rid of all bitterness, rage, name-calling, mean-spirited words and slander, along with spiteful retaliation. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [32]Instead, I will be kind to others, tenderhearted, forgiving others as You, Father, forgave me, because of Christ. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

The King James Version says, "Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God" (4:30). This means don't let sin lurk in our hearts, because the Holy Spirit wants us to be holy. Lord, I will not give grief to the Holy Spirit by living a sinful life, because He has sealed me with the authority of His presence that will keep me until the final day of redemption. {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22} ***Amen.***

Ephesians 5

Walk Worthy as Children of God

[1]Lord, I will follow You as a child follows his parents because I am Your child. [2]I will walk in love to others as Christ loved me and demonstrated it by giving Himself as a sweet and acceptable sacrifice to You, my Father. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4}

Because we are in the family of God, we must live as God's children. Lord, I will follow You as a child follows his parents because I am Your child. I will walk in love to others as Christ loved me and demonstrated it by giving Himself as a sweet and acceptable sacrifice to You. Amen.

[3]Lord, I will not be involved in sexual sins or dirty actions or greed because those things are contrary to godliness. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [4]Also I will not be known by filthy speech, foolish talking, and jesting, but I will be gracious in all things. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [5]Lord, I know there is no place in Your kingdom for those who are sexually addicted, nor for the filthy minded, nor for greedy people. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [6]No matter how much people excuse these sins, You, Father, will still punish them as You will all those who are disobedient. [7]Therefore I will not get involved in those things. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Because our old nature always pulls us away from God, we should pray to be pure. Lord, I will not be involved in sexual sins or dirty actions or greediness because those things are contrary to godliness. Also, I will not be known by filthy speech, foolish talking and jesting, but I will be gracious in all things. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16} Amen.

[8]Lord, in the past I walked in darkness, but now that I have Your light I will walk in it. [9]Lord, I want the fruit of the Spirit in my life; I want to be good and do what is right, and tell the truth [10]so I can be acceptable to You. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [11]Lord, I will not have anything to do with the works of darkness; rather I will expose them. [12]Remember it is shameful to speak of the things people do in secret. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [13]But when light shines on them, their deeds are clearly revealed for what they are. [14]This is why it is said, "Awake, sleeper, get up from the dead, and Christ will give you light." [15]Therefore, Lord, I will be careful how I live my life, not as a fool but as a wise person. {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} [16]I will use my time wisely because these are evil days. [17]I will not be foolish, but will try to understand Your will for my life. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17}

Paul tells the Ephesians to "understand what the will of the Lord is" (5:17, KJV). Since God has a plan for our lives, we should pray to find His will or plan for how we

should live. Lord, I will be careful how I live my life, not as a fool but as a wise person. I will use my time wisely because these are evil days. I will not be foolish, but will try to understand Your will for my life. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} Amen.

[18]Lord, I won't drink wine because I will lose control of myself. Instead I will let the Holy Spirit continually fill me and control me. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}

We should not let alcoholic beverages control our body, but we must let the Spirit of God control us. Lord, I will let the Holy Spirit continually fill me and control me. Then I'll sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with other believers, making music in my heart to You. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} Amen.

[19]Then I'll sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs with other believers, making music in my heart to You. {230 Hymn-Prayer, Col. 3:16} [20]Lord, I will continually give thanks for everything to You, the Father, in the name of my Lord Jesus Christ. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2} [21]Lord, I will submit myself to other believers out of reverence to You.
[22]I know wives should submit to their own husbands, just as they do to You. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [23]For the husband is the head of the wife, just as Christ is the head of the body and is its Savior. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [24]Just as the body submits to Christ as its head, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[25]Lord, husbands should love their wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave His life to make it holy and clean, through washing of the Word of God. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [26]Christ did this to make the church glorious, without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [27]Husbands should love their wives as they love their bodies, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [28]because a man is actually looking out for himself when he loves his wife. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [29]No one hates his body. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} [30]On the contrary, a man will feed and care for his body just as Christ cares for His body, the church. [31]Lord, the Scriptures teach that a man should leave his father and mother to be joined to his wife and the two become one. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [32]This is a great mystery, but it illustrates the relationship between Christ and the church. [33]So each man must love his wife the way he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

Ephesians 6

Your Spiritual Warfare as a Believer

[1]Lord, children should obey their parents because they belong to You for this is what You want them to do. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [2]One of the Ten

Commands has a promise stating, "Honor your father and mother [3]so that it will go well with you and you will live a long and prosperous life." {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [4]Lord, You don't want fathers to irritate their children, because it makes them resentful. Rather, You want fathers to bring them up with positive discipline that You approve. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1}

[5]Lord, You want workers to obey and respect their employers, and fear displeasing their bosses, just as they would fear displeasing You. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]They shouldn't work hard just to "butter up the boss" when he's watching. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [7]They should put passion into their work as though working for You, {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [8]because You will reward everyone for their good service, whether they're a boss or a worker. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [9]Bosses must treat their workers right, and not threaten them because both bosses and employees work for You, and You have no favorites. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}

[10]Lord, I will be strong in Your power {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [11]and put on all the spiritual armor so I can stand against the deceptive strategy of the enemy. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [12]I am not fighting against humans who have flesh and blood, but against evil powers, authorities, and demons of the unseen world, and I'm struggling against the mighty powers of darkness and their tricks. I'm fighting against filthy spirits who influence this world from their ethereal realm. {528 Warfare-Prayer, Rev. 12:7} [13]Lord, I'll use every piece of Your armor so that when evil comes, I'll be able to resist and win the battle. {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [14]With Your help, I'll stand in battle with Your truth buckled around my waist. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [15]I'll cover my chest with the armor of righteousness, and I'll wear the shoes of peace that come from the good news of the gospel. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [16]I'll carry the shield of faith to stop all the arrows and fiery darts of satan. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [17]I'll wear the protective helmet of salvation and I'll protect myself with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12}

[18]Lord, I will pray at all times, with every type of intercession and spiritual warfare. I will pray persistently and boldly for all Christians everywhere. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17}

[19]Lord, I will pray for those who minister for You so they will have boldness and the right words to proclaim the message of the good news of the gospel. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [20]This was Paul's request and the reason why he was in chains in Rome. Just as Paul prayed for strength to keep on sharing the gospel, that is my prayer for me and for all Your servants. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8}

Paul tells the Ephesians to pray for him (6:19), as he prays for them (1:16-21, and

3:14-19). Lord, I will pray for others, just as I want them to pray for me. I will pray for their victory over sin, their influence in the world, their growth and their fellowship with You. Amen.

[21]Lord, Tychicus delivered this letter to the saints in Ephesus and told them all about Paul [22]so they would be encouraged. [23]Lord, I want Your peace ruling my heart, and so give me a deep love to live for You. [24]I want Your grace in my life and on all those who love You deeply with an enduring love. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Philippians

Ch 1: Paul's Confidence in Spite of Suffering 1730
Ch 2: Christ, the Pattern for Believers 1732
Ch 3: Christ, the Object of the Believers' Desire 1734
Ch 4: Christ, the Believers' Strength 1736

PHILIPPIANS

Key Words: *Joy or Rejoice* (Philippians 2:2)

Key Verse: "Rejoice in the Lord always. Again I will say, rejoice! Let your gentleness be known to all men. The Lord *is* at hand. Be anxious for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known to God; and the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus" (Phil. 4:4-7).

Theme: Paul exhorts the Christian to live triumphantly for God. He says, "For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain" (Phil. 1:21). He writes joyfully as Nero's prisoner facing death, yet he expresses joy (4:4) and peace (4:7) and he is not anxious about anything (4:6). Paul knows that death (1:22-24) means entrance into heaven, but he also realizes he can serve God while he remains alive. But Paul warns against attempting to drift into heaven. He wants his believers to know Christ more intimately while on earth (3:10) and that he will strive to do all he can for God while on this earth (3:14). *Lord, may I follow Paul's example to do all I can to serve You while I live on this earth. Amen.*

Philippians 1

Paul's Confidence in Spite of Suffering

[1]Lord, Paul and Timothy considered themselves Your slaves. I too will be Your slave, for You are my Master. They wrote to all the saints and church leaders at Philippi, {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} [2]greeting them with Your grace and peace. [3]Paul thanked God for their salvation and godly life, and in the same way {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [4]I am grateful for my salvation and I rejoice in opportunities to pray for my family and friends {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} [5]because of their partnership in helping me proclaim the good news from the very first until now. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [6]Lord, I know that You who began the good work of salvation will continue it in me until the day You return. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [7]You are always on my mind and in my heart, so it is only right that I have this confidence. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [8]Lord, You have given me the privilege of serving You both in difficult circumstances and good days, and this deep assurance comes only from Your heart, O Christ Jesus, my Savior. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1}

Paul uses the word "joy" or "rejoicing" 17 times in Philippians, reflecting his happiness when writing to these believers. There were no doctrinal or moral problems he had to confront. Also this was a church that supported him with prayer and money. He calls them "my joy" (4:1), just as a father gets joy from his children. Lord, teach me to rejoice in the victories and growth of other believers, whether or not I led them to Christ. My greatest joy in life is to lead someone to Christ and see him grow to maturity. Amen.

9Lord, I pray that my love of family and friends will keep growing and that they will grow in true knowledge and perfect understanding of You, {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3}10so they will always make the best choices and live pure and blameless lives. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1}

Paul prayed that the love of the Philippians would "abound yet more and more" (1:9), so that what was in their hearts would flow in tangible deeds to others. Lord, give me a growing love for others and show me ways to let my love flow into their lives. Amen.

11I want them filled with all the good qualities that only You can produce in them; I pray this for Your glory and praise.

Paul prayed that the Philippians would be "filled with the fruits of righteousness" (1:11, KJV). Even though they were serving Christ, Paul wanted even more fruit in their lives, so he prays accordingly. Lord, I ask for more fruitful Christian character, and more fruit from my service for You. Amen.

12Lord, may my family and friends understand what You have done in my heart that makes me share the gospel with others. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 13All those about me know that I am Your slave, and {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 14this has given me boldness to serve You and to spread Your message without fear. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} 15Lord, I know some preach the message of Christ out of jealousy or competition, but others preach out of a pure heart. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 16Still others preach Christ for the wrong motives, doing it out of selfish pride. 17But others are motivated by Your love because You have given all of us this task. {238 Inappropriate Motives-Prayer, James 4:2-3} 18I don't care what their motives are just so long as You, Christ, are preached. Whether You are preached from right or wrong motives, I will rejoice and continue rejoicing, {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 19because I know You will use the message to set many free. {110 Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer, Ps. 18:6}

20Lord, it is my earnest desire and hope that I will never embarrass You, but that with all boldness as always You will be magnified in my body whether by life or death. {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} 21Lord, my passion is to live for You, O Christ, and if I die, it will be my gain. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

[22]If I go on living in this body, I will still continue serving You. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} [23]So I am not sure which option to choose because I want to leave this body to be with You which seems the best choice for me. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [24]But if I stay in this body to serve You, I can still accomplish much for You. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} [25]So, I am sure that if I stay and continue my ministry, I can further Your work in many believers. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} [26]Lord, I pray that my family and friends will continue living for You, and that whether I remain on this earth or die, [27]they remain firm in their faith in the gospel.

[28]Lord, I pray they will not be afraid of their enemies, {52 Boldness Request in Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:8} but will be courageous in Your care; because the testimony of my family and friends will convict their enemies of their sin and make them aware of perdition. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [29]Lord, You have given all of us the privilege of believing in You, but also suffering on Your behalf. My family and friends are both in the same struggle {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}— [30]what I fight, they also fight.

Philippians 2

Christ, the Pattern for Believers

[1]Lord, I want the same harmony for believers today that Paul wanted for the Philippians. Many believers have one purpose in life because we all belong to Christ, and we are encouraged by His love, and we have fellowship with the Holy Spirit. [2]You have made our hearts tender and compassionate, {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} as we have a common purpose to glorify Jesus Christ, and to love one another and work together to serve Him. [3]Lord, help me keep egotistical desires out of the picture, and keep me from selfishness. Help me regard others as better than myself, and keep me from thinking only of my agenda. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [4]Help me be interested in others and not just my own affairs. {381 Priority-Praying, Acts 6:4}

Paul exhorts the Philippians to be humble and think of others, rather than thinking only about themselves. "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be likeminded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind" (2:2, KJV). Paul reminds them to be humble, "Let nothing be done through strife or vain glory; but in lowliness of mind let each esteem other better than themselves. Look not every man on his own things, but every man also on the things of others" (vv. 3-4, KJV). Lord, I know my weaknesses and sinful nature, so I know I am nothing, but Christ is everything. I will think of the good things others do, and I will pray for them. Amen.

[5]Lord, I want the same attitude toward others as Jesus showed by His example of humility. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} [6]Even though Jesus was God He did not make exceptions for Himself because of His deity. [7]On the contrary,

Jesus emptied Himself and took on human flesh and became a servant. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} 8He humbled Himself even more: by becoming obedient to death and dying as a criminal on the cross. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18}

To be humble, the Christian must have the same attitude as Christ. Paul told them, "Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: But made Himself of no reputation, and took upon Him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men" (2:5-7, KJV). Because Jesus came to serve others, we should not think more highly of ourselves than we should, but give our lives for others. Lord, thank You for the example of servanthood in Jesus, He came to serve others and I'll do the same; I'll serve others. I'll be like Jesus and make Him my example in thought and deed. Amen.

9Therefore You raised Jesus to the highest possible position and gave Him a name above every name. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 10So that at the name of Jesus, every knee will bow in heaven, earth, and under the earth, {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 11and every tongue will declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to Your glory, O Father. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Because Jesus gave Himself in death for others, God raised Him from the dead and exalted Him above every name. In the future, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (2:10-11, KJV). Lord, I join all angels and believers to worship Jesus Christ for what He has done for me and all believers of all ages. He is not only the Lord of the universe, He is also my Lord. Amen.

12Lord, Paul reminded the Philippians that they followed his instructions when he was with them. Now he wants them to be just as obedient while he is away from them, because their reverence and fear demonstrates to everyone their salvation. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 13Lord, give me a deeper desire to serve You just as You gave the Philippians the power to please You. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 14I will do all things without murmuring and complaining, 15so that I will be a blameless child of God in the eyes of all who live in a crooked evil world. May I shine as a light to them all.

Help me do everything without griping or complaining so that I have a blameless and faultless testimony to all. Help me live a clean life as Your child so I'm a light in a dark and lawless world. Amen.

16Lord, help me share with others the Words of life so that I'll be faithful until Christ returns. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} Lord, help me run my

race victoriously so that my works will not become useless.
17Even if I die a martyr's death like Paul, I will rejoice in this opportunity. 18May other believers rejoice with me if I have the privilege of dying for You. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
19Lord, Paul wanted to send Timothy to the Philippians to find out how they were getting along. That would encourage Paul 20because Timothy was Paul's trusted helper who put other people's interests ahead of his own. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} 21Lord, Paul was grateful for Timothy who was like a son to him and he wanted the same things Paul wanted. 22Timothy demonstrated his godly character when he sacrificed with Paul for the gospel. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} 23Paul told them as soon as his affairs in Rome were settled, he would send Timothy to them, 24and then he planned to visit them in Philippi.
25Lord, Paul also wanted to send Epaphroditus back to the Philippians. He had brought money to Paul from them. {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 26Paul was concerned because the Philippians heard Epaphroditus was sick and had almost died. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} 27But God had mercy and he lived. Paul said that his death would have been an unthinkable burden. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} 28Lord, Paul was eager to send Epaphroditus back to them because the Philippians wanted to see him. 29"Welcome him with Christian love," Paul said. {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} 30Epaphroditus had almost died doing for Paul the things the Philippians couldn't do for Paul because they were so far away.

Philippians 3

Christ, the Object of the Believers' Desire

1Lord, whatever happens in my life—whether good or bad—I want to rejoice in Your provision for me, just as Paul never got tired of rejoicing in Your provision for him. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
2Lord, keep me safe from the pressures of mean-spirited legalists who bite at me like a dog. They want everyone to keep the law to be saved. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} 3Lord, I have the true circumcision of the heart and I worship You in the Holy Spirit, and I rejoice in Christ Jesus. Lord, Paul had better qualifications than all the legalists, so Paul could have been the best of all strict legalists. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 4But Paul put confidence not in the flesh but in Your grace. 5Lord, Paul was born a Jew into the tribe of Benjamin, circumcised on the eighth day. Paul spoke Hebrew, kept the law as a Pharisee, and he persecuted believers. 6Everyone considered Paul blameless. Lord, just as Paul considered the perfections of his legalism as unimportant, help me realize the law is useless to give me intimate fellowship with Christ. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

Paul described his zeal for self-righteousness before he was saved (3:4-6), but keeping the law didn't make him righteous. His

passion—"That I may know Him"—should be the desire of every believer. Paul testifies, "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord" (v. 8). Lord, I want to know You more intimately. May Your passion flow through my life for others. Amen.

7Lord, just as Paul gave up everything for Christ, I also count everything loss to have intimate fellowship with Christ. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 8Yes, Lord, I give up everything for the knowledge of Christ {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} and I no longer treasure them because Christ has become my treasure. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 9Lord, I am now united in Christ, not having my righteousness based on legalism, but based on faith to receive Christ's righteousness. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}
10Lord, I want to experience Christ and the power of His resurrection. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} I want to know what it means to suffer with Christ, and to share spiritually in His death, and eventually be resurrected from the dead. 11Lord, I have not yet reached the goal of Christ, but I keep pursuing it, so I can become the Christ-dominated person for which You originally pursued me. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Lord, thank You for the privilege and strength for everything I've accomplished in the past. But that's behind me. I will build on my past and reach out to do more in the future. Amen.

12Lord, I know I have not attained the goal, and I do not consider my life perfect. 13But I focus my entire energies on this one thing: I daily forget past accomplishments and failures and look forward to what lies ahead. 14I keep giving all my energy to win the prize of Your upward calling to me in Christ Jesus. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} 15Allow me to have this attitude, and if You think otherwise, reveal this to me. 16Lord, all spiritual believers should be doing the same thing, but many are not pursuing Christ. Show them what they should do. Everyone must live at the level they've learned and obey the truth they know. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18}
17Lord, help me follow the example of Paul and learn from the pattern he set for all believers. 18There are many who live as enemies of Christ, as Paul told us. 19They are walking toward destruction, and their belly is their god. They are proud of their sin when they should be ashamed of their lifestyle. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 20Lord, I am a citizen of heaven and I wait for my Savior, Jesus Christ, to come take me there. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} 21Then He will transform my finite body to be like His glorious body with the same power He will use to conquer everything on earth. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}

Philippians 4
Christ, the Believers' Strength

[1]Lord, Paul wanted to see his friends in Philippi that he had won to Christ because they were the fruit of his work. Lord, just as Paul prayed for the Philippians to remain loyal to You, may I stay true to You in my faith. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [2]Lord, Paul begged Euodia and Syntyche to settle their disagreement and be of one focus in serving You. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [3]Then Paul asked the church to work with these women and with Clement to spread the gospel. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14}
[4]Lord, I rejoice gladly in all Your goodness, So always keep me filled with Your joy. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}

Paul wants the Philippians to be happy in their Christian faith (4:4) and live daily for Christ in light of His soon coming (v. 5). He told them, "Be anxious for nothing" (v. 6), but "let your requests be made known unto God" (v. 6). This is a picture of God's child bowing in prayer to tell the heavenly Father about every anxiety and worry in his or her life. Lord, teach me to pray instead of worrying about things. I've done all I can about the problem. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} Now work out all the details to Your glory. Amen.

[5]Let my gentleness and goodness be evident to all because Christ may come at any moment. [6]Lord, I won't worry about anything, {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} but I'll pray to You about everything, and I'll be thankful for all things that happen. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [7]Then Your peace will guard my heart and mind because the presence of Christ Jesus in my life surpasses anything that I could ever understand. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Paul gives us four prayer words that will guard our thoughts from anxiety and worry. First, "everything by prayer." The word for prayer is proseuchomai, meaning "toward God's face." It has the idea of fellowship with God. When God's Word tells us to pray about everything, we ought to do it. Second, "supplication" is a specific petition focusing on our need. Third, the word "thanksgiving" means we must be thankful for the privilege of speaking to God and we must be grateful for all requests that He answers. The fourth word "ask" is aito which means" to request." Remember, we have not because we ask not (James 4:2). When we pray about our anxieties in these four different ways God "shall keep your hearts and minds" (Phil. 4:7, KJV). Lord, I come to You with questions and anxieties. Hear my requests and grant me peace in heart and mind. Amen.

[8]Lord, I'll constantly meditate on whatever things are true, {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} whatever things are honorable, whatever things are right, whatever things are pure, whatever things are lovely, whatever things contribute to my having a good reputation for You. {456

Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [9]Lord, I'll keep doing in my daily life the things that Paul does in his life; then You, the God of peace, will be with me. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [10]Lord, Paul was thankful the Philippians had not quit expressing concern for him and sending money for his ministry. {362 Praise for God's Care, Eph. 3:20-21} [11]Paul did not say this to ask for more money, but to let them know his appreciation. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [12]Lord, I'm like Paul, satisfied with what I have. I have experienced poverty, {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} and on other occasions, I've had more than enough. I've learned in every way and in every place, to be satisfied with what I have, whether I am full or hungry, whether I have abundance or poverty. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [13]Lord, I can do all things through Christ who gives me the help to get it done. {508 Unlimited-Prayer, Phil. 4:13}

Paul claims, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (v. 13, KJV). We are limited by our own strength and weak faith, but we are unlimited when we are related to Christ, who can do all things. The key is relationship, and isn't prayer a relationship with God? When we are properly related to Christ, we will not pray about impossible things conceived by our selfish ambitions. Also we will not limit ourselves by small things, because of weak faith. We will pray properly when we relate properly to our strength in Christ. Lord, I will trust You for big things because You want Your servants to do big things in this world. Keep me from praying in the flesh for things too big or too small. I will seek to pray properly. Amen.

[14]Nevertheless Paul thanked them for their gift to him that helped him through his present difficulty. [15]Lord, Paul thanked the Philippians for sharing in his ministry, reminding them that they were the only ones who sent money in his early ministry. {482 Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer, Ps. 105:1}[16]Even in Thessalonica they sent money more than once. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6} [17]Lord, Paul reminded them again he was not asking for more money, but he was telling them that their gift will bring them rewards through his ministry for Christ. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [18]Paul told them he had no needs because of the gifts they sent by Epaphroditus. It was a sweet-smelling aroma that pleased God. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [19]Lord, I want You to care for my financial needs, the same way You took care of Paul from Your glorious riches in Christ Jesus.

[20] Glory be to You, my God, my heavenly Father, forever and ever. [21]Lord, Paul sent greetings to all the Philippians from all the fellow workers with him. [22]Then he sent greetings from all the Christians in Rome, especially those who had been saved in the emperor's household. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} [23]Lord, I want the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to rest on me. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Colossians

Ch 1: The Prayer for Believers and the Preeminence of Christ 1739
Ch 2: Warning against False Wisdom and Legalism 1741
Ch 3: Our Heavenly Union with Christ Determines Our Daily Walk 1743
Ch 4: Earnest Prayer 1745

COLOSSIANS

Key Word: *Preeminence* (Colossians 1:18).

Key Verse: "And Christ is the head of the body, the church; Christ is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things Christ may have the preeminence" (Col. 1:18, ELT).

Theme: In Colossians Paul wrote a lofty passage in praise of Jesus Christ (1:15-20). Epaphras, who served in the church at Colosse, came to tell Paul about the church while Paul was a prisoner in Rome. The church was rich, yet Paul warns of some subtle errors at work in the church. First, was legalism, "do not touch, do not taste" (2:21), and Judaistic observance of days (2:16). Second, there was false mysticism, "intruding into those things which he has not seen" (2:18). Third, some were involved in the "worship of angels" (2:18). Fourth, there was philosophic speculation: "Beware lest anyone cheat you through philosophy and empty deceit" (2:8). *Lord, keep me straight in thinking and practice. I will walk in fellowship with Christ, just as when I received Him as my Savior. Amen.*

Colossians 1

The Prayer for Believers and the Preeminence of Christ

[1]Lord, Paul was led by God [2]to write to the Colossian believers with Timothy using his authority as an apostle to remind them of the greatness of the indwelling Christ and to warn them of some new doctrinal problems springing up among them.

[3]Lord, Paul gave thanks for the Colossian believers [4]from the first time he heard about their salvation, and for their new expressions of love for all the saints. Lord, use the testimony of my salvation to encourage others, just as You used the testimony of the Colossians to bless others. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [5]Lord, I am looking forward to the promise of heaven! This pledge was mine the moment I first believed, just as it guarantees the same hope to others who believe. Lord, the gospel is the power that is transforming my life and all other lives everywhere. [6]This good news is given out all over the world, changing lives, {179 Fruitful-Prayer, Matt. 13:8} just as it transformed the Colossians.

Lord, may You always deal with me in grace as Paul prayed for Your grace on the Colossians. And may You give me peace that comes from You, my God and Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} *Amen.*

7Lord, Paul reminded the Colossians that Epaphras faithfully brought the gospel to them. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} Now Epaphras was their representative helping Paul in Rome. 8As a matter of fact, Epaphras was the one who told Paul about the strengths and problems of the new church at Colosse. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}
9Lord, raise up intercessors to pray for me as Paul continually prayed for the Colossians. {373 Praying about Prayer, Matt. 6:5-13} Lord, I pray for a total understanding of Your will and what You want me to do with my life. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} I pray for spiritual wisdom to make decisions that will honor and please You. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

Paul asks that the Colossians may be "filled with the knowledge of His will in all wisdom" (1:9, KJV). Having God's wisdom to know what to do is the first step to walking with the Lord. Lord, I will learn as much as I can about the Scriptures, so I will walk wisely for You. Amen.

10I pray to continually do good things for others, for this is Your command to me. {543 Worthy-Praying, Rev. 4:11} I pray to know You more intimately so I can enjoy fellowship with You. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} 11I pray to be strengthened with spiritual power {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} so I can endure with patience from You. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 12I pray to be filled with joy so I'll always be thankful for the spiritual inheritance You've given me. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} 13I'm grateful You have rescued me from the kingdom of satanic darkness and delivered me into the kingdom of Christ. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 14I praise You for the freeing power of Christ's blood that has forgiven me all my sins.

The Preeminence of Christ

15Christ, I see You as the perfect reflection of the Father who cannot be seen. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} Christ, You existed before the Father created all things, and You are supreme over all things. 16Christ, You created everything in heaven and earth, You created the things we can see, and the things we can't see. Christ, everything has been created by You and for You, including kings, kingdoms, rulers, and authorities. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 17Christ, You existed before all things were created; now Your power holds creation together. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} 18Christ, You are the head of the church which is Your living spiritual body. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} Christ, You were the first to rise from the dead; You are first in

everything. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50}
19Christ, all the fullness of God lives and dwells in You. 20Christ, by You God the Father reconciled all things to Himself. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} Christ, by the blood of Your cross God the Father in heaven made peace with everything in heaven and on earth. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}
21Christ, You brought me back as a friend when I was far, far away as Your enemy by my evil thoughts and sinful actions. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 22Christ, You brought me into the very presence of the Father by the sacrifice of Your body on the cross. Christ, I now have access to the Father's presence because in Your sight I am holy, blameless, and pure. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 23Christ, I completely believe this truth about You and I base my faith on it. Christ, I will not drift away from this assurance for this good news that has saved me has also been preached all over the world. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}
24Paul was happy to suffer for the believers in Colosse because he identified with Christ's sufferings, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} and through Christ's sufferings others are brought to saving faith. 25Paul was given the commission to spread the gospel to all Gentiles, {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} 26a message that was not known by them in past generations and centuries, but now has been revealed to them that the riches and blessings of Christ are for them also. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18}
27Christ, I rejoice greatly in the truth, that Christ lives in me, my hope of glory. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 28I share this message of You with all people so that all believers may become perfect in You. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} 29Christ, I am motivated to serve You {464 Striving-Prayer, Rom. 15:30} because You energize the Father's work within me. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

Colossians 2

Warning against False Wisdom and Legalism

1Lord, Paul interceded for believers in other churches, even though he had not seen them. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} Paul prayed the following request for them. This is the same that I pray for those I know and for the larger body of Christ.
2Lord, I pray that they may be encouraged, and that they will experience strong ties of love to one another. I pray that they may have a full understanding of how Your mystery will work in their lives so they can live confidently for Christ. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} 3I pray that they may understand the treasures of wisdom that are hidden only in Christ. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}
4Lord, may no one deceive me with cunning arguments that anyone is the wisdom of God; I know that only Christ is the wisdom of God. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 5Lord, Paul was happy that the Colossian believers were living as they should and their faith was

steadfastly rooted in Christ. {319 New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, 2 Thess. 1:3} 6Lord, may I always continue to obey Christ Jesus, my Lord, just as I did when I first believed in Him. 7May I be rooted in the faith, and nourished by Christ so I'll grow strong in my Christian life, and may I always be thankful for what Christ has done for me. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}

Paul's admonition to the Colossians was, "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in Him" (2:6, KJV). Notice the threefold names in this verse: first, "Christ" represents His work on the cross for our salvation; second, "Jesus" represents His humanity, that He was born of a virgin, and grew to manhood; third, "the Lord" represents His deity. He is fully God the Son who intercedes for us at the right hand of God the Father. Lord, may I always continue to obey Christ Jesus, my Lord, just as I did when I first believed in Him. May I be rooted in the faith, and nourished by Christ so I'll grow strong in my Christian life, and may I always be thankful for what Christ has done for me. Amen.

8Lord, Paul warned the Colossians against those who would lead them astray by human logic or deceitful theories {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} that come from depraved thinking or evil principles of the world. Paul reminded them that such "teaching" didn't come from Christ. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} 9Lord, Paul reminded the Colossians that Your fullness—the fullness of the Godhead—lived in Christ's human body, 10and that only when a believer was indwelt by Christ could he experience Your full understanding and leadership. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19}

Paul reminded the Colossians that Christ's fullness—the fullness of the Godhead—lived in His human body, and that only when a believer was indwelt by Christ could he experience Christ's full wisdom and leadership. Lord, I yield to Your will and I seek Your wisdom, for only through Your lordship in my life can I understand Your plan and accomplish Your will for my life. Amen.

11Lord, when I came to salvation in Christ, I was circumcised—set apart—in my heart. This was not a physical procedure, but I was spiritually set apart from satisfying my sinful nature so that I might please Christ Jesus. 12I was identified with Christ's death when I was spiritually baptized into Christ, {30 Baptized-Praying, Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12} and I was raised with Christ to new life by the same power that brought Him from the dead. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 13Lord, I was dead in my rebellious sins against You, being controlled by my sinful nature; but You forgave all my sins. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 14You wiped my record clean of all the charges against me, and forgave them by nailing them to Christ's cross. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 15Now evil

powers have no authority over me because Christ publicly triumphed over sin by His victory on the cross. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

We get our spiritual victory through the power of Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. We triumph over sin because He triumphed over sin. Lord, I was dead in my rebellious sins against You, being controlled by my sinful nature, but You forgave all my sins. You wiped my record clean of all the charges against me, and forgave them by nailing them to Christ's cross. Now evil powers have no authority over me, because Christ publicly triumphed over sin by His victory on the cross. Amen.

16Lord, because I am completely forgiven, no one can condemn me for what I eat or drink, or for not celebrating holy days or Sabbaths. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 17These Old Testament rules were only a shadow of coming things; they pointed us to Christ who fulfilled these rules.

18Lord, I'll not let anyone cheat me of my relationship with Christ, even when they insist on self-denial or worship of angels, for they are puffed up by their deceitful insight. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} 19They are not united with Christ, the head of the body, for He nourishes all believers into a vital union that grows together by Your nourishment. {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}

20Lord, since I have died together with Christ to be separated from this sinful world, {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} why would I subject myself to worldly regulations, claiming 21"do not taste, touch, or handle"? {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 22These are merely human rules that mean nothing, 23even though these rules seem "right" because they demand self-denial and humility. But they never help me triumph over my evil thoughts and desires because victory comes only through the person of Christ. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20}

Colossians 3

Our Heavenly Union with Christ Determines Our Daily Walk

1Lord, since I have been raised to new life in Christ, I will control my thinking by the principles of heaven where Christ is sitting at Your right hand in the seat of honor and influence. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 2I will think on things in heaven and not be controlled by things on this earth {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} 3because I died when Christ died and my new life is hidden by You in Christ. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 4Then when Christ appears to the whole world, I will appear with Him in glory. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

We have been united with Christ by His death; therefore we are "one" with Him.

We don't lose our separate identity in that union, but we are indwelt by Christ (3:15-16; Gal. 2:20). Lord, since I have been raised to new life in Christ, I will control my thinking by the principles of heaven where Christ is sitting at Your right hand in the seat of honor and influence. I will think on things in heaven and not be controlled by things on this earth. I died when Christ died and my new life is in Christ. Then when Christ appears to the whole world, I will appear with Him in glory. Amen.

5Lord, I will put to death any sinful desire—my sexual lust, filthiness, evil desires, and greed which is idolatry. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 6These are the vices You punish in those who are rebellious against You. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 7I used to be guilty of these things when my life was controlled by the world. 8But now that I have Christ dwelling in my life, I will get rid of anger, rebellious behavior, slander, and filthy language. {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} 9I will not lie to anyone, for I have turned away from my old nature with its sinful urges. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} 10I have turned to my new nature that You continually renew within me, as I learn more and more about Christ. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} 11Lord, all new believers in Christ can be controlled by their new nature, whether they are Jews, or Gentiles, whether they are circumcised or not, whether they are barbarian, civilized, slave, or free. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} Christ is the only power that can control a life because He lives in all believers. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} 12Lord, since You chose me to live a holy life, I will clothe myself with mercy, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 13I recognize that some believers let these sins disrupt their lives, so I will forgive their trespasses as You forgave me. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4} 14Lord, love is the most important attitude I can put on because love makes me one with all other believers. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} 15Also I want Your peace to control my heart because all believers are called to live in peace. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 16Lord, I want the rich words of Christ to live in my heart so that I have His wisdom to teach and correct other believers. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} I want to sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to you with a thankful heart. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} 17May everything I say and everything I do be expressed in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} giving thanks to You my heavenly Father. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

When we were saved, Christ came to live in our lives (3:15-16). Lord, I want Your peace to control my heart because You called me to live in peace. I want the rich words of Christ to live in my heart so that I have Your wisdom to guide my life. I want to sing psalms,

hymns, and spiritual songs to You with a thankful heart. Amen.

18Lord, wives must submit to their husbands because this is what You desire of them. 19Husbands must love their wives and never be mean to them. {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} 20Children must always obey their parents, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} for this pleases You. 21Fathers must not provoke their children to anger because they will become discouraged and give up. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}

22Servants must obey their earthly bosses in everything {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} not just when they are watching. They must obey from the heart because that pleases You. 23Lord, I will do everything with my whole heart because I am working to please You, and not men. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16}

Lord, may everything I say and do bring glory to the Lord Jesus Christ, giving thanks to You, my heavenly Father. I will do everything with my whole heart because I am working to please You and not men. Amen.

24Then You will give me an inheritance as a reward, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} 25and those who do wrong will be repaid for their rebellion because You will not let anyone get away with sin. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4}

Colossians 4

Earnest Prayer

1Lord, masters who direct servants must be kind and fair just as You our Master in heaven treats us.

2Lord, I will give myself continually to prayer, {88 Continue in Prayer, Luke 11:8-10} always remembering to be thankful. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 3I will pray for Your ministers to have opportunities to preach the message of Christ {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} (this is the reason Paul was in chains.) 4I will pray that ministers will preach the gospel as clearly as they can. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30}

Paul asks the Colossians to pray for him: "Continue in prayer." At the beginning Paul prayed for them (1:3, 9-12). This fulfills the promise of Christ, "Again I say unto you, that if two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). Lord, I will pray with others because You told me to do it, but also I have more faith and boldness when I pray with others, and You promised that God the Father would hear and answer. Amen.

5Lord, I will live a good testimony among non-Christians {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} and will use every opportunity to share Christ with them. {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} 6I will make sure my words are gracious and useful {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} with

the right answer for everyone. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}
7Lord, Paul told the Colossians that Tychicus will tell them how he was doing. Tychicus had been faithfully serving the Lord with Paul. {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 8Paul told them he was sending Tychicus to give them a message so they would be encouraged. 9Paul also told how he was sending Onesimus back to them in Colosse. Onesimus had recently been saved and now he was a brother in Christ. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22}
10Paul gave the Colossians greetings from Aristarchus who is a prisoner with Paul. He also sent greetings from Mark, Barnabas' cousin. Then Paul told his readers to receive Mark when he comes their way. 11Finally, Paul sent greetings from Justis. He notes that these are his Jewish-Christian co-workers. 12Paul sent greetings from Epaphras who is from Colosse. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} Epaphras continually prayed for the Colossians, asking God to make them strong and mature in their Christian faith. {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} 13Paul reminds them that Epaphras is a prayer warrior for all believers. 14Paul included greetings from Luke the physician, and Demas, and asked that their greetings be passed on to other believers. 15Paul asked the Colossians to greet the church in Laodicea, and 16to pass this letter to the church in Laodicea, and that they should read the letter he wrote to them. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18}

Apparently Epaphras has a list of people for which to pray (4:7-15). When I was first saved, I began writing a list of people, things, and events for which to pray. I have kept that list for almost 60 years. When God answers, I check it off with an "AMEN!" The bigger the answer, the bigger the "AMEN!" Lord, teach me to pray systematically and in order for all the problems, issues, and challenges in my life. I will write out a list of things for which to pray so I won't leave out anything and I will include all requests on a regular basis. Teach me to be methodical, yet exuberant and wholehearted in prayer. Amen.

17Paul told the church to exhort Archippus to be faithful to his ministry that the Lord gave him. 18Paul signed the letter and told them, "Pray for me because I am in chains." {501 Two-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} Grace to you. Signed, Paul. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38}

1 Thessalonians

Ch 1: Characteristics of a Model Church 1748
Ch 2: Characteristics of a Model Servant 1749
Ch 3: Characteristics of a Model Brother 1751
Ch 4: The Hope for All Believers 1752
Ch 5: Characteristics of a Model Life 1753

1 THESSALONIANS

Key Word: *Example* (1 Thessalonians 1:7)

Key Verse: "So that you became examples to all in Macedonia and Achaia who believe" (1 Thess. 1:7).

Theme: Because of persecution (Acts 17:1-10), Paul was forced to leave Thessalonica and almost immediately he wrote back this first letter to the Thessalonians. His first theme dealt with their confusion about Christ's return. Some Christians in the church died and those still alive thought wrongly that the dead had missed out on the return of Christ. Paul writes to tell that "the dead in Christ" would be first in the rapture. Second, Paul describes the richness of local church evangelism. Third, Paul exhorts them to holiness of living, and fourth, he confirms young believers in foundational truths he had taught them. *Lord, I love a church that reaches out to win lost people to Christ. Put me in a church like that and help me win someone to Christ. Amen.*

1 Thessalonians

Characteristics of a Model Church

[1]Lord, Paul, along with Silas and Timothy, wrote to the church in Thessalonica, Greece, reminding them that You, our heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, founded the church. Paul prayed grace and peace on the Thessalonians, and I want that grace on my life. [2]Lord, may I always be thankful for others as Paul was thankful for the believers in Thessalonica: praying for them, [3]thinking of their faithful work, deeds of love, and their patient anticipation of the return of the Lord Jesus Christ. [4]Paul reminds them that You chose them to be Your very own people.

The Thessalonians believed Jesus could return at any moment, and that hope carried them through persecution. Lord, my hope is in Jesus. I will be ready because Jesus could come at any time. I'll plan short-term and long-term projects and work hard to complete them because Jesus may not come in my lifetime. "Even so, come Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20). Amen.

[5]Lord, Paul reminded his readers how the gospel came to them by his explanation and by the demonstrated power of the Holy Spirit. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [6]Paul reminded them that his life was a demonstration of the truth of his preaching, and that they received his message with joy, in spite of the persecution that came on the young {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52} church. [7]Lord, may I be an example to all others just as the believers in Thessalonica were to those in Greece. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [8]May I spread the message of the gospel to others {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} just as the gospel reached many because of the Thessalonians. {338 Outreach-Prayer, Acts 4:29-31} [9]Lord, everyone was telling Paul of the strong faith of the Thessalonians, how they welcomed the gospel, and how they turned to Christ from idols to serve You, the living and true God. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [10]Lord, I look forward to the return of Your Son from heaven {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} whom You brought back from the dead. For He is coming back to deliver us from the terrible wrath and tribulation You will pour out on the world in the future.

Paul thanks God that his prayers have been answered for the Thessalonians in that many were saved (1:2). Lord, I pray that I would spread the message of salvation to many. I also pray that those I've influenced with the gospel may also be faithful witnesses. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 2

Characteristics of a Model Servant

[1]Lord, Paul reminded the Thessalonians about his visit to them {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [2]and how badly he was beaten in Philippi before coming to them. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} Paul reminded them of his strong ministry in spite of vicious opposition. {444 Soul Winner's-Prayer, Prov. 11:30} [3]Lord, Paul reminded his readers that he didn't use ulterior motives or impure desires, nor was he trying to trick them. [4]Paul preached as a messenger from God who gave them the message of salvation. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} He did not preach to please people, but to please God, who knows the motives of people. [5]Paul says he never used flattery to get them to believe, nor did he pretend to be their friends just to get their support. [6]He also didn't preach to build up a reputation or to get human praise. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} Then Paul reminded them he could have asked for money because he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, but he didn't. [7]Lord, help me to be gentle among new believers as Paul was unassuming and kind to the Thessalonians. Help me care for young followers of Christ to feed and protect them as a mother cares for her baby. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7} [8]Help me be loving to new Christians, {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} willing not only to give them the gospel, but to give them my own soul as well. Paul loved the Thessalonians dearly, not only giving them the gospel, but his own life

also. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [9]Lord, Paul reminded the Thessalonians that he worked with his hands, slaving day and night, so he wouldn't be a burden to them. {338 Outreach-Prayer, Acts 4:29-31} [10]Paul reminded them that God was his witness and that his treatment of them was fair. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [11]He treated them as a father would treat a son, teaching them what is truthful, {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [12]encouraging them to live worthy of their divine calling, and inviting them to share in Your kingdom of glory. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

The Thessalonians continued to witness the gospel to others. Lord, may I have a burden for lost people. The gospel was given "gently" (2:7). Lord, may I tenderly care for lost people as a mother cares for her children. There was "affectionate desire" (v. 8). Lord, teach me to pray affectionately for the lost to be saved. Besides giving them salvation, Paul gave his "own soul" (v. 8). Lord, I'm too selfish, so teach me to sacrifice my life for lost people. May I want them to have the life of Christ in their souls as I have in mine. Amen.

[13]Lord, Paul was thankful that they received his preaching not as though it were human words, {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} but as though his message was the very Word of God which it was, namely, Your living power to transform lives. [14]Lord, Paul reminded the Thessalonians that they were like the churches in Judea in that they suffered from their countrymen, just as the Christians in the Holy Land suffered from the Jews, the ones who killed the Lord Jesus and the prophets. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [15]Those who persecuted the church are against both the Gentiles and God {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} because they don't want anyone other than the Jews to be saved. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [16]Their punishment was adding up in God's records, and one day God's punishment will fall on them.

Part of our spiritual warfare praying is recognizing the ways satan tries to defeat us, and the tricks he uses to stop God's work. Lord, just as Paul realized satan was trying to stop his ministry, I realize the many ways satan opposes me and tries to defeat me. Amen.

[17]Lord, Paul tells the Thessalonians, "I want to see you, and even though you are separated from me physically, I still have you in my heart. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [18]I have longed to come see you but satan has prevented my coming. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [19]I live to see my young children in Christ. You are my joy, my hope, my reward, and you will bring me much joy at the coming of Christ when I stand before God for judgment. {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} [20]You will be my glory and reward." {266 Joy-Prayer, Acts 13:52}

Paul's greatest joys were the people he led to Jesus Christ. He called them his "crown of rejoicing" (2:19). Just as a crown was a symbol of achievement, it was also the king's symbol of power and authority. Lord, I want no other authority in my life than the influence of winning people to salvation. The Thessalonians were Paul's "glory and joy" (2:20). Lord, may I never lose the thrill of winning someone to salvation. Keep me rejoicing in getting people saved. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 3

Characteristics of a Model Brother

[1]Lord, Paul reminded the Thessalonians that when he went to Athens, he sent Timothy to minister to them, even though he was left alone at Athens. {443 Solitude and Prayer, Luke 5:16} [2]Paul wanted Timothy to keep them strong in the faith and prevent anyone from dropping out. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} [3]Lord, Paul reminded them that troubles are part of God's plan for the believers. {19 Anticipating-Problem Prayer, 1 Thess. 3:4} [4]He told them when he was with them that some persecution would come, as they had recently experienced. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [5]Paul was so concerned for them that he sent Timothy to find out if the Thessalonians were standing firm in their faith. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} Paul was afraid the tempter would have tripped them up, and Paul's efforts were destroyed. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40}

We must pray about dangers or problems we expect. Paul said, "We should suffer tribulation" (3:4, KJV). Sometimes God answers our prayers and stops the problem before it reaches us. Sometimes God gives us grace to endure the problem. Whatever we do, we must make God the Lord of the storms and the Lord in the storms. Lord, solve some of my problems before they reach me. But when storms do reach me, help me have victory over the problems. And when things go against me, give me internal victory. No matter what happens, I will worship You and fulfill Your plan for my life. Amen.

[6]Lord, Paul was encouraged because Timothy had just returned to bring the good news that the Thessalonians were standing firm. Paul also learned that the Thessalonians wanted to see him. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} [7]This news gave Paul a lot of confidence in his present trials, and that his ministry of planting new churches would succeed, even when trials hit new churches. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [8]Now Paul was ready to really throw himself in ministry because of the positive news that the Thessalonians were standing true. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [9]Lord, I cannot thank You enough for all the joy I have in Your presence that Your work prospers in spite of trials. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [10]I will pray continually for those in trials that You will

supply what is lacking in their faith. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34}

It's not enough to pray once a day. Instead we must pray like Paul, "night and day praying exceedingly" (3:10, KJV). Later Paul will exhort us, "Pray without ceasing" (5:17). Lord, I will pray all the time, not just when I am on my knees. Every time a need comes to my mind, I will pray. Amen.

[11]Now may You, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, help me stand in the face of trials. {382 Problem-Solving Prayer, Acts 27:33} [12]May You make my love grow and overflow to those suffering persecution. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [13]Make my heart strong, blameless, and holy before You, the Father of us all. And may I live a guiltless life because the Lord Jesus Christ is returning with all those saints who are His. {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16}

We must pray like Paul, for God to make us "increase and abound in love one toward another, and toward all men" (3:12). Lord, You are the source of love, so overwhelm my heart and make me love You more, and that will motivate me to love others more. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 4

The Hope for All Believers

[1]Lord, I know the Scriptures teach that I should please You with my daily life, {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} [2]and they command me to live as close as possible to the biblical standards. [3]You want me to be separate from sin, and especially to keep away from sexual immorality. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [4]You want me to marry in holiness and purity {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [5]and not in sexual lust as do the pagans for this is a sign they do not know God.

We must pray to live a holy life (4:3, 7) and ask God to give us strength to keep our bodies disciplined. As Paul said, "Every one of you should know how to possess his vessel in sanctification and honor" (4:4, KJV). The verb "to sanctify" means to separate from sin, which has the same meaning as the noun "holy." Lord, I have an old nature that tempts me to sin so give me strength to overcome sin. I want my body to be a holy temple that will glorify You. Sanctify me and make me holy. Amen.

[6]I will never sin by having sex with another's spouse for You have promised to punish this sin. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [7]Lord, You have not called me to be filthy-minded but You want me to think pure thoughts. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [8]If anyone rebels against the rule of purity, he is not disobeying man's laws, he is disobeying Your law and rebelling against the Holy Spirit who indwells him. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20}

Since God gives us the Holy Spirit (4:8), we should let the Spirit control our lives and service. Lord, I yield to the Holy Spirit. Let

Him make me holy, let Him make me spiritual. Come, Holy Spirit, fill me, lead me, use me, and glorify the Father through me. Amen.

9Lord, Paul didn't need to tell them to love their brothers, since You already taught that in Scripture. 10My love is growing toward other Christians and I want to love them more in the future. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 11My goal is to live a quiet life, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} to work diligently at my task, and do faithfully all I am required to do. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 12This way I will influence those who are not Christians, and have enough money to live on. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3}

13Lord, Paul didn't want the Thessalonians to be ignorant of what happens to believers when they die so they wouldn't grieve like the world that has no hope beyond the grave. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} 14Since we believe that Jesus died for us and rose again from the dead, {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} those who have died and sleep in Jesus will He bring with Him at His return. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} 15The Bible teaches that we who are alive at His return will not be raptured before those in graves, but they will be raptured first. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 16For the Lord Jesus will come down from heaven with a shout as loud as an archangel, and a blast from a trumpet. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Then the dead in Christ will be the first to rise to meet the Lord in the air. 17Then we who are alive and remain on earth will be caught up with them in the clouds to meet the Lord Jesus in the air, to ever live with Him. 18Lord, this promise assures me that I'll live with You forever, and I want everyone to know about this prospect so they'll face death with courage and hope. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

Paul gives us confidence that there is hope beyond the grave, "To be absent from the body [is to be] present with the Lord" (2 Cor. 5:8). And when Christ returns, "We will be with the Lord forever" (4:17). Lord, I fellowship with You in prayer on this earth, but I know I'll live with You forever in heaven. Thank You for this inner confidence. Amen.

1 Thessalonians 5

Characteristics of a Model Life

1Lord, I don't expect You to tell me when Christ will return because You said "no one knows the exact time of Your return to earth." 2All I need to know is that "the day of the Lord will come unexpectedly like a thief in the night." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 3When everyone is saying, "We have peace on earth," sudden disaster will come like labor pains on a pregnant woman. No one can hide from it and everyone, everywhere, will be punished. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 4I have known about Jesus'

return, so I am not in the dark about coming judgment {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} and I won't be surprised. [5]We believers are children of light and we live in the daylight; we don't belong to darkness and night. [6]I will not sleep as some do, but I will watch and be sober. [7]Those who live in the darkness of night will sleep and get drunk. [8]I will be protected by the armor of faith, and I will nurture my love and I will wear the helmet of hope. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [9]Lord, I know You never meant for believers to experience the wrath and tribulation that is coming. You meant to save us thrugh the Lord Jesus Christ. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [10]He died for me so that whether I am alive or in the grave, I will be protected by Him and live with Him. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [11]So I will be encouraged {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} by this fact and I will encourage others. {454 Spiritual-Strength Prayer, Rom. 1:16}

[12]Lord, I will be considerate of those who minister among us as teachers in the Lord. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} [13]I will honor them and obey them, and I'll not agitate other believers. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Paul exhorts us to "know them which labor among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you" (5:12). We should pray for our church leaders so that the whole local assembly will prosper and will grow in Christ. Lord, I pray for the success of our church leaders so that my church will grow spiritually, and that it will reach out to the unsaved. May I grow in Christ, as my church grows (5:12-14). Amen.

[14]Lord, I will warn those not working for You, {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} and give courage to those who are frightened, and will give watch care to the weak, {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} and will be patient with all. [15]Lord, I pray that no one will pay back evil for evil, {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} but will always do good to believers and unbelievers alike. {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} [16]I will rejoice at all times, {212 Happiness Inspired by Prayer, Matt. 5:3-8} [17]and I'll pray constantly. {252 Intermittent-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:17} [18]I'll give thanks always to You for everything because this is what You expect me to do. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [19]I'll not suppress the Holy Spirit's working in my life, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} [20]but will listen to the preaching of Your Word. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} [21]I'll not be gullible, but will analyze everything by the Word of God to determine what is true. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} [22]I'll stay away from every form of evil and anything that tempts me to sin. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16}

Paul tells his readers, "Pray continually" (5:17). This is the same exhortation Jesus gave for the need of constant prayer (Luke 18:1). But we can't pray every second of the day. Some say this means be in a constant

attitude of prayer. Others say it means be ready to pray at any second. The word "continually" means the same as "intermittent." We have intermittent windshield wipers on our modern cars which mean they operate only when it's raining. So to pray "without ceasing" means to pray when we have a need. Also the harder it rains, the faster the windshield wipers work. That means the more severe the need, the more we strive in prayer. Lord, I come now gently because I want to meditate on You, but I'll pray more strenuously when the need is greater. Amen.

[23]Lord, may I grow in the abundance of Your peace. Keep my body, soul, and spirit strong and blameless until You return to receive me. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13} [24]I know You are faithful to all You call to accomplish Your purpose in their lives. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

Paul reminds us, "The One who calls you is faithful and He will do it" (5:24). It's not our faithfulness, but God who dwells in us; He makes us faithful. "He will do it." When we are faithful in prayer, it is not us, but God working in us "to will and to act" (Phil. 2:13). Lord, I come to You in prayer because You give me a burden to pray. Your love motivates me to pray for others. My faith in You motivates me to ask for big things. You have given me a vision of the future that drives me to my knees. When I come to the Father, I come through the intercession of Jesus (Heb. 7:24- 25). Thank You for Your faithfulness. Amen.

[25]Lord, Paul ended his letter asking the Thessalonians to pray for him {501 Two-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [26]and greet one another with a holy kiss. [27]He wanted this letter read to all Christians. [28]Then Paul prayed, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

2 Thessalonians

Ch 1: Comfort Because They Are Being Persecuted 1757
Ch 2: Antichrist and the Coming of Christ 1758
Ch 3: How to Live While Waiting for Christ's Return 1760

2 THESSALONIANS

Key Words: *"He comes"* (2 Thessalonians)

Key Verse: "When He comes, in that Day, to be glorified in His saints and to be admired among all those who believe, because our testimony among you was believed" (2 Thess. 1:10).

Theme: The Thessalonians probably thought Jesus would come immediately to set up His kingdom, so they raised the question, "Some in our church have died since believing in Christ; what will happen to them?" Paul wrote 1 Thessalonians to explain that those who died in Christ will go first in the rapture when Christ returns.

Paul wrote this second letter to the Thessalonians because some in the church were "shaken in mind" and were "troubled" because they were going through persecution. They thought their trouble was the seven years of tribulation. Paul wrote this second letter to tell them the rapture hadn't come. Then he outlines the horrible things that will happen during the tribulation. He then instructed the Thessalonians about the glorious event when "He comes" (1:10). *Lord, I don't look for tribulation, judgment, or any parallel event. I look to see the Lord Jesus when He shall come for me and all those who belong to Him. Amen.*

2 Thessalonians 1

Comfort Because They Are Being Persecuted

[1]Lord, Paul, Silas, and Timothy sent greetings to the church in Thessalonica which belonged to You the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} [2]They prayed for grace and peace from You and the Lord Jesus Christ. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [3]Lord, I continually thank You that my faith is growing, {204 Growth-Prayer, Eph. 4:12-16} and my love for others is growing. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [4]May I have patience and faith when I face trials and troubles. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3}

Paul continually thanked God for the new converts that had been saved through his influence, "We are bound to give thanks always to God for you" (2:13, KJV). We should be grateful that

God has used us and be thankful for those saved through our ministry. Lord, I pray for spiritual strength for all those who have been saved through my ministry. Thank You for what You've done in my life and in the life of others. Amen.

5My constant determination will demonstrate that Your care of me is correct and that I am worthy of the kingdom of God, for which I am now suffering. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 6Lord, I know You will repay those who persecute Your believers, and reward those who are suffering with the same inner confidence and peace 7we'll all receive when Jesus appears from heaven with His powerful angels. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 8Lord, I know You will come in flaming fire to punish those who reject You, and refuse to accept the good news of the Lord Jesus. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} 9They will be punished in everlasting hell, forever separated from Your presence, never to see the glory of Your kingdom. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 10Lord, thank You that Jesus is coming to be glorified and to be seen by His saints, who are those who believe in Him. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6}

11Lord, I pray continually that I'll be worthy of Your calling, and be the kind of follower You want me to be. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Paul prayed that his readers would "fulfill all the good pleasure of His goodness and the work of faith with power" (1:11, KJV). Lord, I want to accomplish good things for You, but my "good works" are nothing (Eph. 2:8-9). So work in me and through me to accomplish those things that will last. Amen.

12May the name of my Lord Jesus Christ be glorified when others see the kind of life I live. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

Paul thanked God because the faith of the Thessalonians was "grow[ing] exceedingly" and their love was "toward each other abound[ing]" (1:3, KJV). Isn't that God's plan for us? That we continually grow in character? Lord, convict me when I stop growing in my Christian faith. Help me to see weak areas and to strengthen them. Give me a strong appetite to grow in every area of my life to be more like Christ. Then as I grow, may my thanksgiving to You also grow. Amen.

2 Thessalonians 2

Antichrist and the Coming of Christ

1Lord, Paul explained to the Thessalonians about the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and how we will be gathered to Him. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} 2He did not want them alarmed by a false prediction, or rumor, or any letters that claimed to come from him. They had heard that the tribulation of the day of the Lord had already begun. 3They were confused because they

were suffering more persecution than ever before, and thought the tribulation had begun and Christ had come and they had missed the rapture. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} Lord, Paul told them the tribulation could not begin until the man of sin—the antichrist—was revealed and Christians in name only fall away from the faith. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 4The antichrist will oppose everything about God, and exalt himself so that he is worshiped as God, and he will sit in the temple of God claiming that he is God. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 5Lord, Paul told these things to the Thessalonians while he was there, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 6now he reminds them that the antichrist cannot come until the Holy Spirit is taken out of the way because the Spirit holds back a full onslaught of evil in the world. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 7But the One restraining sin—the Holy Spirit—will be removed when believers are raptured. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} 8Lord, Paul told the Thessalonians that the antichrist will be fully revealed after the rapture, but the Lord Jesus Christ will eventually destroy him with the breath of His mouth {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and with the glorious appearance of His coming. 9Lord, Paul reminded them that the antichrist will be satan's representative full of demonic power and lying tricks. {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} 10He will deceive all the lost people who don't have spiritual insight because they have already rejected the truth, and have chosen not to believe it. 11You will send a strong delusion so that they will believe satan's lie. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 12They will all be punished who refused to believe Your truth and who chose willingly to sin. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

It would seem that the millions of people left on earth after the rapture would realize that Christians have disappeared. It would seem they would accept the truth of the rapture and believe in Christ to get saved. But God will allow them to be greatly deceived, and they will believe satan's lies. Lord, I want to know the truth about Your return and about everything in the Bible. Teach me the truth so I can know truth and live correctly. Amen.

13Lord, I will forever give You thanks because You loved me and chose me from the beginning to be saved, and You set me apart to the Holy Spirit and truth. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 14I thank You for the good news that came to me, and I obtained eternal life through the Lord Jesus Christ. {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} 15Therefore I will stand fast and hold on to the message that Paul delivered to the churches by word and by letters. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} 16-17Lord, I pray that my heart will be comforted and be established to do every good work by You, the heavenly Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ, who loves me and gives me the hope of His return.

Paul was concerned that the Thessalonians would not be spiritually alarmed or easily upset (2:2) over a wrong misunderstanding of the Lord's return. He not only prayed for them (1:3, 11; 3:1-5), he also taught them correct doctrine concerning the second coming of Christ so they would be established in their faith. Lord, keep me from wrong emotional expression about Your return. I will study Your Word so I'll have strong faith in You and Your return. Amen.

2 Thessalonians 3

How to Live While Waiting for Christ's Return

[1]Lord, Paul asked for the Thessalonians to pray for him, as he prayed for them. I pray that the Word of the Lord may spread quickly, and be effective in winning many to Christ. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [2]I ask that I'll be delivered from people who are evil and bigoted because they have no faith. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} [3]Lord, I know You are faithful to give me strength and will guard me from the evil one. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [4]I have believed that Your Word will continue to be successful. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [5]May You turn many hearts to Your love and that they may wait patiently for Christ's return. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Paul prayed that they would have "the patient waiting for Christ" (3:5, KJV). We should pray that we not give up, but have an enduring spirit to overcome all obstacles, trials, and problems. Lord, I want to endure all difficulties. Help me. Give me tenacity to keep going. Amen.

[6]Lord, Paul gave the Thessalonians a command to avoid a believer who is lazy and avoids work that he should be doing. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [7]Paul wanted his example to be imitated because he was not idle but worked hard and paid for his own meals. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} [8]Paul worked constantly and he worked diligently so he wouldn't be a financial burden on them. {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} [9]He wanted to be an example for them to follow, even though he had the right to expect a salary. [10]Lord, Paul gave them a rule when he was there, "Don't give food to anyone who refuses to work." {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} [11]Paul heard that some Christians were lazy, refusing to hold a job, and trying to live off those who were working. [12]Paul ordered them by the authority of the Lord Jesus Christ to begin working and earning the food they eat. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23}

We are to work hard at our occupation and not be lazy (3:11-12). We should not depend on others to take care of us financially. We should pray for a job, pray for strength and wisdom to do our job, then pray that we do our job well, and finally pray that God is glorified through our work. Lord, I want to be a good testimony to You in the way I work

and am productive through my job. Help me work as hard as I can to please You in all I do. Amen.

13 Lord, I have learned from Paul and the Thessalonians never to tire of doing the right thing. 14 If any refuse to obey the command of Paul, I'll have nothing to do with them so they'll be convicted of their wrong ways. 15 However, he is not an enemy to Christ. Rather, he is a brother who needs correction. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

16 Lord, I pray to receive the peace that is Yours, may I receive it every day, in every way. Lord, be with me! {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 17 Lord, Paul finally greeted all the Thessalonians in his own handwriting, that gave genuineness to this letter. 18 Finally, Paul prayed for the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ to be on them. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38}

Because all Christians are in Christ, we are joined uniquely together. Therefore we ought to ask other believers to "pray for us" (3:1), just as Paul requested prayer for the Thessalonians. Why? (1) Because we need God's help to be victorious against temptations, sins, and trials; (2) because God answers when two people agree in prayer (Matt. 18:19); (3) because God reveals Himself to us when we stand in harmony with other believers (Matt. 18:20); and (4) because we are not perfect, we need prayer. Lord, look on me kindly when I ask others to pray for me. Amen.

1 Timothy

Ch 1: Paul's Relationship to Timothy and Warning about Heresy 1764
Ch 2: Instructions about Prayer and the Role of Women in Church 1766
Ch 3: Qualifications for Pastors and Deacons. 1767
Ch 4: How a Good Minister Should Live 1769
Ch 5: The Good Work of a Minister 1770
Ch 6: Warnings to a Minister 1772

1 TIMOTHY

Key Words: *Faithful Sayings* (1 Timothy 1:15)

Key Verse: "But if I am delayed, *I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth" (3:15).

Theme: Originally the apostles were the authority in the churches, teaching people what to believe, and guiding the church's ministry. But as the end of the apostolic era approached, it was necessary that a clear revelation be given about the soundness of faith, and church order. Paul wrote 1 Timothy, "*I write* so that you may know how you ought to conduct yourself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God" (3:15).

Four times Paul used the key words "faithful sayings" like a verse we might repeat to remind us of the essentials of Christianity (1 Tim. 1:15, 3:1, 4:9; 2 Tim. 2:11; Titus 3:8). *Lord, I love Your church and I will learn how to live for You in the church. Help me to be faithful in all things. Amen.*

1 Timothy 1

Paul's Relationship to Timothy and Warning about Heresy

[1]Lord, Paul wrote to Timothy, his son in the faith, reminding Timothy that Paul was an apostle by Your command and that the Lord Jesus Christ was his Savior and hope. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [2]Paul prays grace, mercy, and peace for Timothy from You, the Father and from Jesus Christ. {180 Fruit-Producing Prayer, Gal. 5:22-23}

Paul led Timothy to Christ (1:2), and he called Timothy "my true son in the faith." We should be glad for those we influence to salvation, and then pray for them, always thanking God for them. Lord, I thank You for the opportunity of influencing people to salvation. May my converts walk faithfully in their new faith. I thank You for each of them. Amen.

[3]Lord, Paul reminded Timothy that he was to stay in Ephesus to stop certain false teachers from spreading false doctrine, {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [4]and to stop

spreading myths and genealogies that create controversy in the church. Rather Timothy should build up Your work. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} 5Lord, I know that love comes from a sincere heart, a pure conscience, and believing faith. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} 6Some have drifted from these qualities and spend their time arguing about nothing, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 7so they don't know what they're saying. {245 Insincere-Prayer, Matt. 12:38-39} 8I know the law is good when we apply it properly to our lives. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} 9I also know the law is not given to keep good people in line, but the law is aimed at rebellious people to teach them the truth, and point them to salvation. 10The law is aimed at adulterers, perverts, slave traders, liars, and perjurers. 11The law was written for those who deny the gospel and sound doctrine and the truth that was committed to Paul. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

12Lord, I thank You for giving me strength to serve You, and You found me faithful so that You called me into Your service. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} 13Before I was saved, I was a liar and curser, and I was against the faith; I did all this in ignorance. You showed me mercy, so that I became a believer. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} 14Your grace filled me with faith and with love that comes from Jesus Christ. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

Paul was thankful for his salvation (1:12) so he thanked God for giving him "power" (1:12) for ministry. He confessed that he was a "persecutor and a violent man" (1:13). Then he called himself a sinner. He said, "I am the worst" (1:15). Actually every sin—whether against the person of God or a sin of pride or flesh fulfillment—is against God. Therefore everyone could call himself the "worst of sinners." Lord, I know my sins are terrible and my transgressions place me in the worst possible relationship to You. Thank You for forgiving me by the blood of Christ. Thank You that I am in Christ where I am as close to Your heart as I can get. Amen.

15Lord, this is a faithful saying that no one can deny: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners and I myself was the greatest of them. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 16Your mercy was shown to me, because Jesus Christ has made me a great example of Your inexhaustible patience. As a result, other people have come to trust Jesus and gain eternal life. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} 17Lord, I give glory and honor to You, the only God. You are immortal and invisible, forever and ever. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9}

Paul gave honor to God (1:17). When we worship God, several things happen. First, God comes to receive our worship because Jesus said, "The Father seeks worship" (John 4:23, PJV); therefore we can experience His presence as we worship Him. So as we give God the worship He wants, we receive His presence in return. Worship becomes a two-way street. Lord, thank You for giving me

Your presence—including joy, confidence, acceptance—as I give to You my worship. Amen.

18Lord, again Paul reminded Timothy, his son, to do these things he is telling him. These are the truths spoken by prophets, so he should fight for them like a good soldier. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} 19His weapons are faith and a pure conscience. Because some have denied their conscience they have wrecked their faith. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 20Such are Hymenaeus and Alexander who are enemies, thus Paul has given them to satan to punish them so they won't bring shame on the name of Christ. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

There are many ways to worship God. Remember worship means to give God the "worthship" that is due to Him. When you glorify God, you are not adding to any majesty He already has. No! God cannot change, and nothing can be added to God. When you glorify God (1:17), you make God more glorious in your mind and life. You grow in Christ as you realize how much more glory can be given to Him in your attitudes and actions. Lord, I glorify You with the worship of my words because I realize how much more glorious You are. As I grow in my worship, I realize how much more majesty You have, and with each realization, I grow more. Amen.

1 Timothy 2

Instructions about Prayer and the Role of Women in Church

1Lord, Paul directed Timothy to pray in every way for all types of people. I will pray for all people, interceding for Your mercy in their lives, I will give thanks for Your work in every area of people's lives. {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} 2I will pray for political leaders and government supervisors, so I can live peaceably and follow holiness and honesty in my life. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 3In this way I fulfill my prayer obligation and will please You, my God and Savior. 4Lord, I know You want everyone to be saved and to learn the full scope of biblical truth. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 5You are the only God and Christ Jesus—the Man— {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} is the only Mediator between You and all people 6because Jesus sacrificed Himself as a ransom for all the people in the world. This is the message of truth everyone must hear and believe. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 7Lord, You appointed Paul as a preacher and apostle. No one can deny that Paul was appointed to teach faith and truth to all. {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49}

Paul gives four different ways to pray in 1 Timothy 2:1. First is "supplication," deesis which means we plead with God because of our personal needs. Second is "prayers," proseuche which comes from pros, "toward," and

euchomai, "face." It means we approach God "face to face." Third, "intercession," enteuxis, which pictures childlike confidence. Fourth, is giving thanks, which shows our gratitude for what God has done for us. Paul taught us to pray for "kings and those in authority over us" (2:2). We should pray for government leaders for several reasons: (1) to enable us to lead a quiet life; (2) to enable us to live godly lives; and (3) to help us get others saved (2:2-4). Lord, I pray for my president, members of Congress, judges, governors, and law enforcement officials so I can live a quiet, peaceful life. Amen.

[8]Lord, because of the way You changed Paul and me I will freely lift my hands in prayer to You, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} free from anger or jealousy.

Paul desired we pray "lifting up holy hands in prayer, without disputing" (2:8). Did you know that doubt is arguing with God? The King James Version says, "Without doubting." Lord, I will not argue with You, and I will not doubt. I believe You exist and You reward those who diligently seek answers from You (Heb. 11:6). Amen.

[9]Lord, Paul wanted women to dress modestly, without being indecent or calling undue attention to themselves. Paul wanted Christian women to be noticed for their inner godly personality, not for their outward dress or fixing their hair, or gaudy jewels, or indiscreet clothing. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8} [10]Paul wanted women to do good works [11]and listen to good Christian women so they could be godly. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [12]Paul didn't want women teaching men which puts them in authority over men. Instead he wanted them to quietly listen in church. [13]Paul used the illustration of Adam being created before Eve, so You created men to be leaders. [14]But Eve was blinded and deceived by satan, then Adam sinned with his eyes wide open; thus he was guilty and plunged the race into sin. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [15]And women were punished with pain and suffering in giving birth to children. But they will be saved by trusting Jesus the Savior and then living quiet lives before You. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13}

1 Timothy 3

Qualifications for Pastors and Deacons

[1]Lord, Paul said any man who wants to be a pastor/leader wants to do a noble work for You. {432 Service-Prayer, Heb. 5:4} [2]But he must be a good man: blameless, the husband of one wife, self-disciplined, hardworking, and obedient, and also he must be courteous, {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} a good teacher, and must open his home to visitors and guests. [3]A pastor can't drink alcohol, be hot-tempered; but he should be courteous with people and gentle. He must not be greedy for money, [4]but must manage his family well. [5]Because if a man can't make his family behave, he shouldn't be responsible for church behavior. [6]A pastor must

not be a new convert, because he may become proud and arrogant. Then God would condemn him as God condemned satan for his pride. [7]Lord, Paul said deacons should live by the same standard as the pastor of the church. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

People looking for work read the Want Ads in the newspaper or they ask a friend. But what do believers do when they want to work for God in the church? They ask God if they "desire a good work" (1 Tim. 3:1, KJV). Lord, I want to serve You, so lead me to a place where I can work for Your kingdom. Amen.

[8]They should be respected by the church and do what they promise. Deacons should not drink alcohol, or be greedy for money. [9]They must be conscientious Christians believing and walking in faith. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} [10]The church must examine them before putting them into the office of deacon. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [11]In the same way the wives of pastors and deacons must be respectable, not gossipers, but faithful in every area of life. {54 Brinkmanship-Praying, Ps. 91:3-10} [12]Deacons should be the husband of one wife, with happy and obedient families. {299 Marriage-Harmony Prayer, 1 Peter 3:8} [13]Those who do a good job as deacons should be respected by all in the church. God will reward them with His blessings, for their faithful walk in Christ Jesus. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21}

God has a list of qualifications for elders and overseers (3:1-8) and for deacons or servants (3:8-13), and their wives (3:11). Lord, I don't measure up perfectly to Your requirements, so help me grow in every area of my life. Help me grow in Christ to please You and develop my abilities so I can serve You acceptably. Amen.

[14]Lord, Paul told Timothy he wanted to be with him soon. [15]But in case he was delayed, Paul wanted Timothy to know how people should behave in God's family—the church of the living God—because it teaches and protects the truth of God. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [16]Paul gave Timothy the doctrinal statement for all of the church to learn and believe. Jesus appeared in a human body, He was anointed by the Holy Spirit, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} was seen by angels, preached among the Gentiles, {199 Great Commission-Prayer, Luke 24:49} and was believed by many in the world, and taken up into glory.

Paul included doctrinal essentials of faith that all must believe (3:16). Correct doctrinal faith begins with a correct view of Jesus. Lord, I believe Jesus was born of a virgin and lived a perfect life in His human body. He was seen by angels, preached to lost people everywhere, the only source of salvation, and ascended into heaven where He sits at the right hand of God the Father. Amen.

1 Timothy 4

How a Good Minister Should Live

[1]Lord, Your Holy Spirit told us that in the last days some will turn away from Christ. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} They will follow seductive spirits and will believe false doctrine that comes from demons. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [2]These false teachers will lie about the truth, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} and they are hypocrites whose consciences are seared as though they were branded with a red-hot iron. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [3]They will forbid marriage and demand that people abstain from food. {300 Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer, John 6:11} [4]Lord, You've created every good food to eat, and I should reject no food but I must thankfully enjoy it all. [5]I should bless it and give thanks, and Your Scripture and prayer make it holy. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1}

Paul reminds us to receive with "thanksgiving" (4:3) all the food that gives us strength and life. God created food for us, so we must eat with thankful hearts. Lord, thank You for creating food that gives me strength and life. I recognize You as my sustainer and the source of my life. Keep me from being stingy and ungrateful. Amen.

[6]Paul told Timothy to explain this to the church as a good pastor who knows the Word of God. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8}

Paul reminds us to be "nourished up in the words of faith" (4:6, KJV) because the Scripture strengthens us spiritually and causes us to grow in Christ. We should not remain spiritual babies (1 Cor. 3:1-3), but we must grow to become like Christ. Lord, I will study Your Word daily to grow and be more like Christ. I long to be strengthened by the Holy Spirit inwardly. Amen

[7]Paul also told Timothy not to waste time arguing with those deceived by godless myths and old wive's tales. Paul told Timothy to develop his spirituality, and I also will follow this advice. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [8]Lord, Paul told Timothy physical exercise is all right, but he shouldn't go to extremes with it. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} [9]Spiritual exercise is unlimited because it rewards us with a good life here on earth and will reward us in heaven. [10]Lord, I will give myself diligently to ministry and will take whatever suffering comes so that people will believe in Christ. Because I believe Christ died for me and lives forever, my hope is in Him, along with all who put their trust in You. {483 Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Ps. 107:2}
[11]Help me teach these things to everyone, {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [12]and let no one ignore me because of my age. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} Help me be an example to all believers, in my speech, behavior, love, faith, and purity. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [13]Help me discipline my time

by reading the Word of God to people, and then preaching and teaching it to them. {344 Pastor-Prayer, 2 Cor. 1:11} [14]I will use the spiritual gifts You gave me, that came to me through the Scriptures and have been recognized by the church. {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10}

Paul tells young Timothy, "Don't neglect your [spiritual] gift" (4:14). We all have a spiritual ability to serve God, so we should not lay it aside. Lord, I thank You for giving me spiritual gifts to serve You. I will use them as I best know how. Fill me with the Holy Spirit to serve You more effectively. Amen.

[15]I'll put all my energy into my work; I want everyone to see what You are doing through me. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} [16]Therefore I will be careful of what I do and teach so that people who hear me will be saved, and I will fulfill Your calling for my life. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4}

1 Timothy 5

The Good Work of a Minister

[1]Lord, You told me never to speak harshly to elderly men, but to speak to them respectfully as to a father. You told me to speak lovingly to younger people as I would speak to those in my family. [2]You told me to treat elderly women as I would treat my own mother. {160 Family-Heritage Prayer, Matt. 1:1-17}

[3]Lord, You have instructed the church to take care of widows if they don't have anyone else to care for them. [4]Their children or grandchildren are the ones who should take responsibility for them to repay the debt they owe to their elders, for a grateful heart pleases You very much. [5]But the church should especially care for widows when they have no one in this world to care for them. Then let them spend their nights and days in prayer, {97 Daily-Prayer, Acts 2:42} [6]not running around looking for pleasure and entertainment. [7]Lord, Paul gave Timothy the church principles to care for people and do what is right. [8]The ones who won't care for their needy relatives, especially those in their immediate family, have no right to call themselves Christians; they are worse than nonbelievers. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [9]Widows should be involved as special church workers when they are 60 years old, having been the wife of one husband. [10]She must have been hospitable to others and helped those in trouble. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [11]The church is not to accept young widows because they will want to get married again. [12]And people will condemn them for not keeping their promise to be a special committed church worker. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [13]Besides, young widows can become lazy, {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} going from house to house gossiping and meddling in others' affairs. [14]Paul thought young widows should re-marry, have children, and look after a home; then no one can accuse them of anything. [15]Some young widows have

already turned from Christ, having been led astray to follow satan. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [16]The relatives of a widow must take care of her, and not expect the church to do it. Then the church can use its money to care for needy widows who fit the qualifications of genuine widows. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

[17]Lord, Paul taught the church to give worthy pastors double consideration in paying them, especially those who preach and teach well. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} [18]The Scripture says, "Never put a muzzle on the ox to keep them from eating. When they work to bring in the crop, let them eat as they work in the fields." In another place the Scriptures teach, "Those who work deserve their pay."

We have special obligations to the pastor(s) of our church. We are to follow their example (1 Tim. 3:4, 5), obey their teaching (Heb. 13:7, 17), and perhaps greatest of all, pray for them (1 Tim. 2:2). We must pray that they are kept from satan's temptations, that God uses them to preach the Word, that they are godly examples, and that they manage the church of God. Lord, thank You for my pastor(s); keep them from sin and danger. Use their ministry, help them manage the church, and build them up in faith. Amen.

"No pastor can rise above his prayers to God." – **Jerry Falwell**

Paul reminds us that "the laborer is worthy of his reward" (5:18, KJV). Therefore it is all right to be compensated for our work for God. However, this doesn't always involve money. Paul spoke of a crown (2 Tim. 4:8), our joy (1 Thess. 2:19, 20), and fruit (Rom. 1:13). We never pray for compensation or for the things we will get out of our labor for God. We pray for God to bless His ministry. When God does that, compensation will take care of itself. Many times we may not be compensated on this earth, but we will be rewarded in heaven, "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on...they will rest from their labors, for their deeds will follow them" (Rev. 14:13, KJV).

[19]Lord, Paul taught the church not to listen to complaints against the church leaders, unless there are two or three witnesses. [20]If the church leaders are wrong, {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} rebuke them in front of the church as a warning to all believers. [21]Paul said before God, the Lord Jesus Christ, and the holy angels are to rebuke sinning pastors impartially, whether they are friends or not. Treat all people equally without favoritism, for we are all equal in Christ. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [22]Lord, Paul taught never to choose a pastor too quickly because some faults may be overlooked. Therefore I will learn from the example of my leaders to keep myself pure from all sin. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

Paul told Timothy, "Keep thyself pure" (5:22, KJV). We should make holiness our priority, keep our thought life pure, and yield all things to God. If we try to be holy in the flesh, we end up in legalism. We should

make a 100-percent commitment to God, and remember holiness is a continuous process, a full-time process, and a God-empowered process. Lord, I want to be holy within and without. Fill me with the Spirit to empower me to overcome temptation. Keep my mind pure and keep me ever vigilant. Amen.

[23]Lord, Paul told Timothy to quit drinking only water, but to take some grape juice for digestion because he was frequently sick. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [24]Lord, some people's sins are obvious to all, long before a formal complaint is made against them. Others have sins that are not easily discovered until they actually come to light. In other cases the sins of some will not be discovered until judgment day. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [25]The same truth applies to the good deeds that some do; they will not be hidden forever.

1 Timothy 6

Warnings to a Minister

[1]Lord, workers should work hard for their bosses, and respect them in all ways. May Your name and Christian expectations not be laughed at by the world because Christians are lazy workers. A worker must not take advantage of his boss because he is a Christian. {246 Integrity-Praying, Ps. 101:2} [2]On the contrary, Christian workers must do better {103 Dedication-Prayer, Mark 10:16} since they are helping their boss make their business effective and successful. {134 Employment-Prayer, Col. 3:17, 23}

[3]Paul told Timothy to teach these principles and that those who have a different interpretation are both selfish and ignorant because these truths are biblical and effective, based on the words of the Lord Jesus Christ. [4]Those who question these truths stir up arguments that lead to anger and jealousy and abuse. [5]These people always cause trouble and they never tell the truth. They use religion to get rich. [6]Lord, Paul told us we are truly rich when we are happy and satisfied with what You give. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [7]We have brought nothing into this world and we will take away nothing when we die. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3} [8]So, as long as we have food and clothing, we should be content. {170 Food-Provision Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [9]Those who are passionate about being rich, are open to all types of temptations and get-rich-quickly schemes. Their financial lust will hurt their walk with Christ and eventually destroy their life {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [10]because the love of money opens people up to all kinds of sin. Those who spend their lives chasing wealth have wandered away from Your standards for living and opened up their souls to fatal wounds. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Often Christians pray for money, but they seldom realize the dangers of possessing money. Yes, we need money for ministry, food, shelter, and clothing; but often money

possesses us. Paul reminds us, "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil" (6:10). It is "a trap" (v. 9) and "those who want to get rich fall into temptation...[that can] plunge men into ruin and destruction" (v. 9). So what should be our attitude about money? First, yield all your money to God. Second, ask God to guide every use of your money to glorify God. Third, pray for strength, wisdom, and faithfulness to your employment in making money. Fourth, be content with the money you have, especially being "content with food and clothing" (v: 8). Fifth, give generously to God's work. Lord, thank You for all my money, belongings, and retirement treasures. I yield them to You; use everything for Your glory. Show me what money to use for myself and what to invest in Your work for Your glory. I am Your money manager; help me manage all my talents, time, and treasure for Your purpose. Amen.

[11]Lord, because I am dedicated to You, I will avoid the evils associated with money. I purpose to live a saintly life and I will seek to be filled with faith, love, and gentleness. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [12]I will fight to put You first in all my life, and {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} I will hold tightly to eternal life that You give. This is my calling and my commitment, and I have confessed this to the church. [13]Now before You—the source of life—and before Jesus Christ, {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} [14]I promised to do all that I say I will do, so that no one can find any fault in me both now and in the future till Christ returns. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [15]For at the right time Christ will come from heaven, being sent by You, the Almighty God. Jesus is King of kings and Lord of lords. [16]Jesus will never die, and He lives in light so brilliant that no one has seen Him, or can see Him. To Jesus be honor and power forever.

[17]Paul told Timothy to warn those who are rich in this world that they should not look down on others, or trust in their money, but trust in God, who out of His riches gives us all we need to be happy. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [18]Timothy was instructed to tell rich people to use their money to do good. They are to be rich in good works, generous and willing to share with those in need. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [19]The only safe investment in life is to store up real wealth in heaven. {388 Provision of Food Praise, Ps. 65:9-11} [20]Paul told Timothy to guard carefully the commission God had entrusted him. Keep out of pointless arguments of those who show off their knowledge, for they are not really that smart. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} [21]They have missed the most important thing in life. They don't know You at all, but may they continually experience Your grace. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

2 Timothy

Ch 1: Paul's Charge to Timothy 1775
Ch 2: How to Minister in the Day of Apostasy .. 1777
Ch 3: The Prediction of Apostasy and God's Answer in Scripture 1779
Ch 4: Paul, a Faithful Servant 1780

2 TIMOTHY

Key Word: *Doctrine*

Key Verse: "Preach the Word. Be prepared in season and out of season; correct, rebuke, and encourage—with great patience and careful instruction" (2 Timothy 4:2).

Theme: Paul wrote 1 Timothy from the relative ease of his "own rented house" in Rome (Acts 28:30). He was released and later arrested or put in the Mamertine Prison, a miserable dark damp hole in the ground. Paul writes 2 Timothy from difficult circumstances, knowing he will be martyred soon. Paul emphasizes the personal life of a servant of Christ in a time of apostasy. He says, "This you know, that all those in Asia have turned away from me" (1:15) and "Demas has forsaken me, having loved this present world" (4:10). Paul describes apostasy (3:1-8) and exhorts Timothy to "continue in the things which you have learned" (3:14).

Paul asks Timothy, "Do your best to come to me quickly" (4:9). Then Paul asks for a few items, "the cloak that I left with Carpus at Troas and my scrolls, especially the parchments" (4:13). *Lord, may I be faithful to You till death, as was Paul whether I die or You come in the sky; I look forward to being with You. Amen.*

2 Timothy 1

Paul's Charge to Timothy

[1]Lord, Paul told Timothy he was appointed by Jesus Christ to be an apostle to tell everyone that eternal life is promised to those who believe. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [2]Timothy was a son to Paul in the faith, and {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [3]Paul prayed for Timothy to have grace, mercy, and peace from You the Father and from Christ Jesus our Lord. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} [4]Lord, Paul remembered Timothy in prayer night and day and he longed to see him, because Timothy cried when they left each other. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [5]Paul remembered Timothy's genuine faith which was first in his grandmother Lois and in his mother Eunice. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14}
[6]Paul said to stir up the inner fire You gave Timothy, which was evident at his ordination when Paul laid hands on him. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} [7]Lord, You have not

given me a spirit of cowardice but a spirit of power, love, and self-control. {514 Victory Over Doubt-Prayer, Mark 11:23}

We are given spiritual gifts to serve God (1 Peter 4:10). Sometimes we let the fire of enthusiasm die and we need to pray that God will revive our commitment and service to Him. Lord, forgive me when I lose my excitement for serving You. Stir up my spiritual gift and give me a holy uneasiness when I sit around in my lethargy and complacency, doing nothing. "Stir up the gift of God" (1:6, KJV). Amen.

[8]So I will never be ashamed of witnessing for Christ or ashamed of other Christians, I will accept my share of hardships as I share the gospel, relying on Your power to accomplish Your will. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3}

Because the heart is deceitful and will mislead us, we must pray for boldness to testify for Christ and serve Him. Lord, I confess my weakness; give me boldness to speak for You. Use my testimony to bring people to salvation and to glorify You. Amen.

[9]Lord, You have saved me and called me to holiness, not because of anything I've done but for Your purpose and by Your grace. Your kindness and love was shed on me before the beginning of the world, {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [10]but was revealed when our Savior, Christ Jesus, abolished sin and proclaimed life by His death. Lord, I believed it and received it. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [11]Lord, Paul again reminded Timothy he was a preacher and because he was an apostle to the Gentiles, he is also suffering hardships. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [12]Lord, I am not ashamed of the gospel because I know I've put my trust in Christ. And I have no doubt that You, Father, are able to care for all I've entrusted to You until that day when Jesus Christ will return to earth for me. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [13]Lord, I will continue to believe and live by the sound teaching I've learned from Scripture. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [14]I will guard Your special calling for my life by the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in me.

Paul told Timothy, "Hold fast the form of sound words...that good thing...keep by the Holy Ghost" (1:13-14, KJV). So we pray (1) for wisdom to guard the truth, (2) for boldness, (3) for faith to move mountains, and (4) for inward strength to get the job done. Lord, give me wisdom to defend Your Word against attacks; give me strength and boldness to do it, and give me faith to remove mountain barriers that block Your truth (Mark 11:23-24). Amen.

[15]Lord, Paul reminded Timothy that Phygelus and Hermogenes have refused to have anything to do with Paul. {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} [16]Paul prayed blessings on Onesiphorus' home because he was not ashamed of Paul's chains. Onesiphorus came to see Paul in jail and helped

him when he was in Ephesus. {343 Partner-Prayer, Acts 3:1} 17Onesiphorus went to a lot of trouble to find Paul when he was in Rome. {548 Yearning-Prayer, Ps. 63:1} 18Paul prayed a blessing on him, knowing he would be rewarded at the Judgment Seat of Christ. {198 Gratitude-Prayer, Phil. 4:6}

2 Timothy 2

How to Minister in the Day of Apostasy

1Lord, I will be strong in the grace that comes from Jesus Christ. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} 2All the truth I heard from my teachers, I will communicate to trustworthy people who in turn will be able to teach others. {314 Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer, Acts 18:24-26}

Paul tells Timothy to "be strong" and he adds "in Christ Jesus." That should be the request of all believers for themselves: (1) to be strong against their old sinful nature; (2) to be strong against attacks from without; and (3) to be strong against trials and temptation. Lord, I want to be strong internally; give me spiritual strength. Help me stand against trials, temptations, and attacks against my Christian faith. Strengthen me with Christ's strength. Amen.

3I will accept my share of difficulties as a good soldier of Christ Jesus. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 4No soldier gets bound up with worldly things because he must always obey his commanding officer. Therefore I will separate myself from sinful things. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 5An athlete cannot win a contest unless he keeps all the rules. And so I will discipline myself to obey Christ. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}

6And a farmer gets first claim on the harvest over any crops growing in his field, {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15} 7so I will work hard to get Your reward. {436 Silent-Prayer, Ps. 39:1-3}

Paul told Timothy to "endure hardness... like a good soldier of Christ Jesus" (2:3). This includes (1) self-discipline; (2) trials; (3) temptations; (4) persecution because of the faith; and (5) natural difficulties in life. That suggests the believer shouldn't complain, blame others, or retaliate. Lord, I will suffer hardship in life, knowing my suffering can never equal Your suffering for sin. Help me when I'm tempted to give up, and strengthen my weaknesses. Amen.

8Lord, I will remember the gospel of Jesus Christ; He was a descendant of David, He died for me, and He was raised from the dead. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 9This is the gospel for which Paul was being persecuted. Paul was chained like a criminal, but Your gospel is not chained. 10Paul suffered all his persecutions for the sake of those who have believed the gospel, that they may be saved by Jesus Christ and obtain eternal glory that comes to those who are saved. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} 11Lord,

Paul gave Timothy a faithful saying that he could rely on and share with others. If I have died with Christ on the cross, I will live with Him in heaven. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} 12If I hold firm in my profession of faith, I will reign with Him in glory. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 13If I deny Christ, He will deny me. If I become faithless, Christ is always faithful. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}

14Lord, Paul told Timothy to remind the church about this truth and not argue with anyone over this statement of faith because it will only confuse those who are listening. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 15I will study to know everything about Christianity, so I can be Your approved workman. {536 Worker's-Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:15}

Christians are exhorted to be "a workman who does not need to be ashamed" (2:15). In one sense the quality of work we do is an extension of the quality of our character, so we must do our best at all times, in all situations, for all tasks. Lord, I want to please You in all my work. Give me wisdom, strength, precision, and endurance to do my best at all times. Help me learn from failure, and motivate me when the job is less than perfect. Amen.

16I will not be ashamed of my ministry, but will rightly handle the word of truth. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 17I will avoid foolish discussions which make people get angry and sin against one another, as it destroyed Hymenaeus and Philetus. 18They claimed the resurrection of the dead had passed, departing from the truth of God; then they dragged others down with their self-destruction. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} 19Lord, even though there are false teachers, I know Your truth is as solid as a rock. You know all who belong to You, and all who call on Your name must avoid doing wrong things. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5}

20Lord, in a large home there are all kinds of dishes, some are made of gold and silver, others of wood and clay. Some dishes are used for special occasions; other dishes are used for ordinary things. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} 21I want to be a special dish used by my Master, Jesus Christ, and kept ready for His good work. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21}

Dishes are made of different kinds of material: gold, silver, wood, and clay. Each dish has a different purpose. Paul admonishes each believer to "purge himself [and] be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and fit for the master's use" (v. 21, KJV). Lord, show me any sin or weakness in my life that keeps me from service. Forgive me and cleanse me, then use me in Your service. I want to do "good works." Amen.

22Instead of giving into the lust of youth, I will seek holiness, faith, love, and peace in fellowship with all who call on the Lord. {205 Guard Your Heart-Prayer, Phil. 4:6-7} 23I will avoid foolish arguments that

upset people, and lead to quarrels. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} 24So I will not quarrel with anyone, but will be kind, a good teacher, and patient with all. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 25I will be gentle when I correct people who disagree with me, remembering You can change their minds {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} 26so that they will recognize the truth, and escape satan's grip on them, and be free of his trap. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8}

2 Timothy 3

The Prediction of Apostasy and God's Answer in Scripture

1Lord, I know that in the last days before Christ comes, there will be dangerous times. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 2People will be aggressively self-centered and greedy for money, boastful, arrogant, and will scoff at You. They will be contentious and ungrateful to their parents, and lack any sensitivity for people. 3They will be inhumane, without love and without forgiveness, and they will be sarcastic, violent, and rebellious. 4They will hate anything good, but they will be treacherous, rash, conceited, and addicted to pleasure, rather than lovers of God. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 5They will say they are Christians and they attend church, but their lives will deny what they profess. I won't have anything to do with these people, and I'll keep away from them. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 6Lord, these types of people break up homes, having sex with stupid people who are obsessed with sex, trying one fantasy after another. 7They continually try to educate themselves, but they never come to the truth. {50 Blind-Prayer, John 11:22} 8Men like this defy the truth just as Jannes and Jambres defied Moses, they have polluted minds and they have turned against the Christian faith. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7} 9And in the long run they won't be very influential; their folly will be their downfall, and everyone will see their rebellion. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Paul warns "in the last days perilous times shall come" (3:1, KJV). Therefore we should prepare ourselves by prayer when heresy, persecution, false teachers, and extreme temptation come in the last days. Lord, I know You will come to deliver us in the last days, but before that we will endure a compromising church, false teachers, extreme sin, and all kinds of trials and temptations. Make me strong to stand against sin and to stand for You. Give me wisdom against false teachers, and boldness against compromise. Keep me when I can't keep myself. Amen.

10Lord, I know that Paul taught that we who believe in God should also live godly lives. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 11Just as Paul demonstrated faith, patience, and love in a consistent life-long way, Paul was persecuted in Antioch, Iconium, and Lystra, but You Lord, rescued him from all of them. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} 12Therefore

anyone who tries to live a life dedicated to Christ will be attacked. {330 Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Gal. 5:11}

Jesus warned that those who follow Him will suffer persecution (John 15:18-25). Paul issued the same warning, "All that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution" (3:12, KJV). Therefore we must (1) pray for those being persecuted; (2) prepare ourselves to remain true in persecution; (3) pray to be strong against evil; (4) pray for our testimony; and (5) pray for "dying grace" should we need it. Lord, my persecution is nothing like the persecution You suffered in death. Help me be ready when extreme persecution comes; may I stand and glorify You in times of trial. Amen.

13These wicked imposters of Christianity will go from bad to worse, deceiving themselves as they deceive others. 14Lord, I will be true to the teachings of Scripture, remembering who my teachers were and what they taught me, just as 15Timothy remembered his teachers from childhood, making him wise in the Scriptures so that he accepted Christ as his Savior and was saved. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} 16The whole Bible was written by Your inspiration, and is useful to teach me the truth, and points out what is wrong in my life, helping me to do what is right. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} 17The Bible is Your tool to prepare me in every area of my life, so I can do Your work. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3}

2 Timothy 4

Paul, a Faithful Servant

1Lord, Paul reminded Timothy that he stood before You and before Christ Jesus, who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing when He sets up His kingdom. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 2I will preach Your Word continually, at every place, at all times, when it is suitable and when it is not. I will correct all false teaching and rebuke those who believe and spread it around. I will encourage all people to do the right thing all the time, based on what Your Word teaches. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13}

Teaching a lesson is like planting a seed; it takes time to see fruit from our endeavors. So Paul talks of ministering "with great patience and careful instruction" (4:2). Lord, as I teach Your Word, may it grow in the hearts of hearers. Give me faith to continue teaching even when I don't see results in their lives. Amen.

3Lord, the time is coming when people won't listen to the truth, but will seek out teachers who reinforce their sin. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 4They won't listen to Your Word, but will live by their misguided rebellious ways. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 5I will be careful to always follow Your principles, and I will always be ready to suffer for Christ. I will try to win others to Christ, and do the things I should do. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7}

6Lord, Paul testified it was time for him to die since his life was being poured out as a sacrifice to You. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} 7Paul said, "I have fought a good fight to the end, I have run the race to the finish line, I have kept true to the faith." {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} 8Now Paul expects the crown of righteousness that You have for faithful witnesses that will be given to all who look for Christ's appearing. {94 Crown of Righteousness-Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:8}

Paul looked forward to receiving a crown of righteousness, which was the reward for giving one's life in service. It's called a martyr's crown. Jesus said, "Be faithful even to the point of death, and I will give you the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10). Lord, I will be faithful no matter what. I will be faithful to You because You have been faithful to me. I'll not do it for a crown, and if I receive a crown, I'll place it at Your feet in worship (Rev. 4:10). Amen.

9Lord, Paul asked Timothy to come to him as soon as possible, {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 10since Demas had forsaken him, Crescens went to Galatia and Titus to Dalmatia. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} 11Only Luke is with Paul. Paul wants Timothy to bring Mark when he comes, and to bring his coat from Troas, and also his books and scrolls. {404 Restorative-Prayer, Isa. 55:7}

Paul was critical of Mark because he left Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary trip (Acts 15:37-39). Paul refused to take Mark on the second journey and split fellowship over the issue. But here Paul has forgiven Mark and requests that he come, "He is profitable to me for the ministry" (4:11, KJV). Paul learned that at times the work is bigger than the worker. Also Paul forgave those who abandoned him. Lord, take bitterness out of my heart against any who have offended me. May others forgive me for my offenses. Teach me to love Your people, both those faithful and unfaithful, but keep me faithful. Amen.

12Paul has sent Tychicus to Ephesus. 13Lord, Paul warned Timothy about Alexander the coppersmith because he bitterly contested what Paul was teaching. {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 14Then Paul prays, "Lord, repay him for the evil he has done." 15Lord, Paul said there was no one with him when he made his first defense before the judge. 16He prayed for those who deserted him, "May they not be judged for what they did." {1 Abandonment-Prayer, Ps. 42:9} 17Paul testified that the Lord Jesus stood by him, and gave him power so that the message of grace was proclaimed for all the unsaved to hear it. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 18On that occasion You delivered him from being thrown to the lions. {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6}

19Paul stated, "The Lord will always deliver us from danger, until it's time to go to heaven." Paul glorifies You for his deliverance thus far. 20Lord, Paul told Timothy to greet Prisca and Aquilla and

the household of Onesiphorus. Erastus is in Corinth, and he left Trophimus sick in Miletus. He sends greetings from Eubulus, Pudens, Linus, Claudia and the other believers. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [21]Paul wants Timothy to come here before winter. [22]Then he prays, "May the Lord Jesus Christ be with you, and may you have His grace." {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Titus

Ch 1: Qualifications for Pastors 1784
Ch 2: The Work of a Pastor 1786
Ch 3: Command to Godly Living 1787

TITUS

Key Words: *Set in order* (Titus 1:5)

Key Verse: "The reason I left you in Crete was that you might straighten out what was left unfinished and appoint elders in every town, as I directed you" (1:5).

Theme: After Paul was released from his first imprisonment in Rome about A.D. 63, he and Titus journeyed together to tour the churches, but their trip to Crete was the cause of this book. Titus was left in Crete to "straighten out" the problems they found there. First, the churches were careless about essential doctrine (3:8), and second, the churches needed to finish the work that was left undone and to appoint elders in every town (1:5).

Titus is never mentioned in Acts because he may have been the one supplying needed information to Luke, the human author. We know he was a Gentile (Gal. 2:3), who was led to Christ by Paul (Titus 1:4). The two worked together in Antioch before the Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15). Then Titus accompanied Paul on his trips (Gal. 2:1). *Lord, I thank You for faithful workers like Titus who are not in the limelight. I will serve You even if I don't get recognition. Amen.*

It's amazing what you can accomplish if you don't care who gets the credit.

Titus 1

Qualifications for Pastors

1 Lord, Paul wrote to Titus calling himself Your slave and a messenger of Jesus Christ. Paul was commissioned to preach to the elect so they would have faith in the Word of God, and be transformed in this life and gain eternal life. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} 2 Lord, You cannot lie; You promised eternal life before the world was created. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} 3 In Your plan, You revealed the gospel to Paul so he could share it with everyone.

The gospel is based on hope for a better future. So Paul has hope for the church on the island of Crete, and he leaves Titus there to straighten out things. Isn't hope the antidote for most of our problems? We need hope that God will straighten out our family and vocation problems. We

need hope that our inner life can be straightened out so we do what we ought to do. Then we need hope of a better life on earth and hope for life with Jesus after the grave. Lord, thank You for giving me hope for a better life. Now I am motivated to learn and discipline myself to serving You. Now my life can be a testimony to others and bring glory to You. Thank You for hope beyond the grave for I know I will spend eternity with You. Amen.

4Paul wrote to Titus who shared his ministry, because Paul led Titus to Christ. Paul prayed for Titus to experience grace and peace from You the Father, and Christ Jesus the Savior. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
5Lord, Paul left Titus in Crete to organize churches and appoint pastors in every town. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} 6A pastor must have unquestioned character and be the husband of one wife. His children must be believers, and he must not be charged with disorderly conduct. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24} 7A pastor will be Your representative to the people, so he must be blameless, never arrogant, short-tempered, violent, greedy, or a brawler. {442 Sober-Praying, Prov. 23:31} 8A pastor must be hospitable, friendly, self-disciplined, fair-minded, and dedicated. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} 9He must have a firm grip on the message of salvation, and must agree with the doctrine Paul taught, so that he can teach sound doctrine to all, and refute those who oppose it. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16}
10Paul said there were many rebellious Christians in Crete who must be dealt with because they say all Christians must keep the Jewish ceremonial law. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 11Paul told Titus to silence them because they were ruining whole families just to make money. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 12Then Paul quoted a Cretian poet who said, "Cretians are nothing but liars, dangerous beasts who live to fill their bellies." 13Therefore Paul wanted Titus to correct them harshly and point them to sound doctrine, 14so they will stop listening to Jewish fables and stop obeying rules that are man-made because these things turn believers from the truth. 15Lord, those who are committed to purity will find purity in their search for truth. Those who are rebellious and evil in their thinking will find the corruption they seek. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 16They claim to know God personally, but their actions deny their search for truth. They are outrageously rebellious toward You, and everything they do is evil. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

Paul left Titus in Crete to straighten out things in a disorderly church that was plagued with internal strife and doctrinal problems. The first step in spiritual housecleaning is prayer (1) that leaders are biblical (Titus 1:6-9); (2) that false teachers are silenced (Titus 1:10-13); (3) that family relationships are appropriate (2:1-10); (4) that salvation is correctly understood (2:11-15); and (5) that personal conduct

is biblical and kind (3:1-11). Lord, I will pray before I attempt to straighten out things in my life or in the church. Give Your wisdom to me on how to proceed and what to do. Give me kindness for people and firm belief in Scripture. Help me do all things decently and in order. Amen.

Titus 2

The Work of a Pastor

[1]Lord, Paul told Titus to teach sound doctrine, [2]and to tell the older men to be serious about the truth, self-disciplined, and dignified, and to do everything patiently and quietly; but most of all, to be men of faith. {279 Life-Defining Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2}

Twice Paul exhorts "healthy" spiritual living. He calls it "healthy teaching" (the process), and "healthy message" (the product we deliver). The King James Version calls it sound doctrine. We should pray for the message we deliver and the way we deliver it. Lord, help me give out the Word of God in a healthy way, and to use the message of salvation to produce spiritual health in those who hear it. Amen.

[3]Lord, Paul told Titus to teach the older women that they must be holy in behavior, and that they must not gossip nor get drunk, and to be the teachers of godliness. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} [4]Older women must teach the younger women to behave rightly, love their husbands, and love their children. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [5]Younger women must be sexually pure, gentle, keep their houses clean, and obey their husbands so they don't disgrace the gospel with their lifestyle. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [6]Lord, Paul told the younger men to behave, and to be serious about their duties in life. {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} [7]They should be an example of sincerity and honesty, and keep their promises {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [8]so no one can accuse them of lying, and they must not take advantage of others financially. [9]Lord, Paul told the workers to be obedient to their bosses, and obey the orders given to them, and never steal anything from them but be completely honest at all times. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [10]Slaves must strive to be an example of Christianity in everything they do.

Paul wants Titus to "set in order" or "straighten out" the church at Crete. Outward order begins with inward discipline. So Paul exhorts self-discipline for women (2:5), for men (2:6), and for all new converts (2:12). So we must pray for self-discipline, because controlling ourselves is the first order of business in bringing order to any situation. Lord, I want to be more disciplined; show me why I have difficulty controlling myself. Then give me the strength of Christ to bring into control my mind, appetite, actions, and reactions to others. Amen.

[11]Lord, You revealed Your grace to us, and made it available to the entire human race. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} [12]You have taught us to deny ourselves of everything that does not lead us to godliness. You have taught us to deny our pride and sinful ambitions, to discipline ourselves, and live good lives, here and now in this present world. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [13]Lord, I am looking for the blessed hope and glorious appearing of Jesus Christ my Savior and God. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [14]He sacrificed Himself for me to set me free from all contamination and wickedness. Jesus has purified His people to be His very own, and He always wants them to do the right thing. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

Sometimes we must correct others. Realizing that most people do not like to be corrected, we should begin with prayer (1) for the ones we've corrected, to receive our admonition; (2) for us to have the right attitude; (3) for the problem we're correcting; and (4) for God to be glorified in the process of correcting. Lord, I don't like to correct other people; give me grace and humility to do it. Bless me when I correct others so that You are glorified and the problem is solved. Amen.

[15]Paul told Titus to teach these truths and then rebuke any who would not listen to him. And finally, he encouraged Titus not to let anyone despise him personally.

Paul reminds us we are "looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing" (2:13, KJV). So we should pray (1) for patience when things go wrong; (2) for people to be saved before He returns; and (3) for us to work faithfully as we wait. Lord, I look for Your return to receive us into glory. Give me patience in a world that is driven by sin. I want to be delivered from problems and trials. But motivate me to work faithfully for You while there is time to win more people to salvation. Even so, come, Lord Jesus. Amen.

Titus 3

Command to Godly Living

[1]Lord, I will be obedient to government officials, and will obey all civic laws, and I'll work honestly for a living. I will not slander government rulers, nor will I pick fights with them. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [2]But I will be courteous to them and be kind to all people. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [3]I remember I was once foolish and rebellious to laws, and rude to people because I was a slave to my lusts. I lived for sinful pleasures, hating people, and being hated by them.

Paul wanted everyone to obey God, and he emphasized this point by reminding his readers that he once was disobedient. He then went on to describe his being a slave to all kinds of human desires and pleasures (3:3). Technically when we obey, it is not

our own initiative, because "it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do" (Phil. 2:13, KJV). Therefore we should praise God for our obedience, whether quick or slow; whether partial or complete. Lord, I praise You for the spirit of obedience You've placed within my heart. May I grow stronger and quicker in my daily obedience; and may You be glorified in my obedience. Amen.

4Lord, then You revealed Your kindness and love to save me; {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 5I was not saved by my works of righteousness, but I was saved by Your mercy. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 6You washed my sins way, and I was born again by the working of the Holy Spirit in my life which You abundantly poured out to me through Jesus Christ my Savior. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} 7Jesus did this so I might be justified in Your sight, and I became Your heir, looking forward to inheriting eternal life with You. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 8Lord, I rely on Your truth and will affirm it constantly so that they who believe in You for salvation will be careful to maintain good works. This truth is good and it works for me, and will work for all who believe it. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Paul thanks God for His mercy that saved us from sin by the "washing of rebirth" (3:5). We are born again by the renewing of the Holy Spirit" (v. 5). Lord, thank You that I was born again where You gave me a new nature with new desires to serve You, and You made me a member of the family of God. Thank You for forgiveness of sins, a transformed life, and access to God the Father. Amen.

9Lord, Paul told Titus not to argue over pointless questions, and genealogies, and controversies over the Jewish law. They are useless and cannot help anyone. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 10If anyone quarrels about this truth after the first and second rebuke, put him out of the church. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} 11That type of person has already condemned himself and has rejected the truth.

12Lord, Paul promised to send Artemas or Tychicus to Titus, and then he was to join him at Nicopolis where Paul planned to spend the winter. {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 13He told Titus to make travel plans for Zenas the lawyer and Apollos. 14Paul wanted all believers to help others who have need, as this makes their lives productive. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} 15Everyone with Paul sent greetings to Titus, and he finally prays, "Grace be with you." {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}

Philemon

Ch 1: A Prayer for Forgiveness and Restoration 1791

PHILEMON

Key Word: *Profitable* (Philemon v. 11)

Key Verse: "I appeal to you for my son Onesimus, whom I have begotten *while* in my chains, who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me" (Philem. 10-11).

Theme: Onesimus (meaning "profitable") had robbed his master Philemon in Colosse and escaped to Rome. Then by providence, Paul crossed paths with Onesimus and led him to Christ. Then Onesimus began serving Paul who was renting "his own rented house" (Acts 28:30) where he was continually chained to an armed Roman soldier (Acts 28:16). Eventually Paul sent Onesimus back home with this letter that asked Philemon to forgive Onesimus and treat him as a "brother in Christ." Paul could ask this because he had led Philemon to Christ (v. 19). Paul pleads, "But if he has wronged you or owes anything, put that on my account" (v. 18).

This short letter is a picture of redemption. Onesimus represents us who have sinned against God the Father, who is represented by Philemon. Paul, representing Christ, intercedes for the Father to forgive our sin. Christ asks the Father to put our sin to His account (2 Cor. 5:21). *Lord, I am a sinner who deserves punishment and death. I come through the intercession of Christ because He paid the price for my sin. Thank You for putting my sin on Christ's account. Amen.*

Philemon 1

A Prayer for Forgiveness and Restoration

[1]Lord, Paul wrote a letter with Timothy from his prison in Rome to Philemon, a rich Christian in Colosse. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [2]The letter was also addressed to Philemon's wife Apphia, and to his son Archippus, a church leader in the Colossian church. [3]Paul prayed for grace and peace on the life of Philemon from You, our heavenly Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. [4]He also thanked You for Philemon and made a commitment to continue praying for him, {484 Thanksgiving-Prayer, Eph. 1:16} [5]that Philemon would keep trusting the Lord Jesus and develop deep love for Your children. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [6]Lord, Paul

said Philemon was fully committed to the work of God, and as Philemon put his generosity to work, he would understand what he could really accomplish. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [7]Philemon's generosity had given Paul joy and comfort, and refreshed Paul's heart in serving God. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [8]Lord, Paul boldly asked a favor from Philemon, even though Paul could have demanded it because of all he had done for Philemon. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [9]Paul asked that his request be received from a friend, since he was now an old man and in prison for the sake of Christ. {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} [10]Lord, Paul requested kindness be shown to Onesimus, a runaway slave from Philemon, whom Paul had led to Christ. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} [11]Onesimus was not much use to Philemon in the past, but now Onesimus is useful to both of them because he had been serving Paul in prison. {512 Useful-Vessel Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:20-21} [12]Paul says, "I am sending Onesimus back to you and part of my heart goes with him." [13]Lord, Paul really wanted to keep Onesimus in Rome to do things for him that he couldn't do because his chains restricted him. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [14]Onesimus could have helped Paul's ministry, and that would be Philemon's contribution to Paul, but Paul didn't want to make Onesimus stay in Rome without Philemon's consent. And Paul didn't want to force Philemon to let Onesimus stay in Rome with him. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [15]Lord, Onesimus ran away for a little while, so Philemon could have him permanently. [16]But not taken back just as a slave, but received as a beloved brother in Christ. Onesimus will do more for Philemon now as a brother than he previously did as a slave because now he belongs to You. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

The name Onesimus means "useful." He was previously un-useful because he stole from his master Philemon and ran away. Paul led Onesimus to Christ in Rome when Paul was a prisoner. Paul reasons, "Who once was unprofitable to you, but now is profitable to you and to me" (v. 11). Paul concludes that Onesimus is "not now as a servant... a brother beloved, specially to me" (v. 16). Then picturing salvation Paul said, "Accept Onesimus as you would accept me" (v. 17). Lord, I am a picture of Onesimus. I have sinned against You. Thank You for receiving me in Christ. Amen.

[17]Lord, Paul asked Philemon to receive Onesimus as he would receive Paul. [18]If Onesimus has stolen anything or cost Philemon any money, {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [19]Paul said, "Put that on my account, and I will repay it to you" (Paul did not mention that Philemon owes him his very life). {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [20]Lord, this letter is a wonderful picture of Christianity. Just as Onesimus ran away from his master, so I was straying away from You. Just as Paul promises to pray for Onesimus' damages, so Christ paid for all the damages that sin

did to my relationship with You. Just as Paul prays for Philemon to receive Onesimus, so Christ prays for You to receive me. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [21]Lord, Paul trusted Philemon to respond positively, then added that Philemon would do more than he asked. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [22]Lord, Paul added one more request: "Get a room ready for me, and pray God will send me to see you." [23]Paul sent greetings from Epaphras, Mark, Aristarchus, Demas, and Luke, his co-laborers. [24]Paul concludes by praying, [25]"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

Philemon was a rich businessman in Colosse who owned a slave named Onesimus. Paul begins by (1) thanking God for Philemon's love for people and his faith in God (v. 5); (2) Paul recalls his active faith (a church meets in his home, he has encouraged many, and is considered a partner of Paul) (v. 17); (3) Paul prays that "the communication of thy faith may become effectual" (v. 6); (4) Paul wants Philemon not to punish Onesimus for running away, but to receive him back as a brother and to forgive any charges against Onesimus (he probably stole before he ran away); (5) the basis of Paul's request is relationship, he led both Philemon (v. 19) and Onesimus (vv. 10-11) to Christ; and (6) Paul's request to Philemon is a picture of redemption. Onesimus represents sinners who run from God, but repent and ask for forgiveness. Philemon represents the Father against whom the sinner rebels. Paul represents Christ who asks that the sin of the sinner be charged to His account. Lord, I love this picture that tells my sins were charged to Jesus and He paid redemption's price. I am no longer a slave, but a member of the Father's family. He receives me back as a brother (v. 16). Amen.

Hebrews

Ch 1: Jesus Is Better than the Prophets 1796
Ch 2: First Warning against Neglect 1798
Ch 3: Jesus Is Better than Moses 1799
Ch 4: Jesus Is Better than the Sabbath 1801
Ch 5: Jesus Is Better than Human Priest 1802
Ch 6: Third Warning about Disobedience (Continued) 1803
Ch 7: Jesus Is Better than Melchizedek 1805
Ch 8: Jesus Is Better than Aaron (Continued) ... 1807
Ch 9: Jesus Is Better than the Old Sanctuary ... 1808
Ch 10: Jesus Is Better than the Old Sacrifices (Continued) 1810
Ch 11: The Superiority of Faith in Jesus 1813
Ch 12: The Superiority of Faith in Jesus (Continued) 1816
Ch 13: Faith in Jesus Is the Better Way 1818

HEBREWS

Key Word: *Better* (occurs 11 times)

Key Verse: "Dear friends, we are confident of better things in your case—things that accompany salvation" (Hebrews 6:9).

Theme: God used the book of Hebrews to stop the Jewish Christians in Jerusalem and around the world from going back into the temple and resorting to Old Testament religious practices and celebrations. They may have gone back into the temple because of their religious heritage, or because of their natural commitment to friends and relatives who were not converted to Christ. But the longer they remained in the temple, the more likely they were caught up in its practices, and eventually they would backslide.

Therefore the author tells them Christ is "better" than angels (1:4-2:18), better than Moses (3:1-19), better than the Sabbath (4:1-16), better than the priesthood (5:1-8:5), better than the covenants (8:6-7), better than the temple (9:1, 10:39), and better than Old Testament heroes (11:1-12:2). The author also interjects warnings (called parentheses) throughout the book: 2:1-4; 5:11-6:12; 10:26-39; 12:3-17; 12:25-29. He warns that in the temple "no sacrifice for sins is left" (10:26). Christ is the "better" sacrifice and the "better" high priest. When the Jews offered temple sacrifices, they had "trampled the Son of God under foot" and "created as an unholy thing the blood of the covenant and...insulted the Spirit of grace" (10:29). *Lord, You are better than all religious services and worship expressions. You are my life and salvation. I put my trust in You, You are better than anything this world can offer. Amen.*

Hebrews 1

Jesus Is Better than the Prophets

[1]Lord, long ago You spoke in many different ways at many different times to past believers, by the prophets, giving them a partial picture of Your eternal plan. [2]But You spoke completely and finally through Your Son to whom You have given everything, and through whom You created the universe. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} [3]Your Son is the radiance of Your glory and the exact representation

of Your nature. His power sustains all things. After the Son provided forgiveness of sins, He sat down at Your right hand in glory. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3}

During Bible times God spoke through prophets, miracles, and many other means, but finally God spoke the ultimate message in Jesus. Today we get the complete message of God from the Scriptures. It tells of our Savior Jesus Christ from the beginning to the end. When God speaks, we must listen and pray to understand (through scriptural insight) what God says to us. Then we must live by the message we have heard from God. Lord, I will spend time listening to Your message spoken through the Scriptures. I will listen to Jesus, and learn as much about Him as possible. Speak now...speak clearly...speak specifically to me...I'm listening. Amen.

Jesus Is Better than Angels

4 Your Son is much greater than the angels,
His name—Jesus, Savior—is much greater
than theirs. {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb.
1:4, 8:6}

The key word in Hebrews is "better." (1) Jesus is better than the angels; (2) Jesus is better than Moses; (3) Jesus is better than the Sabbath; (4) Jesus is better than the high priests; (5) Jesus is better than the covenants; and (6) Jesus is better than the sacrifices. Jesus is better than anything the Hebrews had in the Old Testament. Therefore we must praise God for all He's done for us in Jesus. Lord, living for Jesus is better than my former life. Jesus' salvation is better than anything I could ever do for myself. The indwelling Jesus is better than emptiness without Him. Yes, Jesus is better, and I praise You for Him. Amen.

5 You never said to the angels, "You are My
Son, since I have become Your Father."
You never said about the angels, "I am
His Father, He will be My Son." 6 You
said, "When I bring the firstborn into the
world, let all the angels worship Him."
{264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 7 You
said, "I make the angels swift as the wind,
and My servants will punish with fire." {14
Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} 8 But
about the Son You said, "Your kingdom,
O God, will last forever and ever, and You
will rule in righteousness; {264 Jesus-Wor-
ship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} 9 You love righteous-
ness and hate iniquity. Therefore Your
throne—Jesus—is set above all others, and
I, the Father, will pour out the oil of right-
teousness on You." You called Your Son—
Lord—when You said, {147 Exalt-Jesus
Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 10 "In the beginning,
O Lord, You laid the foundation of the
earth; the heavens were the work of Your
hand. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps.
19:1, 2} 11 The heavens will vanish, but You,
My Son, remain; 12 they will wear out like
old clothes but You, My Son, will remain
forever and Your years will never end."
{147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}
13 You never said to any angel, "Sit at My
right hand until I humble your enemies

under your feet." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

We must worship Jesus because His salvation is so much better than all the people and means God used to save people in the Old Testament. Jesus is the centerpiece of salvation and we should worship Him, which means giving Jesus the worthship that is due to Him. Lord Jesus, I worship You because You became flesh to live among us as my example. I worship You for Your perfect life and life-changing teaching. I worship You for suffering in my place and dying for my sin to give me forgiveness and cleansing. I worship You for Your resurrection that gives me new life. I worship You because You became my High Priest who intercedes for me now in heaven. Amen.

[14]No, You didn't exalt any angel because they are spirits who minister to You in worship, and they minister to those who will receive salvation. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31}

We should thank God for the ministry of angels. Angels are "ministering spirits" (1:14). The word "ministering" is a synonym for the ministry of worship, in which our worship ministers to God. Just as we minister to God when teaching the Word, or we minister to God when we serve, so we minister to God with our worship. Lord, I serve You with the worship of my hands, my tongue, and my music. I worship You with my money and my holy living. Amen.

Hebrews 2

First Warning against Neglect

[1]Lord, I will pay careful attention to the biblical things I've heard so that I don't drift away from You. {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [2]Because the message spoken by angels was true, and every disobedience has its own judgment, no one will go unpunished if he neglects Your salvation that is promised to him. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [3]The promise was first announced by Jesus Himself and passed on to us by them who heard Him speak. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [4]You confirmed this message with signs, miracles, and gifts of the Holy Spirit distributed to them. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4}

Christ Is Better than Created Man

[5]Lord, You did not make angels rulers of the world to come, but You made Your Son ruler of everything. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [6]David said in the psalms, "What is man that You are concerned about him, but you honor the son of man? {497 Trusting-Prayer, Rom. 11:33} [7]You made him a little lower than angels, so You could crown him with glory and honor, and You put everything under his feet. [8]You left nothing that was not put under Your Son, yet at the present time, everything is not subject to him." [9]We see Jesus, who for a short time was made lower than the angels, now crowned with glory and splendor in heaven, because by Your grace He submitted to death for all mankind. {260 Jesus' Suffering

Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [10]Lord, it was Your purpose to allow Christ to suffer, because through His death Jesus brought many to heaven and He became the leader of their salvation by His sufferings. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [11]We have been made holy by Jesus, we have the same Father, and Jesus is not ashamed to call me His brother. {333 Oneness-Prayer, Phil. 2:2} [12]For Jesus predicted in Psalms, "I will tell My brothers about the Father and in their presence I will praise Him." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [13]At another place Jesus said, "I will trust My Father," and again He said, "Here I am with Your children You have given Me." {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [14]Since all Your human children have flesh and blood, Jesus shared this same humanity, so that by death, He could destroy the one who holds the power of death, that is, the devil, [15]and free all those held captive by the fear of death for their entire lives. {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} [16]Lord, I know You don't give this ministry to angels, but You minister to the children of Abraham. [17]Therefore, Lord Jesus, You became like man, that You might be a merciful and faithful intercessor to the Father for us and satisfy His wrath against us. [18]Because You suffered willingly, even when You were tempted to by-pass the cross, You are now able to help me and others when we are tempted.

We should be grateful that Jesus suffered in our place so that we do not have to suffer punishment for our sins. Lord, thank You for sending Your Son to suffer in my place, so I don't have to suffer for my sins. The cross was not an accident or the results of hateful vengeance. You planned for my salvation and sent Your Son to suffer for me. I bow in gratitude and worship for Your great plan to save those who believe in You. Amen.

Hebrews 3

Jesus Is Better than Moses

[1]Lord, because You have set me apart for Christ, and because You have chosen me by a heavenly calling, You want me to fix my thoughts on Jesus the Apostle and High Priest of my faith. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [2]Jesus faithfully served You as a Priest just as Moses faithfully served You in the holy sanctuary.

Moses was faithful to his calling just as Christ was faithful to death. We should pray to be faithful to our calling. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} We have the examples of faithful biblical servants, and we have the indwelling of Christ's strength to make us faithful. So God will help us, "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it" (1 Thess. 5:24, KJV). Lord, I have a deep desire to be faithful, but I also have an old nature that tempts me to sin. Keep me faithful by Your strength and I will be faithful. Amen.

[3]But Jesus was worthy of greater honor than Moses, just as the builder has greater

honor than the house he built. {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb. 1:4, 8:6} [4]Every house is built by someone, but You are the builder of everything. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}
[5]Moses was faithful to serve in Your house, his work was a type—an illustration—of Christ's work that was coming, {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [6]but Christ has complete authority over Your house. And as a Christian, I am part of Your house so I will cling with confidence to that hope to the end. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2}

Second Warning against Unbelief

[7]Lord, when I hear Your voice speaking to me, {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} [8]I will not stubbornly resist You as Israel rebelled against You and wandered in the desert 40 years. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

Today is the only day God can work in my life. Yesterday is past and is history. Tomorrow has not yet come; it is a dream and goal for all that I do today. I can't serve God tomorrow, at least not yet. But today is now. And perhaps now is God's favorite word for service, for now is the time God can do His work in my life. Lord, thank You for today; I will use today for Your glory because when it's gone, I'll not have another chance to use that moment of time. Today is now, so I'll serve You immediately. Amen.

[9]In the desert the Israelites constantly tested You and disobeyed You, even though they knew what You did in the past for them. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [10]That is why You were angry with them and said, [11]"Their hearts are hardened and they refuse to obey Me; they shall never enter into the rest I have for them." [12]Lord, I do not have a disobedient heart that rejects You. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3}

Because we have an old nature that would pull us away from God, we must protect ourselves with prayer and Bible study to keep our hearts from unbelief. Lord, I admit I am not perfect. I am tempted to doubt Your Word and existence. Keep my heart from unbelief. I will study Your Word continually, and attend church faithfully, and serve You constantly so I'll not be tempted to doubt You. Amen.

[13]I will listen to Your Word today so I won't develop an unbelieving, stubborn heart. {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} [14]I will faithfully trust You to the end, just as when I was first saved so I can share all the blessings You have planned for me. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13} [15]But now, I will not harden my heart as Israel did in the desert. {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [16]The Jews were the people who heard Your voice and rebelled. They were the ones Moses delivered out of Egypt. [17]They were those who made You angry so You made them wander in the desert 40 years because of their sin. Their bodies were buried in the wilderness. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev.

17:5} [18]Those were the ones You swore would never enter Your rest; why couldn't they enter the Promised Land? {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [19]It was because of their unbelief. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24}

Hebrews 4

Jesus Is Better than the Sabbath

[1]Lord, since Your promise of entering Your rest still stands, I will be careful not to neglect entering Your rest. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [2]You had the gospel preached to me just as it was preached to Israel, but they couldn't take advantage of it because of unbelief. {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} [3]Now I can enter Your rest by faith, because You said, "I made an oath that those who will not believe Me, cannot enter My rest." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [4]I know Your rest is waiting for me because I will finish my work. After You worked six days, You rested on the seventh day because You finished all Your work. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

God rested after the creation week on the seventh day as our example and as a promise to us. Obviously we still have a seventh day of rest available to us, but God also promises a "rest for the people of God" (4:9). Jesus said, "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matt. 11:28). Lord, I'm weary in this body; I need rest every night to make it through tomorrow. But I also want an inner rest; give me inner peace and assurance. Ah...Your rest is so good, I like it. Amen.

[5]The promise remains for some to enter Your rest today, {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [6]even though those who heard the gospel preached to them rejected it. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} [7]God still warns through the words of David, "Today, if you hear God's voice, do not harden your hearts against Him." {486 Today's Response in Prayer, Heb. 3:7} [8]If the promised rest was the land into which Joshua led them, God would not have later promised a different rest. [9]Therefore there remains a Sabbath-rest for you who read this letter. {62 Children of Promise-Prayer, Gal. 3:28} [10]When you enter your rest, you cease from your labor, just as the Father ceased from His labor. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} [11]Therefore I will make every effort to enter Your rest, being careful not to disobey You as the Israelites did in the wilderness. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [12]Lord, Your Word is alive and active, sharper than a two-edged sword, piercing the unseen things such as my soul and spirit, exposing my thoughts and attitudes for what they are. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12}

The Scriptures have life and energy when they enter a person's heart. (1) They convict of sin; (2) they make people uncomfortable in their sin; (3) they cause people to see God's judgment of their sin; and (4) they explain Jesus' death; and (5) they motivate people to

repent and turn to God. Therefore we should pray for God to use the Scriptures in the lives of our unsaved family and friends. Lord, use the Bible in the lives of my unsaved family and friends to "slice between their soul and spirit" so they will come to faith in Jesus Christ. Amen.

13 Lord, You know everything about everyone. Nothing is hidden from You who will judge everyone, so You know who will enter Your rest. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5}
14 Lord, Jesus Your Son has gone to heaven as my great High Priest, so I will hold fast to my faith. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5} 15 My High Priest understands me and sympathizes with my weaknesses because He was tempted in all parts of His being, just as I am, yet He did not commit sin. {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} 16 So I will come boldly to Your throne and I will receive mercy and find grace in my hour of need. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5}

Hebrews 5

Jesus Is Better than Human Priest

1 Lord, the human high priest was selected from among human men, and was chosen to represent Your people before You. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} 2 He sympathized with the ignorant and those who made mistakes, because as a mortal, the high priest was subject to weaknesses. 3 This is why the high priest offered sacrifices for his own sins before he offered them for anyone else. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} 4 No one makes a choice to be a high priest; he must be chosen by God, just as Aaron was chosen. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

When God calls a person to serve Him with all of his time and energy, he must respond wholeheartedly. Today this is described as a calling to full-time service. Many were born into the Levitical family, but only a few were called to be priests (Heb. 5:4). The one called must have his sins forgiven before he preaches forgiveness to others (5:3). One other qualification is a prayer ministry, that is, he "offered up prayers and petitions" (5:7). When God calls a person, he must pray, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt" (Matt. 26:39, KJV). Lord, I may not be called to full-time ministry, but nevertheless may Your will be done in my life. I will serve You with all my heart, whether in full-time ministry or not. Amen.

5 So Christ did not make the choice to be the High Priest, but the Father chose Him, saying, "You are My Son, today I have become Your Father." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 6 Again the Father said, "You are a priest forever in the priestly order of Melchizedek." {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} 7 In His earthly days Jesus prayed with loud cries and tears to God who could save Him from death, and He was heard because of His obedience. {257 Jesus' Example-Prayer, John 17:1}

God hears the prayers of those who fear Him, "He had offered up prayers... and was heard in that he feared" (5:7). Fear is more than the negative of being scared by God's anger or judgment; it is positive reverential trust in His sovereign control of all things. Lord, I am afraid of not obeying You because I know about Your final judgment on sin and rebellion. But I also respectfully reverence You for Your absolute power to do Your will. So I will obey You and trust Your power to accomplish Your will in my life. Therefore I pray with confidence that Your will be done. Amen.

[8]Although Jesus was Your Son, He learned what obedience was like when he experienced suffering. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [9]It was after this experience that Jesus became the giver of eternal life to those who obey Him. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [10]Then You declared Jesus to be the High Priest after the order of Melchizedek. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1}

Third Warning against Disobedience

[11]The author had a lot more to say about the priesthood of Melchizedek, but the readers didn't fully understand what he wrote. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} [12]When they ought to be teachers, they were still students; needing someone to teach them the elementary truths of Christianity. They needed milk, not solid food! {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} [13]Spiritual babies still live on milk, not knowing how to live right because [14]solid food is for mature Christians who by training can distinguish between good and evil. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12}

Hebrews 6

Third Warning about Disobedience (Continued)

[1]Lord, I won't stay with the elementary teachings about salvation, but I'll go on to maturity in Christ. {203 Growth in Christ-Prayer, Col. 2:8}

The basic nature of prayer is relationship; it is a two-way communication between you and God. You both talk and you both listen. In chapter 6 the author is describing basic Christianity, that is, "The elementary teachings about Christ" (6:1). While basic prayer is good and necessary, we should "go on to maturity" (6:1). We do that by building on the basics. Lord, I love my basic relationship with You. Pull me back if I ever get away from my basic relationship with You. I will talk to You in prayer, and let You talk to me through the Word, and then I will talk to lost people about salvation. Keep me basic. Amen.

[2]I won't go back to my original repentance from sin, nor will I keep studying my baptism, or my spiritual gifts, or the resurrection from the dead, or eternal judgment. [3]Lord, I will build my life on these foundational truths and grow to maturity in my daily walk with You. [4]It's impossible for

those who are saved to go back to the temple to have their sins forgiven by a blood sacrifice. [5]If a person knew Jesus Christ, and tasted the heavenly gift, and had been filled with the Holy Spirit, and understood the Scriptures, and felt the assurance of heaven, {416 Salvation-Prayer, Luke 18:13} [6]and he turns against You, it's impossible to be spiritually renewed in the temple. When they sacrifice a lamb, it's like crucifying again the Son of God and torturing Him anew. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [7]When farm land drinks in the rain from heaven, it grows a good crop because it experiences Your blessing; that's a picture of our spiritual prosperity from You. [8]But if farm land keeps growing weeds and thorns, the land is worthless, and it might as well be cursed; that's a picture of a person who doesn't produce spiritual fruit. {178 Frightful-Prayer, Mark 14:36}

[9]Even though the writer warns the readers, he thinks they will do better things for You. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} [10]Lord, You are not unjust, You'll not forget a person's faith, nor his love, nor his good works. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [11]I will show the same diligence to the very end of life, so I will get my full reward when I get to heaven. {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [12]I will not become lazy, but will follow the example of those who through faith and patience received the prize. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4}

Jesus Is Better than Abraham

[13]I know You will do what You promised. When You made a promise to Abraham, since You couldn't swear by any other, You swore by Yourself. {13 All-Time Praying, Heb. 7:26} [14]You promised to bless Abraham and give him many descendants; [15]so Abraham received a son after waiting patiently for many years. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [16]People today swear an oath by someone greater than themselves to guarantee what they promise and end all arguments. {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [17]Because You wanted to make it very clear to Your children what You would do, You guaranteed it with Your oath. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [18]Lord, You have given me two things: Your promise and Your oath, and since it's impossible for You to lie, I know without a doubt that I'll receive eternal life that You've promised. {227 Hope-Rejoicing Prayer, Heb. 6:19} [19]I have this certain hope of heaven as an anchor of the soul for I'm connected to Christ who has gone before me, {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} [20]to enter the most holy place in heaven, where He intercedes for me as my High Priest. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5}

We should have confident hope in the future. Why? (1) Because God has promised we will live with Him, and "It is impossible for God to lie" (6:18); (2) because we have a safe anchor (6:19); and (3) Jesus has already gone to heaven and we are "in Him," so positionally we are actually in heaven. Lord, I feel Your Spirit stirring in my soul and it gives me hope of heaven. But I also know You promised I would live with You (John

14:2-3). That too gives me hope of heaven. But most of all I know Jesus has already gone to heaven, and I am in Him, so that guarantees that I will go there when I die. Amen.

Hebrews 7

Jesus Is Better than Melchizedek

[1]Lord, Jesus became a priest after the order of Melchizedek, who was king of Salem and Your priest; he called You by the name El Elyon, Possessor of heaven and earth. {42 Blessing A Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [2]When Abraham returned home after defeating the kings, Melchizedek interceded for him. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [3]Then Abraham gave Melchizedek a tenth of everything he gained. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV}
[4]The name Melchizedek means "king of righteousness," and the title king of Salem means "king of peace." {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [5]There is no record he had any previous ancestors, or that he died; he is like the Son of God, a priest forever. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44} [6]Lord, Melchizedek was great, even Abraham, the Father of the Jews, gave him a tenth of all he had. {102 Dedication of Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44-45} [7]The Old Testament required the descendants of Levi who became priests to collect a tenth from all the people, that is, their brothers. {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} [8]However, Melchizedek did not trace his heritage to Levi, yet he collected a tenth from Abraham and blessed him. The one who has power to bless is the greater. {371 Prayers Received by Christ, Heb. 7:8, KJV}

The King James Version translates this verse, "Here men that die receive tithes, but there He receiveth them" (7:8). The word "there" is a reference to heaven, which is the opposite of earth, and the words "He receiveth," are a reference to Jesus to whom we pay tithes. We give our money on this earth, but Jesus in heaven receives the gift. When we do anything for God on this earth—including prayer—Jesus receives the gift in heaven. Lord Jesus, thank You for receiving my prayers and all other things I do for You. You are the focus of my love; I do all for You. Amen.

[9]In the case of Levi, ordinary mortals received tithes, but Melchizedek who received tithes lives forever. [10]Levi, who was in the body of Abraham, paid tithes to Melchizedek who lives forever. [11]Therefore the Jewish priests who came from the rank of Levi couldn't save us, but God sent us Christ as a priest from the rank of Melchizedek to save us.

Jesus Is Better than Aaron

[12]For there to be a change of priesthood, there also needed to be a change of law. [13]Jesus who became a Priest, was from the tribe of Judah, not from the tribe of Levi. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [14]Moses didn't write anything about a person from Judah to serve as a priest at the altar. [15]So God's method changed because Christ's

new position as High Priest came from Melchizedek. [16]Christ didn't become a priest based on the requirements of Levi, but He became a priest by the power of a life lived forever. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [17]The psalmist proved this about Christ, "You are a Priest forever, after the rank of Melchizedek." [18]The former laws of priesthood were set aside because they were weak and useless. [19]The law never saved anyone, but now we approach God with a better hope. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [20]God promised that Christ would be an eternal Priest; remember, God never promised this about the Levitical priests. [21]Only to Christ did the Father say, "You are a Priest forever after the rank of Melchizedek." {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} [22]Because of this oath Jesus now guarantees us a new and better covenant with God. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [23]Under the old system, there were many new priests who took the place of the older ones who died off. [24]But Jesus lives forever, and has a continuous priesthood, so I can come to You anytime through Jesus my Intercessor. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [25]Now Jesus is able to completely save me when I come to You, since He lives forever to make intercession for me. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1}

The King James Version refers to Jesus as "this man" (7:24). Jesus is now at the right hand of God the Father in His human body, scars and all. Jesus died, was made alive, and ascended up into glory. There in His physical body, Jesus intercedes for us today: (1) in His omnipresence Jesus is everywhere present, equally, at the same time; (2) the physical presence of Jesus is at the right hand of the Father in heaven (Ps. 110:1); (3) the indwelling Jesus lives in the heart of each believer (Gal. 2:20); and (4) Jesus lives within the church, which is His body (Matt. 18:20; Eph. 1:23). Lord, I pray to You through Jesus, the man, because He is my Intercessor. Since I'm "in Christ," You accept me as You accept Jesus Christ. Amen.

[26]Lord, Jesus is the kind of high priest I need, one who is holy, blameless, and without sin, and He has access to You in heaven. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [27]Jesus is not like human priests who need to sacrifice for their sins, first for themselves and then for others. Jesus sacrificed only once for all the sins of the world when He once and for all offered Himself on the cross. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} [28]The old law brought sinful men into the priesthood but Your oath brought Jesus into His priesthood; He is my eternally perfect Priest. {258 Jesus' Name-Praying, John 14:13}

Melchizedek is described in the past tense, "Melchizedek was king of Salem" (Heb. 7:1), and "was like the Son of God" (7:3). But Jesus is described in the present tense, "Such a High Priest meets our need" (7:26). What does that mean to us? (1) Jesus is alive; He is not a dead Savior. He's not a historical past-tense person; and (2) Jesus

can help us now, so we can go to the Father through Jesus our Intercessor. Anytime you have a need... anytime...you can pray. Lord, I come to You right now through Jesus my High Priest. Listen to me now. Help me now, because I need You. Amen.

Hebrews 8

Jesus Is Better than Aaron (Continued)

[1]Lord, the writer makes the point that I have a High Priest who sat down at Your right hand in heaven, and {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [2]who now serves in the heavenly tabernacle that You set up. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [3]Since earthly priests appointed by You offer gifts and sacrifices, Christ also must make offerings for sin, but His sacrifices are far better than the Levitical sacrifices. [4]Earthly priests serve in an earthly tabernacle that is a reflection of the one in heaven, {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [5]because when Moses built the tabernacle, You told him to build it after the pattern You showed him on the Mount. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22}

Jesus Is Better than the Old Covenant

[6]But the ministry of Christ is far better than the former priest because the new covenant is far better than the old one, and because the new covenant is based on better promises. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} [7]If there was nothing wrong with the old covenant, there wouldn't have been a need for a new one. {320 New Covenant-Praying, Heb. 8:8} [8]But You realized the old covenant was limited, so You said, "The day will come when I will make a new covenant with the people of Israel and Judah." {320 New Covenant-Praying, Heb. 8:8}

We have a superior ministry of approaching God in prayer, because we come through the transcending preeminence of Jesus Christ. "He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises" (8:6, KJV). Lord, I come to You through the excellency of Jesus Christ, He is a perfect Intercessor, so I pray perfectly in Christ Jesus. You hear me because of His righteousness, not my own. Amen.

[9]It will not be like the old covenant You made with them when You led them out of Egypt. Israel did not keep their part of the covenant, so You canceled it. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [10]You promised to write the new covenant in their hearts so they will know what You want them to do as Your people. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [11]No longer will people evangelize others saying, "Know the Lord," for all will know You, from the influential to the least important. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [12]You promised to forgive their transgressions and no longer remember their sins. [13]Because You called this covenant "new," You made the old covenant obsolete, and what is old

becomes antiquated and disappears. {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.}

When God made a new covenant with Israel, He "made the first [covenant] old" (8:13). Under the old covenant people had to sacrifice a lamb repeatedly because their sins were never completely and finally forgiven. But in Christ, sins are permanently forgiven. Under the old covenant people came to God through the outer tabernacle/ temple, but the new covenant is inner, involving a spiritual transformation of the worshiper. While Old Testament saints related to God through their Levitical priests, now all will personally know the Lord (8:11). Lord, I come to You through the foundation of the new covenant. I come directly without a priest; I come personally and intimately, I come because Jesus has forgiven all my sins. Amen.

Hebrews 9

Jesus Is Better than the Old Sanctuary

[1]Lord, the old covenant had laws about how to worship and its place to worship was a tent. Inside this sanctuary were two rooms. [2]The first room, called the holy place, had the golden candlestick and a table of loaves of bread without yeast. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [3]Then there was the golden altar of incense that represented prayer, and a curtain that separated the two rooms. {488 Torn-Veil Prayer, Mark 15:38} [4]The second room was called the most holy place with the sacred chest, which contained a jar with some manna, Aaron's rod that budded, and a stone engraved with the Ten Commands. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5}

Within the most holy place was the sacred chest, and its lid was called "the mercy seat." Technically God didn't have a throne on the earth, but when God's presence came to earth in the Shekinah glory cloud, it sat on the mercy seat. God sat on a chest (the word "ark" means chest). God didn't sit on some enhanced golden throne; no piece of furniture could give glory to God. God liked to sit where He could be merciful to His people. God liked to sit where He could forgive people's sin. "The high priest entered once every year, not without blood, which he offered for himself, and for the errors of the people" (9:7, KJV). But now we come to the mercy seat in heaven because, "He entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (9:12, KJV). Lord, I don't come to an actual tent or building, but I come to You in heaven. I come because my sins have been forgiven. I come because You forgave all my sins once and for all. I come shouting. "Hallelujah" for all You've done for me. Amen.

[5]On each end of the chest were carved gold creatures with their wings stretched out over the lid of the chest called the mercy seat, the place atonement was made. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5}

Would you like to be close to God? Of all the things close to God's presence, the two winged creatures on the top of the sacred chest were closest. Notice the characteristics needed to get close to God. First, the angels were made from pure gold (Exod. 25:17). There are many grades of purity, and to get gold its purest, the fire of the crucible is heated to its hottest to melt away impurities. The goldsmith skims impurities from the crucible until he sees his face in the gold. God allows the fires of persecution to cleanse us from the impurities of sin. Can God see His face in You? Second, the gold of the angels is beaten (Exod. 25:18). This means the sculptor uses his instruments to sculpt the angels. They were not poured into a mold like cheap imitations. The skill of the sculptor determines the quality of His masterpiece. God Himself is using His skill to knock the rough edges off His masterpiece, that is, you. Third, the angels "stretch forth their wings on high, covering the mercy seat" (Exod. 25:20, KJV). To be close to God, we must stretch forth our hands in worship to God. Worship brings us as close to God as any human can get. To get closer, worship better. Fourth, "Their faces shall look...toward the mercy seat" (Exod. 25:20). They are looking down on the place where the blood is applied to forgive sins. They look down humbly. If you want to get close to God, look to the blood. "Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness" (Heb. 9:22). Lord, I look once again to the cross where Jesus shed His blood for my sin. He died in my place. I can get no closer to You than I am when I am in Jesus. Amen.

6 Many priests followed certain regulations, going into the outer room—the holy place—to carry out worship. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 7 Only the high priest entered the most holy place, and only once a year; he took blood with him for his and others' sins. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 8 The Holy Spirit tells us by this illustration that the average person could not enter the most holy place so long as the old system of law was in place. 9 Lord, this illustration is important because under the old system of law the sacrifices and gifts had to be continually given for they never permanently cleansed the hearts of the worshipers. {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} 10 The old system of law dealt with what foods to eat, how to wash, rules about a lot of little things that people had to obey until Christ brought in a better covenant.

Jesus Is Better than the Old Sacrifices

11 Christ came as the High Priest of a new and better covenant. He took blood into the most holy place in heaven and sprinkled blood on the mercy seat to permanently forgive all sins. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22}

12 Christ did not take the blood of bulls and calves into heaven's most holy place, but with His own blood He entered once and for all, to obtain eternal redemption for all who believe. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} 13 If the blood of bulls and

calves could temporarily and outwardly cleanse those who were unclean, thus sanctifying them, [14]how much more will the blood of Christ offered by the Holy Spirit cleanse us, so we can serve the living God? {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20} [15]Therefore Christ offered this new covenant to all, so that they may receive the promise of an eternal inheritance. And don't forget that Christ's death took away all the sins committed under the old system of law. {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [16]When a person dies and leaves a will that is in question, the death of the one who wrote the will must be established; [17]then people receive the things that were promised in the will. [18]The first covenant became operational when dedicated by blood. [19]Then Moses took blood and sprinkled everything having to do with the old law saying, [20]"This blood seals the agreement between You and God." {92 Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer, Ps. 55:22} [21]Moses then sprinkled blood on the tabernacle and all the instruments of worship. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [22]All things were sanctified by blood, and without the shedding of blood, there was no redemption. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [23]The tabernacle and instruments of worship are copies of the true tabernacle in heaven. They were purified with the blood of animals. {37 Better-Prayer, Heb. 8:6} [24]But the tabernacle in heaven was purified with a better sacrifice, for Christ did not go into the earthly tabernacle, which is a copy of the heavenly one; He appeared before the Father for us. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1} [25]Christ did not offer Himself repeatedly, as the earthly high priest has to make offering every year for himself and others. No! [26]If Christ did that, He would have had to suffer many times. But only once in time did Christ come to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself. [27]It is appointed that each person will die once, then be judged once. [28]But Christ offered Himself once for sins for all. The next time Christ comes, it will be to take us where we will sin no more.

Hebrews 10

Jesus Is Better than the Old Sacrifices (Continued)

[1]Lord, I know the old system of law was only a reflection of coming spiritual realities, not the realities themselves. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [2]The law could never bring the worshiper to spiritual maturity, even though repeated endlessly year after year. {321 New Testament Prayer Possibilities, John 16:24} [3]If the sacrifices sanctified the worshiper, or made him mature, then they would have stopped bringing their sacrifices when they reached perfection. [4]Instead, the worshiper had to recall his sin yearly, every time he brought a sacrifice, because the blood of bulls and goats never took away sin. [5]Lord, when Christ came into the world, He said, "Sacrifices and offerings didn't do away with sin, so You, Lord, prepared a body for Me." [6]It is written in Scripture, "Christ has come to lay down His body as a sacrifice for sin," and

the Scriptures said of Christ, [7-9]"I am here, and I have come to do the Father's will." [10]Now I have been made pure and clean by the death of Christ, who died for all, once and for all. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [11]Under the old law, the priest had to offer the same kind of sacrifice day after day, which never took sin away. [12]But Christ our Priest offered one sacrifice for all time, to take away all sin, then sat down at Your right hand in heaven. [13]Now Christ is waiting for His enemies to become His footstool. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [14]For by one sacrifice, Christ made those perfect who claim the power of the Holy Spirit to live holy lives. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14}

Two forces are at work in our lives in the statement, "He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified" (10:14). First, the word "perfected" is a once-for-all action that is the result of Christ's sacrifice. We are born again and we stand perfect before God. This is a completed action. The earlier word "forever" is a modifier of "offered one sacrifice" (10:12), which suggests security for the believer. But second, there is still work for us to do. The words "are sanctified" (10:14) are a present participle, suggesting that our sanctification is a progressive action. Sanctification is a threefold action: (1) I was sanctified at my conversion; positional sanctification (3:1); (2) I am being sanctified; experiential sanctification (1 Thess. 5:23); and (3) I shall be sanctified (completely separated from sin), that is, consummation sanctification (1 John 3:2). Lord, thank You for setting me apart from sin when I was saved, but I am still tempted. Thank You for working in my life to separate me from sin. Make me pure. Thank You for the fact that I will be separated from all sin forever in heaven. I look forward to that day. Amen.

[15]You said, "This is the new arrangement I will make after they did not keep the old system of law. [16]I will put My laws in their hearts so they will want to obey Me." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [17]Then You said, "I will no longer remember their sins and lawlessness [18]because I have forgiven all sin, and there is no longer need of daily animal sacrifices." {172 Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Phil. 3:10 ff.}

[19]Therefore children of God, let us walk right into the most holy place into the presence of the Father by the blood of Jesus Christ. [20]We have a new and living way into the Father's presence through the offering of Christ's body which tore the curtain down. {488 Torn-Veil Prayer, Mark 15:38} [21]Since I have a new High Priest, [22]I will draw near to You with a true heart and confident faith because my heart is clean by the blood of Christ. [23]I will hold fast to my confession of faith because You are faithful. [24]I will motivate other believers to love and good works, and [25]I will assemble with other believers to motivate them to serve You as I do.

There are three conditions for "drawing near to God" (10:22). First, we must have a "true heart," which means an honest attempt to relate to God. The word "draw

near" is proserchomai, which comes from pros, "toward," and erchomai, "to come." A true heart is honestly seeking God's face. Second, we must come in "full assurance," which means "we believe that God exists" (11:6, PJB). Third, "having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience" (10:22). Lord, I come to You sincerely because I want to know You intimately so I seek Your face. I know You exist and I know You will hear me because I have been cleansed by the blood of Christ. I don't listen to my evil conscience, but I come seeking You and seeking to know You intimately. Amen.

Fourth Warning Against Rejection

[26]Lord, if anyone sins after he has been given knowledge of the truth of the new covenant, there is no forgiveness in the animal sacrifice of the temple. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [27]They have only the terrible judgment of God to face and His raging fire that will punish rebels. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [28]If those who rejected the law of Moses were killed without mercy, [29]how much more severely will those be punished who trample underfoot the Son of God, and considered His blood of the new covenant as unworthy and insulted the Spirit of God who worked in their hearts. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [30]Lord, You said, "Punishment belongs to Me," so I know You will repay. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [31]Also the Scripture says, "Because the Lord will judge His people, it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16} [32]Lord, I know many have suffered when they first believed, as they stood for You in the face of insults and violence. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [33]And sometimes they suffered because they stood with other believers who were being persecuted. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [34]They not only were persecuted because they stood with those in prison, but their goods were stolen. Yet they knew they had better possessions in heaven. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [35]Lord, I will not let my confidence die away, knowing I will be richly rewarded. {243 Inner-Strength Request Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:1} [36]I will persevere, so that when I have done Your will, I will receive what You have promised. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

We come to God, knowing He exists and that our approach to Him is honest and sincere. We know our sins have been forgiven by the blood of Jesus Christ, and that we are presently walking in fellowship with God. Praying in confidence means we are in right relationship with God and we've done everything necessary to enable us to pray properly. Lord, I come to You through the blood of Jesus Christ, knowing I am forgiven and I stand justified in Your presence. I come honestly and sincerely, seeking You with all my heart. Amen.

[37]Lord, I know in a little while You will come and not be delayed. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [38]I will do

what the Scripture says, "The just will live by faith and if he shrinks back, I will have no pleasure in him." {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 39Lord, I have never turned back from following You; no, my faith assures me that my soul will be saved. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}

Hebrews 11

The Superiority of Faith in Jesus

1Lord, because of my faith I am sure You will answer my request, and my faith makes me certain about the things I can't see. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} 2Because of my faith, I know the world was created by You so that things seen came from things not seen. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 3Because of Abel's faith he brought a better offering than did his brother Cain, and Abel pleased You. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2} 4You accepted Abel by receiving his sacrifice, and I can learn lessons of faith from Abel, even though he is dead. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} 5Because of Enoch's faith, You took him to heaven without dying. No one could find him for You took him away because You were pleased with him. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 6Lord, I know I can't please You without faith, so I come to You because I know You exist and I know You reward those who earnestly seek You. {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6}

To get our prayers answered, we must please God, and we do that by believing He exists. We come to God knowing He lives, knowing He will hear us and knowing He can answer when we pray according to His will. The King James Version says we must "diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6). Remember, we can't find God if we don't search with all our hearts. Lord, I want to know You and serve You. I'm not satisfied with my life the way it is. I need You and will continue searching until I find You. Amen.

7Because of Noah's faith, he warned people about a flood he had never seen. Then he built a boat to save his family. The faith of Noah condemned the world, and his faith gave him a basis to claim Your righteousness. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} 8Because of Abraham's faith, he obeyed Your call when he left his home to go where You led him, even though he didn't know where he was going. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 9Because of his faith, Abraham settled down in the Promised Land like a stranger in a foreign country, living in tents as did Isaac and Jacob who were heirs with him. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} 10Because of his faith, Abraham confidently looked forward to living in a heavenly city that would be built by You. Because of his faith, Abraham was able to become a father when he was too old to have children. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21} 11And Sarah, who was barren, had faith to bear a child, because she realized that when You promised a son, You were certainly able to do what You said. {181 Future-Blessing

Prayer, Heb. 11:21} [12]So the whole nation of Israel came from Abraham when he was too old to have a child. The nation of Israel had so many children that like the stars of heaven and the sands of the seashore, they can't be counted. {466 Supernatural-Praying, Acts 15:18} [13]Because of the faith of these people, they continued to look forward to the home You would provide for them, even though they never received it down on this earth. [14]They confessed they were only visitors and strangers in this world. [15]If they liked the old country better than the one promised by God, they would have found a way to return. But they were looking for a place—a heavenly place. [16]That is why God is not ashamed to be called their God, and He has prepared a place for them.

The Old Testament people of faith were looking and yearning for a better home. They could have gone back to the Euphrates Valley, but they didn't want to live among idols and sinful corruption, so they lived in the land God promised to them, all the while "they desire a better country" (11:16, KJV). In the same way we must yearn and pray for a "better country." Lord, I tolerate living in a sinful world, but I yearn and pray for a better place. I look for heaven where I'll live with You forever. Amen.

[17]Because of Abraham's faith, when he was tested, he offered up Isaac as a sacrifice to You. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [18]Abraham believed Your promise that if he offered his only son as a sacrifice, [19]You would raise him from the dead, because You had promised that from Isaac would come the whole nation of Israel. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}

God will test our faith to determine its genuineness and to make us stronger. Abraham was tested and he demonstrated his faith in God was real. Trials come from our enemy to tear us down, tests come from God to strengthen us. Lord, I love You and will follow You. When difficulties come, I will look to You to determine what I can learn and how I can grow stronger. I don't like hardship, I like ease; but when hardship comes, be with me and strengthen me for the task. Amen.

[20]Because of Isaac's faith, he knew You would bless his two sons Jacob and Esau after his death. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}
[21]Because of Jacob's faith, he blessed Joseph's two sons as he steadied himself with his staff to worship You. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23}

Jacob blessed his sons by faith because he believed God would work in the life of his children and fulfill the value he saw for them. This involves trusting in God to bless your children even when you are dead and not able to physically help them. Lord, give me faith to believe You can bless my children when I'm not alive to help them. Amen.

[22]Because of Joseph's faith, when he was about to die, he predicted the exodus of

Israel from Egypt and instructed that his body be buried in the Promised Land. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}
[23]Because of Moses' parents' faith, they hid him for three months after he was born because they realized he was an extraordinary child. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21}
[24]Because of Moses' faith, he refused to be known as the son of Pharaoh's daughter. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [25]Moses chose to suffer the affliction of Your people rather than enjoy the pleasure of sin for a short time. {63 Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Heb. 11:25}
[26]Moses considered that the "reproach of Christ" was better than inheriting the riches of Egypt, because he looked forward to the reward You would give him. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Moses refused the pleasures and wealth of Egypt to identify with the suffering of God's people. While his choice could be considered difficult because of the worldly things he gave up, it involved "seeing Him who is invisible" (11:27, KJV). Therefore our choices should be made in accord with God's choices for us. Lord, help me make good choices based on Your values and Your plan for my life. Give me strong faith to make decisions that will glorify You. Amen.

[27]Because of Moses' faith, he left Egypt, wasn't afraid of the king's anger, and he would not turn back, because he saw You who are invisible. {506 Unknown-Answer to Prayer, Mark 9:24} [28]Because of Moses' faith, he began the Passover, and sprinkled blood on the door post, so the destroyer wouldn't touch the firstborn of Israel as the first born of Egypt died that night. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8}
[29]Because of faith, Israel walked through the Red Sea on dry ground, but the Egyptians drowned when they tried to follow them. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}
[30]Because of faith, Israel walked around the city of Jericho, and the walls fell down. {372 Prayer-Walking, Gen. 13:17}
[31]Because of the prostitute Rahab's faith, she received the spies and was not killed with the rest of the inhabitants. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}
[32]There's more to be said about the faith of Gideon, Barak, Samson, Jephihah, Samuel, or David, or the prophets. {154 Faithfulness-Praying, 1 Thess. 5:24}
[33]Because of the faith of these men, they conquered kingdoms, did what was right, and received what You promised. [34]They were not harmed by lions, or the fiery furnace, and were protected in battle. Some were given strength to be brave in battle, they defeated foreign armies, and women received back their dead. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} [35]Others were tortured to death knowing they would rise again from the dead to a better life. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} [36]Others were mocked, beaten with whips and chained in dungeons. [37]They died by stoning, being sawed in two, and put to death by the sword. Some were homeless and wore skins of sheep and goats; they were destitute, and ill-treated. [38]The world was not worthy of those who

lived in deserts, caves, and ravines. [39]These were all heroes of faith, yet none of them received their reward in this life. [40]God has something better for them, but they had to wait to share something even better with us. {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb. 1:4, 8:6}

Hebrews 12

The Superiority of Faith in Jesus (Continued)

[1]Lord, these many leaders mentioned in the previous chapters are like a large crowd of witnesses. Therefore I will strip off everything that's in the way, especially any sin that would trip me up. {75 Commitment-Prayer, Ps. 37:5} [2]And I will steadily run the race that I have begun without losing sight of Jesus my leader who was willing to die a shameful death on the cross because He knew the joy that was coming in the future, and now He sits at Your right hand in heaven. {391 Race-Preparation Prayer, Heb. 12:1}

The Christian life is pictured as a race that must be run with patience. The secret to running is not our style or pattern of steps. It's not keeping up with others, and it's not beating others. It's "looking unto Jesus" (Heb. 12:2). So, we must lay aside every sin that would hinder us, or anything that would slow us down. We must never forget how Jesus finished His race, even though He suffered on the cross and endured agony. Lord, I will put aside sin that hinders me, and I will discipline myself so I won't be slowed down. I will do like many others who witness to me, I will continue running my race. I will keep looking to Jesus. Amen.

Fifth Warning of Coming Punishment

[3]When I think of the way Jesus endured such torture by sinful men for me, I will not give up. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [4]After all, I've never had to take a stand for Christ to the point of shedding my blood. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3}
[5]I've not forgotten Your words of encouragement to me, "Do not be discouraged when the Lord rebukes you or at His light chastening [6]because the Lord disciplines those He loves, and punishes everyone He acknowledges as His child." {91 Correction-Response Prayer, Heb. 10:9, 10}
[7]Lord, I know suffering is part of my training because You are treating me as Your child, and what child is not corrected by their father? {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [8]If anyone is not corrected by You, then he is not Your child. He is an illegitimate child, and not Your true child. {120 Disciplined-Prayer, Luke 11:1} [9]Moreover, many have had wicked human fathers who corrected them; therefore I ought to be willing to submit to You, my heavenly Father. {429 Self-Discipline Prayer, Titus 2:5, 6, 12} [10]My human father's punishment prepared me for life on earth, but You are preparing me to live a holy life and for heaven itself. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [11]Punishment isn't enjoyable at the time I receive it, but it makes me live right and submit to the laws

of men so I will live in peace and develop character. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

Because we are children of the heavenly Father, He punishes us when we do wrong, just as our earthly father disciplines us. It's not because He is angry, but God "chastened us after His own pleasure; but for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness" (12:10). The fact we are punished by God is proof we are His children. Lord, even though I didn't think so at the time, thank You for punishing me when I've sinned. I want to learn the lesson of holiness. Make me more like You each day. Amen.

12 Therefore I'll hold up under Your discipline, so I'll not be weak, but strong. 13 I'll stand firm on shaky legs, then those who follow me will not stumble, but will walk strong. 14 Lord, I'll do everything possible to live peaceably with everyone, and I'll live a holy life, because without it no one will see You. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16}

The author tells us, "Follow peace with all men" (12:14, KJV). Anything God wants us to have can be sought with prayer. So to live a peaceful life we must (1) pray to be at peace with everyone; (2) pray for peaceful conditions in our culture and the world; (3) pray and yield to God for inner peace, and live daily in light of the peace we have with God (Eph. 2:14), and the inward peace that God makes available to us (Eph. 2:17). Lord, I pray for peace in my city, country, and the world. I will live in light of the peace I have with You, and the inward gift of peace You have given me. Give me inner peace with You, then may I live peacefully with all people. Amen.

15 I will make sure other believers don't miss Your grace, and that no bitterness grows in the church to cause trouble and poison the assembly. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 16 I will make sure no one is sexually immoral or ungodly like Esau who sold his inheritance for one meal. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} 17 Afterward Esau wanted his inheritance but was rejected even though he begged for it with tears. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

The Presence of Jesus Is Better

18 Lord, we don't come to a mountain that burned with fire to a religion that is dark and gloomy to receive the first system of law, that is, the old covenant. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 19 We don't listen to a trumpet blast that was so scary that the people begged it to stop. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} 20 We don't stay away from a mountain, "so that even if an animal touched the mountain, it had to be stoned." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 21 The experience was so terrifying that Moses said, "I am afraid," and he trembled with fear. 22 Lord, I come to Mount Zion, Your city, and the heavenly Jerusalem. I come into Your holy presence where millions of angels gather to worship You. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} 23 I come with the church, right

into Your city—heaven—itself, where everyone is a first-class citizen. I come to You—Father—the judge of all people; I join the spirits of all the redeemed who possess their inheritance. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} [24]I come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant, whose blood intercedes better than Abel's sacrifice. {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb. 1:4, 8:6}

When we approach God in prayer, we should be aware that we are coming to God. In this passage notice what you are approaching. (1) You are coming to a heavenly Jerusalem, where the living God lives (12:22); (2) You are coming to join myriad of angels in worship (12:22); (3) You are coming to worship God with the congregation of the born-again ones (12:23); (4) You are coming to God who judges all people (12:23); (5) You are coming with worshipers who have been made perfect because they are with God; and (6) You come to Jesus to focus on the purpose of praying. Lord, I come to Jesus because He saved me and lives within me. I come to worship Jesus for who He is and for what He has done for me and for all saved people who follow Him. I come to worship Him with all the saints and angels. I come to bow down and worship You in the throne room of heaven. Amen.

Sixth Warning of Future Judgment

[25]Lord, I will never refuse to listen to You when You speak as those who refused to listen to You and were punished. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [26]How much more will those be punished who go back to temple worship? In the future You will send an earthquake to shake the earth, as You promised, "Once more I will send an earthquake, not to shake the earth only, but heaven also." {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [27]Lord, this means at the final earthquake, everything will be removed that is not permanent, and only the things made by You will remain. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} [28]Lord, I am part of the kingdom that is unshakeable, therefore I will serve You with thankfulness. {21 Approach Worshipfully, Heb. 12:22} [29]I will worship You, but always with reverence and fear, because the fire of Your judgment always burns.

Hebrews 13

Faith in Jesus Is the Better Way

[1]Lord, I will love Christians with brotherly love and {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11}

The King James Version gives a command, "Let brotherly love continue" (Heb. 13:1), which means we must do it, and pray for divine help when we have difficulty doing it. God will help us do what He has commanded us to do. Lord, give me a deep desire to love fellow Christians, because I don't always have that desire. Take away any barrier in my heart that destroys love for others. Forgive me of selfishness, sin, and wrong attitudes, so I can love others properly. Show

me how and when and where to love other Christians. Amen.

[2]I will be hospitable to strangers because some have entertained angels without realizing it. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7}

We should thank God for all the things that angels do for us, "to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation" (1:14). Angels (1) guard us physically (Ps. 34:7); (2) deliver us to heaven when we die (Luke 16:22); (3) wrestle against evil (Eph. 6:10-13); and (4) are messengers for God and administer His affairs (Matt. 13:41-42). Lord, thank You for angels and for all they do for Your kingdom. Whereas I haven't seen an angel, thank You for their ministry to me (13:2). Amen.

[3]I will be concerned for those in prison, as though I were there, and I will remember those who are ill-treated because I know how they feel. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [4]I will honor the sanctity of the marriage vows because the marriage bed should be kept pure, and You will punish the adulterer and sexually immoral people. [5]I will live free from greedy lust for money, and be content with what I have. {310 Money-Prayer, Acts 2:44}

God has promised, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (13:5, KJV). But we sometimes feel alone or alienated. Perhaps it's our sin that makes us feel that way. So, don't live by your emotions; approach God in view of the fact that He said, "I will never leave thee." But if sin has broken your fellowship with God, confess it immediately, claim God's cleansing (1 John 1:9), and enter His fellowship again. Remember, we never lose our relationship with God, but we can lose our fellowship. Lord, thank You for the fact You'll never leave me. But sometimes I've broken my fellowship with You. Thank You for always being there to receive me back. Today, I will live and serve with confidence, knowing I enjoy Your presence and blessing. Amen.

[6]Because of Your promise, You will be my helper; I will not be afraid of what anyone can do to me. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5}
[7]I will respect church leaders who teach the Word of God, I will remember their example and will imitate their godliness. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} [8]Lord, I rejoice that Jesus Christ is always the same, yesterday, today, and will continue forever. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} [9]I will not be sidetracked by strange new doctrines. I realize my spiritual strength comes from You, and I will not become godly by any rules I keep. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} [10]Since I am fed by the food that Christ gives me, no one can get spiritual strength by going back to the temple, and those who do, won't be fed by Christ. [11]The bodies of animals whose blood is still used for sacrifice were burned outside the city of Jerusalem, [12]so Jesus suffered outside the gate of Jerusalem to offer His blood for me and all who come

to Him for salvation. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [13]I will go to Him outside the temple and outside the city walls, there to identify with Him, and bear His shame. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} [14]I realize there is no permanent city for me in this life, so I look for an eternal city that will come in the future. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [15]Therefore I will offer my worship to You through Jesus; may my worship magnify Your name. {365 Praise-Sacrifice to God, Heb. 13:15}

In the Old Testament the Jews brought an animal sacrifice to God to restore their fellowship with God. Today we sacrifice our bodies (Rom. 12:1-2) to God in worship and service. Here we are to offer "the fruit of our lips" (Heb. 13:15) to God. This is when we exalt God, or worship or praise Him. It's all about His glory; it's not about us. Lord, my lips speak Your greatness and power. I worship You for Your love to me and Your protection of my life. I lift You up in my life, and home, and job. Be magnified in all I am and do. Amen.

[16]Also I will continue to do good deeds and share with others because You are pleased with that sacrifice. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22} [17]Lord, I will continue to obey my church leaders and follow their directions because they give an account to You of how well they watch over my soul and others. I will obey them so they will enjoy their ministry because I would be the loser if I caused them grief. [18]I know that my conscience is clear in this matter, and I will act honorably in every way. [19]The writer asked for prayer that he could visit the readers. [20]Now may You—the God of peace—the One who brought the Lord Jesus back from the dead, to become the Great Shepherd of the sheep, equip me thoroughly to do Your perfect will, by the blood of the everlasting covenant. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [21]Lord, work in me everything that will please You; to Jesus Christ be glory forever and ever. {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21}

The author promises God will give the readers "whatever good things you need." So we pray for good things and expect good things, and thank God for them when they come. Lord, You have promised "good things" to us, so I pray for them to come. I will get ready to receive them, and I will prepare my heart to receive them. Amen.

[22]The writer asked the readers to listen patiently to this letter because it is a short one. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [23]He tells them Timothy has been released from prison and will come to see them; also, he the writer will come with Timothy. [24]The Christians in Italy who are with the writer send greetings to the readers. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} [25]Lord, I ask for Your grace and receive it by faith.

James

Ch 1: Preparing for Trials 1823
Ch 2: Our Good Works Demonstrate Our Faith 1825
Ch 3: We Must Control Our Tongue 1827
Ch 4: The Danger of Worldliness 1829
Ch 5: Because the Lord Is Coming—Pray 1830

JAMES

Key Words: *Test or Troubles* (James 1:2-3)

Key Verse: "Blessed *is* the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him" (1:12).

Theme: James, the half brother of Jesus, writes to encourage Jewish believers (1:1) who are going through various tests and trials in their Christian life. God allows His children to be tested so they will become stronger, and through difficulties they can demonstrate the genuine nature of their faith.

James was called a "pillar" of the church (Gal. 2:9) and presided over the first church council (Acts 15), and very early he wrote this letter that contains 54 imperatives (commands) out of 108 verses. A person's outward "religion" was proof of his transforming faith. James' admonition on "good works" is not an argument against Paul's emphasis on grace, but James is stating that if you have experienced free grace, you will demonstrate it by your actions (2:14-26). James wrote this letter before A.D. 40 and tradition tells that he was martyred in A.D. 62. *Lord, I will obey Your commands because I love You and want to please You. I don't keep Your commands in order to become a Christian; I keep them because I am saved. Amen.*

James 1

Preparing for Trials

1 Lord, James wrote a letter to Jews who were being persecuted and were scattered abroad outside the Holy Land, for he wanted to prepare Christians everywhere for suffering. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35}
2 Lord, I will rejoice when I suffer for You even when I fall into every type of trial {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} 3 because I know trials will build patience in me. {462 Storm-Prayer, Acts 27:25} 4 Lord, let patience have its perfect work in me that I may have complete faith, wanting nothing. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9}

Even when we pray, we will be tested. Our faith will be tested; we will be tested in many ways in all parts of our being. But true faith will withstand testing and glorify God. Lord, give me

courage to withstand testing; and when my faith is tested, I will look to Jesus who is my example and the goal of my life. Amen.

[5]Lord, when I lack wisdom, I will ask You for it because You liberally give us spiritual understanding and I know I will receive it from You. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} [6]But I must ask with unwavering faith because those who are unstable are like the unpredictable waves of the ocean, driven by the wind. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} [7]The vacillating man will not receive anything from You {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} [8]because a double–minded person is unstable in everything. {127 Doubting-Prayer, Gen. 22:7}

God will honor your prayers when you ask with confidence. You will be heard even before you pray. Confident-praying is based on these facts: (1) God is your heavenly Father; (2) you've met the conditions of praying; (3) you diligently ask (Heb. 11:6); (4) you have no willful sin in your life; and (5) you are living in fellowship with God. Lord, teach me to pray properly for the right request, and keep me from asking for wrong things. May Your Spirit identify with my spirit so I can pray confidently. Amen.

[9]Lord, when I humble myself and take the low position, You will lift me up for Your purpose. [10]Those who exalt themselves as the rich will be like the flower that is temporally here and then dies and is gone. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [11]Because the sun burns them and they wither with the grass, their beauty is destroyed in the same scorching heat. In the same way the proud will be destroyed. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3} [12]Lord, bless me as I endure the trials that try me because I will receive the crown of life for enduring persecution which You have promised to those who continually love You. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} [13]When I am tempted to give up, I can't say You tempt me. For You do not tempt anyone to evil actions. {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7} [14]People are tempted by their own sinful desires that drag them away {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} and entice them to sin. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [15]When evil lust is planted and grown, it brings forth sin; and when sin is fully grown, it brings death. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18} [16]Lord, I don't want to be deceived. {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [17]I know every good gift is from above, coming down from You, the Father of Light. [18]Lord, You give me spiritual birth through the word of truth that I might be a firstfruit of praise to Your glory. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}

We must realize all the good things in life come from God because (1) He loves people; (2) He wants to make them better; (3) He wants to glorify Himself; (4) giving is His nature; and (5) He wants to bring people to repentance and faith in Him (Rom. 2:4). Lord, thank You for the good things You give

me; I receive them from You and praise You for Your continued goodness. Amen.

19Lord, I will be quick to listen, slow to speak, {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} and even slower to become angry, {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20} 20because anger does not produce a righteous life. 21Therefore I will get rid of all moral filth and evil intent that is prevalent everywhere. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} I will humbly accept the implanted Word which saves me. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} 22I will not merely listen to the Word because that is not enough. I will do what it says. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} 23Those who merely listen to the Word and don't obey it are like people who look at themselves in a mirror 24and forget what they see. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} 25Lord, I want to look intently into the perfect law of liberty, and I know You will bless me if I don't forget what I see there and I continue to obey what I learn there. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10}

We do not find happiness just seeking it so that we may be happy. Happiness is not a valid goal in life. We find happiness on the road to duty. When we seek to grow in Christ, serve Christ, and glorify Christ, we will find happiness in relationship to achieving our goal. While there may be momentary happiness, it is not the same as lasting peace, joy, and contentment that we get from God. Lord, I don't pray to be happy, but I pray that I may grow to be like Christ, and serve Christ, and be able to worship Christ. When that happens I get peace and contentment from Christ, then happiness flows into my life. Amen.

26Lord, some people appear to be religious, but they can't control their speech and their religion is empty. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 27To have pure religion and be clean before You, I must minister to the needs of orphans and widows and keep myself unspotted from the world.

Lord, I've only had soft persecution in my life and I realize it's nothing compared to those who suffer terribly. Help me to see Your presence and will in every uncomfortable situation; I will look for Your guiding hand in the sufferings of life. Amen.

James 2

Our Good Works Demonstrate Our Faith

1My Lord Jesus Christ, I will not segregate myself for any person but will accept everyone equally before You. {225 Honest-Prayer, Ps. 17:4-5} 2I will not show partiality to those who are rich or finely dressed, nor will I look down on those who are poor and dirty. 3Lord, You will not bless those who accept only people in rich apparel and reject the poor by making them sit in a segregated place or stand in the back of the crowd. {101

Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [4]Those who show partiality are judged by their evil thoughts. But I will accept all people equally, and I reject those who segregate themselves against any. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [5]Lord, I know You love the poor of this world, many of whom are rich in faith and heirs of Your kingdom, which You promise to all who love Jesus. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [6]Those who despise the poor will eventually have some rich man oppress them and deliver them to judgment. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [7]These rich men blaspheme the very name of Christ, by whom all believers are called. {206 Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, 2 Tim. 1:14} [8]Lord, I will obey the second part of the royal law found in Scripture, which is to love my neighbors as I love myself. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8}

The royal command tells us to love others as we love ourselves, but that is difficult to do. Self-love is at the core of our existence. So we must pray (1) for a change of attitude about people; (2) to crucify our self-exaltation; (3) for strength to love others; and (4) for specific people whom we ignore or despise. Lord, I recognize my self-exaltation; forgive my sin, and help me repent. Give me a love for people, and I pray specifically for those I purposefully ignore or dislike. Give me the heart of Jesus to love all people. Amen.

[9]But if I reject anyone, I am guilty of sin and I have broken the law. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [10]If I keep the whole law but break just one point, I have broken all the law. {239 Indwelling-Strength Prayer, Eph. 3:16-17} [11]Lord, You said, "Do not commit adultery," and "Do not kill," but if I do not commit adultery, but I kill, then I am a transgressor of the whole law. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [12]I will live by the law, and speak it because I know I will be judged by it. {177 Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer, John 10:10} [13]Lord, I know You will judge without mercy those who have shown no mercy, but those who show mercy will persevere in judgment. {174 Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Luke 11:4}

[14]Lord, I know it is not good to minister by faith {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} if I don't have good works to go with my faith. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [15]If a brother or sister doesn't have bread and is naked, [16]and I say, "Go in peace be fed and be clothed," but I do not give them what they need, what good is my faith? [17]Lord, if my faith doesn't result in good works, it is dead because it has no fruit. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [18]If I tell anyone, "You have faith and I have works," he will try to show me his faith without works, but I will show him my faith by my works. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18} [19]You can say that you have faith because you believe in God, and that's all right. Even the demons believe in God but they tremble. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [20]You can't prove you have faith without works. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} [21]Lord, I realize

our father Abraham was justified before others by works when he offered his son on an altar; [22]therefore he demonstrated perfect faith by works. {158 Faith-Validated Prayer, James 2:18}

Your faith is useless if it is not proven by the good works you do for others. James tells us "faith, if it hath not works, is dead" (2:17). We validate our faith when we are moved to serve others. We should pray (1) to be moved to action; (2) to remove doubt or hindrances that keep us from action; and (3) that our faith grows as we serve. Lord, I want strong faith; move me to action so my faith can grow. Remove any barriers that keep me from serving others. Strengthen my faith as I do the things I know to do. Strengthen my faith as I do the things You burden me to do. Amen.

[23]Then the Scripture was fulfilled that said Abraham believed in God and it was counted to him as righteousness; therefore {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} he was called a friend of God. [24]Now I see how a person is justified by works, not by faith only. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} [25]Lord, I realize Rahab, the harlot, was justified before others by works, because she protected the Jewish messengers and directed them away from the soldiers of Jericho. [26]Therefore just as a body without a soul is dead, so faith without works is also dead or useless. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Lord, thank You for the deep faith You've put within me; I'll serve You with all my heart for I realize my deep faith is nothing if good works don't automatically flow from my faith. Amen.

James 3

We Must Control Our Tongue

[1]Lord, I don't want to be a teacher in position only because teachers are judged by a higher standard. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [2]I know that I offend in many ways. If anyone doesn't offend by his speech he is perfect because when he controls his mouth, he controls his whole body. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [3]People put bits in horse's mouths to control them; {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} this is the way to turn a horse around. [4]A great ship is driven through the sea by fierce winds, yet they are turned around with a small rudder, so the ship goes wherever the captain decides. [5]In the same way, the tongue is a little thing, but it can boast great things and cause great trouble, like a little flame that can start a great fire. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

James tells us to discipline our whole body by learning to discipline our tongue. Why? Because the tongue which is small controls the actions of the whole body. Lord, help me control my tongue for Your glory. I realize my tongue is only an instrument of my heart, so change my heart to reflect Your power and

glory. Give me a strong disciplined heart to control my tongue and body. Amen.

6Therefore my tongue can spread sin throughout my body just like a little flame can start a forest fire. So my tongue can defile my entire life, not realizing it is a fire from hell. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 7People have been able to tame every kind of animal, and birds and snakes, and things in the sea, 8but no one is able to tame the tongue; {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} it is uncontrollably evil and a deadly poison. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} 9With my tongue I can bless You, even the Father, {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} or I can curse people who are made in Your image. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} 10Out of the same mouth come blessings and curses, and {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} this is wrong. {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3} 11Can a fountain give salt water and fresh water? Obviously not! 12Can a fig tree produce olives? Obviously not! Can an olive branch produce figs? Again no! So I will not bless God and curse men! {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13}

13If there is a wise man, I want to see his wisdom in his conversation with other people; {534 Wisdom-Directed Prayer, James 3:13} I want to see his meekness and wisdom by the things he says. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} 14Lord, those who are bitter and envious and start arguments are full of self-glory and they lie against the truth. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 15Their wisdom doesn't come from heaven; it comes from the earth, and {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} 16it is fleshly and devilish because they produce arguments and confusion and evil. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} 17Lord, give me the wisdom that is from above; it is pure, then peaceable, gentle, and it will listen to others. I want wisdom that is full of mercy and good fruits; impartial to anyone and not hypocritical. {458 Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Col. 1:9} 18Lord, I want the fruit of righteousness that is sown in peace; I want to be a peacemaker. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

A wise man is not the one with the highest I.Q. or the one who has accumulated the greatest mastery of facts or vocabulary. James says, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? Let him show out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom" (3:13, KJV). So we must ask God to help us live properly (1) by asking for the Holy Spirit to take away our spiritual blindness so we can use what we know; (2) for strength and determination to serve God properly; and (3) for His transformation to serve God acceptably. Lord, I want to serve You correctly. Take away any spiritual blindness I have so I can acquire facts and use them successfully. Help me to apply what I know to glorify You. Lord, I can discipline many areas of my life but the most difficult to control is my tongue. I know it's not the physical tongue itself, but my deceitful old nature; strengthen me to

discipline my old nature so my tongue will glorify You. Amen.

James 4

The Danger of Worldliness

[1]Lord, I will not fight other believers because these battles come from our old nature that makes Christians fight one another. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [2]When I lust, I don't get what I want. People destroy others and don't get what they want. People fight and argue and still don't get the things they want. {503 Unanswered-Prayer, James 4:3} [3]I do not have what I pray for because I don't ask rightly, sometimes I ask and don't get what I request because I ask wrongly to satisfy my lust. {505 Unbiblical-Prayer, James 4:3}

Lord, teach me the right things in life that I need, then help me to ask You for them in the right way. Amen.

[4]Lord, You've told us that people who commit adultery are friends of the world and they hate You. Help me realize those who are friends of the world are Your enemies. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [5]Lord, I know the Holy Spirit in me has a strong desire that I live a holy and godly life, so let the Spirit give me more grace to repent of evil. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [6]I know You said You give grace {545 Wrestling-Prayer, Eph. 6:10-12} to those who humble themselves but You resist the proud. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [7]Lord, I will submit myself to You, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} I will resist the devil so that he will flee from me, and then I'll have power from You. {515 Victory Over Temptation-Prayer, Heb. 2:18}

Prayers that are not answered are based on selfish or wrong desires. The King James Version says this is because "Ye ask amiss" (4:3). The Living Bible says, "Your whole aim is wrong." The Phillips Paraphrase Version says, "You ask in the wrong spirit." We not only must ask for the right things, we must ask in the right way, with the right attitude. There are many reasons why our prayers are not answered: (1) sin in our lives that blocks our prayer; (2) the answers are not in our best interests; (3) our requests contradict God's plan or God's nature; (4) the answer is withheld for our good; (5) God has something better; (6) the answer would hurt someone; and (7) we lack faith. (See How God Answers Prayer, by Elmer Towns, Destiny Image, www.destinyimage.com, for a complete list.) Lord, I treat unanswered prayer as a great blow to my faith or self-confidence. Help me see unanswered prayer from Your perspective. May unanswered prayer never hinder further fellowship with You. Amen.

[8]I will draw near to You, as You draw near to me. I will cleanse my hands from sin, and I will purify my heart from double-minded thinking. [9]I will be sad and mourn over my sin, and I won't laugh over

it either because sin is a serious thing. [10]I will humble myself in Your sight so You can lift me up.

God honors the humble, and those who are humble will be great. Jesus said "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptizer: notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. 11:11, KJV). Therefore "Humility comes before honor" (Prov. 15:33). We must pray (1) to recognize our selfish nature; (2) to deny selfish desires; and (3) to be humble. Humility is a distant prize, the more we grab for it the farther away it slips. Like going to sleep, the harder we try, the farther sleep escapes from us. Not until we surrender and shoulder our cross, and become followers of Christ do we approach humility. We learn humility from the Humble One. Lord, help me see my selfish nature, and may I say, "Not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20). I will deny my selfish ambitions, and will glorify You in all I do. May others see Christ in me. Amen.

[11]Lord, I will not speak evil of other believers. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} Those who say evil things about a believer and judge a believer actually hate the law. The law prohibits me from judging one another and those who don't obey the law actually hate the law. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [12]Lord, You are the only Law-giver and I am accountable to You. You are able to free or judge, and You judge correctly; take away all bitterness and give me love for all. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[13]Lord, I will not say that tomorrow I'll go to a certain city and live there a year, buying and selling different things, because I don't know what will happen tomorrow. {207 Guidance-Prayer, Rom. 12:1, 2} [14]What is my life? It is like steam from a kettle that's seen for a short time and then it disappears. {86 Contentment-Prayer, Phil. 1:20} [15]Therefore here is what I'll say, "If You will, I will live, and I'll do certain things within Your plan for my life. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [16]I will not take confidence in my boasting, because boasting is evil. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [17]Since I know what good You want me to do, it's evil if I don't do it." {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

James 5

Because the Lord Is Coming—Pray

[1]Lord, I know that all proud people will soon suffer misery; and they ought to weep and moan for coming judgment. {530 Weeping-Prayer, Acts 20:31} [2]The riches they trusted in are corrupt and their fancy clothes are moth-eaten. [3]The tarnish on their gold is a witness against them; {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} their treasures will condemn them and their flesh shall be eaten with fire. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [4]Lord, You hear the weeping of the workers who harvest the field of the rich who defraud them. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [5]The

rich live in pleasure and fulfill their lust, {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [6]and they condemn and "eat up" just people who do not resist them, but the rich have only fattened themselves for slaughter. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

[7]Lord, at the same time, the poor must be patient until You come, just as the farmer waits through the spring and fall rain for his crops to grow. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8} [8]So the poor must wait for Your coming judgment. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

Patience is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22-23), so we should pray to develop godly patience. When we exhibit patience we (1) reflect the nature of God; (2) give evidence that we trust God to control our lives; (3) we become a Christian testimony to others, and (4) we become more godly and can pray more effectively. Lord, I need to be more patient; teach me not to run ahead of Your plan for my life, nor do I want to lag behind. I want to be a good testimony, so develop godly patience in me. Amen.

[9]Lord, I'll not envy what other people have because You are the Judge standing at the door. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [10]I will also learn from the prophets who have spoken Your Word, and were blessed because they endured trials. They are my example to teach me patience in suffering. {345 Patience-Prayer, James 5:7-8} [11]Lord, I have heard of the patience of Job and I know what You do for those who endure suffering. You are very tender and kind to them. Lord, when I'm not patient, help me endure all my circumstances. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} [12]Lord, I will not swear in trials or pain neither by heaven or earth; {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} I will let my "Yes" be "Yes" and my "No" mean "No" because I don't want to be condemned by my speech. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8}

[13]Lord, I will pray when I am afflicted, {350 Persistent-Prayer, Matt. 7:7-8} and if I'm wrongly merry, I'll read the Psalms to understand the severity of life. {439 Singing-Prayer, Ps. 95:2} [14]When I am sick, I will call for the elders of the church so they can pray over me and anoint me with oil in Your name. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} [15]I know the prayer of faith will save the sick and You will raise them up. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [16]If the sick will confess their sins and pray one for another, the sick will be healed and when they have committed sins, they will be forgiven. Lord, I know the continuous sincere prayer of a righteous man will accomplish much. {81 Confession-Prayer, 1 John 1:9} [17]Elijah was a man subject to the same weakness as me, but he prayed continually that it might not rain and it didn't rain for three and a half years. {253 Interventional-Prayer, Matt. 17:20} [18]Elijah prayed again and You gave rain from heaven and the earth brought forth fruit. {423 Say-It-Faith Prayer, Mark 11:23}

God directs us to pray for the sick to get well so God can raise them up. Notice the conditions of healing: (1) call the church elders to pray;

(2) anoint with oil; (3) pray in faith, believing God will answer; and (4) confess sins in order to be right with God. Lord, thank You for healing me in the past, and thank You for healing others who were sick. One condition for healing is "faith," so give me more faith to believe You for answers to prayer. Teach me how to pray in faith. Amen.

[19]Lord, if any believer strays from the truth and is restored by another believer, {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [20]they not only turn around a sinner from his error, but they save a soul from death and hide a multitude of sins. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

Lord, I try to pray but I'm not very effective; I want to know the secret of power in prayer. I know the secret is not in the mechanics of how I say it, nor is there power in the actual words I say. The power is in You, and prayer is relationship with You. Amen.

1 Peter

Ch 1: Your Full Salvation 1834
Ch 2: Live Holy Because of Christ's Death 1837
Ch 3: The Sufferings of Christ 1838
Ch 4: Attitudes About Suffering 1840
Ch 5: Serving Christ in View of His Return 1842

1 PETER

Key Word: *Suffering* (1 Peter 2:20, occurs 12 times)

Key Verse: "Beloved, do not think it strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened to you; but rejoice to the extent that you partake of Christ's sufferings, that when His glory is revealed, you may also be glad with exceeding joy" (4:12, 13 NKJV).

Theme: Peter, the spokesman for the 12 disciples while Jesus was alive, writes this letter from Babylon in approximately A.D. 60. He writes to suffering believers he probably has never seen. They were driven out of their homes in areas that Paul evangelized (v. 2). He doesn't make a personal reference or greetings to anyone.

Peter's theme is victory in the midst of suffering. He has a threefold message: (a) living for Christ while suffering in light of our full salvation (1:1-2:8); (b) our suffering in light of the new position we have in Christ (2:9-4:19); (c) serving Christ in light of His return (5:1-14).

This letter is full of exhortations to godly living, with many references to both the Old Testament and actual words of Christ. *Lord, thank You for the faithfulness of Peter, may I be as faithful to You as he was. Also, may I be faithful to You when suffering and trials come. I don't like pain, so may I be a good testimony to You when trials and sufferings come. Amen.*

1 Peter 1

Your Full Salvation

[1]Lord, Peter the apostle of Jesus Christ wrote a letter to Jewish Christians who were scattered throughout Turkey [2]and to me who was chosen by Your foreknowledge. Lord, I have also been sanctified by the Holy Spirit, {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} and cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} May I obey You in every thought and action, and enjoy Your grace and peace more and more. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

[3]Lord, I praise You, the God and Father of my Lord Jesus Christ, {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} because in Your great mercy I was born again into Your family {226 Hope-Inspired Prayer, Titus 1:2} and given life by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. {405

Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [4]Now may I have confidence in my perfect inheritance, reserved in heaven for me that will not decay or change. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [5]Through faith I am guarded by Your power until the coming of Your complete salvation {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} that will be revealed by Jesus Christ in the last day. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

Christians have a spiritual inheritance waiting for them in heaven. How can they draw on that account now? Or what influence do the riches of heaven have on them now? Because they have a future inheritance they should (1) conduct their lives now as children of the King; (2) live in assurance; (3) face uncertainties, martyrdom, or natural death with confidence; and (4) keep in prayer fellowship with God our Benefactor. Lord, I thank You for the promise of future riches, so I know I'll go to live with You when I die. I also know You will provide for my present needs. But my relationship with You is more important than riches, You are everything I need. Amen.

[6]So I am truly glad this wonderful hope is ahead because I may have to suffer all kinds of trials on earth. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [7]I know that when Jesus Christ is revealed, my faith, though tested, will be genuine like gold, and will bring praise, and glory to You when Jesus Christ returns to earth. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [8]I love Christ even though I have never seen Him with my eyes. By not seeing Him I trust Him more {34 Believing-Prayer, Mark 11:24} because He has filled me with joy that can come only from You. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} [9]I know my future reward for trusting Christ will be the salvation of my soul in the final day. {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10}

Our faith is purified by testing, just as gold is purified by fire (1:7). Therefore, when tested we should pray (1) to be a good testimony to Jesus Christ; (2) to be faithful in trials; (3) to not give up; (4) to influence others to salvation; and (5) to praise God for the experience because He helps us become more godly. Lord, use trials in my life to make me more like Jesus Christ, and purify me of my sin or character flaws. Then use my good testimony to bring others to salvation. I don't like physical pain, and I'm not masochistic, but I'll suffer for You because You suffered for me. Amen.

[10]Lord, even the prophets didn't fully understand this salvation even though they wrote about it, and they had many questions about the meaning of Scripture. [11]They didn't understand what Your Spirit within them was saying when they wrote the prediction of the coming suffering of Christ, {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} and they wrote of the glory that He would have afterward. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [12]The prophets were told these events would not happen in their lifetime,

but would occur many years later. Now, Lord, these events have happened and have been communicated to all of us by those who have preached the gospel to us. Now the angels, like us, have studied these predictions to know Your plan. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7}
[13]Therefore, I will not let my thinking be sidetracked, nor will I live in the future and ignore the present. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [14]I will obey Your truth, and will not be conformed to the evil desires that controlled my life before I was saved. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [15]I will live a holy life, just as You who called me to salvation are holy, {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [16]because the Bible says, "Be holy because God is holy." {418 Sanctification-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:3, 7}

We should be ready to pray at any time. This means our life is pure (1:16); we should not allow evil desires to control our thoughts (1:14), and we "gird up the loins of [our] mind[s]" (1:13, KJV) to pray. Obedience is an acquired discipline; instant obedience is a practiced art. Lord, I am ready to pray at any time because Christ always dwells within my heart, and I pray through Him. Also I've learned to be ready to face anything in life at any time, so I'm always ready to call on You for fellowship or help. Amen.

[17]Lord, I know that You—my heavenly Father—have no favorites; therefore I will pray boldly with reverence, knowing You will judge all people fairly. {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} [18]I know I was not redeemed with gold and silver that perishes from my meaningless life before I was saved. {280 Life-Derailing Prayer, James 4:17} [19]But I was redeemed with the precious blood of Christ who was a sacrificial lamb without blemish or spot. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [20]Lord, You chose Him before creation for this purpose, but only in time did You reveal Him to us. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [21]Now I have new life because You raised Christ from the dead, and glorified Him. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Now I have hope beyond the grave. {156 Faith-Praying, Heb. 11:6}
[22]Therefore I will separate myself from sin and obey Your truth, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} and I will love believers with all my heart. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [23]I was born again to new life, {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} not from earthly parents who give physical life that will eventually die, but I was born again to new life that will last for eternity that comes from the Word of God. {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} [24]Yes, I know our physical life will pass away as the grass that withers, and flowers that die, [25]but Your Word stands forever. I put my trust in this Word that was preached to me. {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7}

Lord, Peter tells me about the greatness of Your salvation; take away my spiritual blindness; help me see all You've done for me, and then help me live daily for Your glory. Amen.

1 Peter 2

Live Holy Because of Christ's Death

[1]Lord, I repent of all known sin in my life. I will not lie, slander anyone, or be jealous of them. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} [2]Like a newborn baby, I thirst for Your pure Word, and {61 Child-Like Praying, 1 John 3:1} [3]I want to taste Your goodness so I can grow to the fullness of salvation. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17}

The King James Version says, "Desire the pure milk of the Word" (2:2). David said, "O taste and see that the Lord is good" (Ps. 34:8). Jesus said, "He that believeth on Me shall never thirst" (John 6:35). We should be thirsty for God and His Word because (1) He's the only One who can truly satisfy us; (2) we get thirsty and needy in this life; and (3) His presence is necessary for our lives to continue. Lord, I'm thirsty and need some relaxation in life. I need the satisfaction that only You can give. If I don't get Your water, I'll die. I need You right away. Ah...Your water is good. Amen.

[4]Indeed, I come daily to Christ for spiritual strength. He's the Rock rejected by unsaved people, but chosen because He is precious to You, the Father. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [5]Now I am a living stone that is part of the building which is Your house, but I'm also a holy priest offering worship to You. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [6]As You said in Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion, Christ as My precious cornerstone and I will not be put to shame because I believe in Him." [7]When I put my whole trust in Him, He becomes precious to me. But to those who do not believe in Him, they reject Him as the cornerstone on which to build their lives. [8]But Christ the primary cornerstone is a stumbling block to the unsaved, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and a stone used in execution to those who reject Him, but I am not disappointed in the One whom I believe. [9]Now Lord, I am part of a chosen people, a royal priesthood, {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} a dedicated citizen of heaven, and one claimed by You. You have set me apart to proclaim the triumphs of Christ who has called me out of darkness into marvelous light. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [10]I am part of the people of God—a saved Gentile—who once was not Your particular people, but now I belong to You, who was outside of Your mercy, but now I have mercy. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2}

[11]Lord, I will keep myself free from self-destructive passions {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} because I am a pilgrim in a foreign land. [12]I will behave honorably among unsaved people {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} so they can see for themselves my good works, {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} and when the day of judgment comes, they will remember the things they now criticize. {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10}

[13]I will submit myself to human institutions {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} for Your sake, {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [14]and

especially to government leaders because they are Your representatives to punish lawbreakers. [15]Lord, it is Your will that my good testimony silence what fools have said about You in ignorance. I am a slave to no one except You, and {171 Fool-Defensive Prayer, Prov. 1:7} [16]I'll live free and I'll never use my freedom as an excuse to sin. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [17]I will respect everyone, {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} and I love the church, and I fear You, {406 Reverent Praying, Ps. 111:10} and I keep the laws of my government. {196 Government Leaders-Intercession, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.}

[18]Lord, I realize Christian employees must be respectful and obedient to their bosses, {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} not only when the bosses are kind to them, but also when the bosses are cruel and demanding. [19]There is a reward for putting up with undeserved punishment when it is done for Christ's sake. But there is no Christian reward when I'm punished because I've done something wrong and deserve punishment. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [20]My reward comes when I accept punishment patiently and do my duty, even when I don't deserve punishment. {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} [21]Because when Christ suffered undeservedly for me, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} He left me an example that I should follow His steps. {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} [22]Christ did not commit one sin, nor was He ever deceitful in anything He said.

*Jesus Christ is our example and we are to follow His steps. When we don't know how to act or what to do, we should ask ourselves, WWJD? These letters mean: **W**hat **W**ould **J**esus **D**o? We should apply Jesus' example to our life, and walk accordingly. Lord, when I don't know what to do, I'll follow the example of Jesus. I'll do in my life what Jesus would do. Help me to live beyond myself and above my limitations. May I live as Jesus lived. Amen.*

[23]Nor did Christ threaten to get even when He was tortured, {261 Jesus'-Example Prayer, 1 Peter 2:21} but He committed Himself to You, the Father, who will judge rightly. [24]Christ suffered for my sins on the cross so I could repent of my sins and live a godly life; {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} through His wounds I have been healed. [25]I was straying like a lost sheep, but now I have come back to the Shepherd and Protector of my soul. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3}

Lord, Jesus has provided a great salvation for me; He helps me live holy as a saved person should live. Amen.

1 Peter 3

The Sufferings of Christ

[1]Lord, You tell a married woman to be obedient to her husband {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} so that if he refuses to obey the Word of God, he may

be won to Christ by his wife's godly behavior {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [2]because her holy life speaks louder than her words. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [3]You tell women not to dress up to show off, and they should not try to be spiritual by depending on jewelry, lovely clothes, and hair arrangements. [4]They must be beautiful inwardly, with a gentle spirit and a quiet appearance, {65 Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Gal. 4:19} which is what You want. [5]That kind of inward beauty was seen in women of the past who trusted You and submitted to their husbands. {549 Yielding-Prayer, Luke 22:42} [6]Sarah is an example who obeyed Abraham, calling him Lord. Women today can become Sarah's descendants by doing what is right {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} and not worrying their husbands or giving them cause for anxiety. [7]Lord, you tell husbands to treat their wives with respect and honor them as the weaker vessel, {459 Spouse-Inspired Prayer, 1 Peter 3:9} because husband and wife are heirs together of the grace of life. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} When the husband does this, his prayers will not be hindered. {31 Barriers to Prayer, Isa. 59:1, 2}

Our prayers are blocked by sin; in this case when husbands "do not treat her (wife) as you should, your prayers will not get ready answers" (3:7, LB). Prayers are blocked because of (1) sin (Ps. 66:18); (2) doubt or unbelief (Mark 11:24); (3) an unforgiving spirit (Mark 11:26); (4) idolatry (1 John 5:21); (5) selfishness (James 4:2, 3); (6) insincere asking; (Heb. 11:6); and (7) heresy or false teaching. Lord, I come to You in Jesus' name with my prayers. I'm not asking to be heard because of my good conduct, I come by the blood of Jesus Christ who cleansed me, and because Jesus is my Intercessor (Heb. 7:24, 25). But I will live rightly with my family so that my prayers will not be blocked. Amen.

[8]Lord, I will live in harmony with other believers; be sympathetic {337 Others-Prayer, Jude 22} and love all believers, {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} and be compassionate and humble. {228 Humility-Prayer, James 4:10} [9]Lord, I will never repay wrong with wrong, or a curse with a curse. Instead, I will repay a curse with a blessing {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV} because that is what You call me to do, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} and I will be blessed by You. [10]Lord, because I want a happy life and prosperity, I will not let my tongue lie, and become deceitful. {487 Tongue-Discipline Prayer, James 3:8} [11]I will turn away from evil and will do good. {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} I will try to live peaceably and hold on to it when I catch it, [12]because You are watching me and listening to my prayers, but You frown on those who do evil.

Peter tells us that God is watching to see if His people do right and when they do, "His ears are open unto their prayers" (3:12). That means right living leads to

right praying and results in answers to our prayers. Lord, I will live right because it is the right thing to do. Then when I pray I will have a right heart, and have a basis to receive answers from You. Amen

13Usually no one tries to hurt me when I do good, 14but if they do try to hurt me, You will reward me {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} and I will not be afraid of them or their threats. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 15I will hold the Lord Jesus reverently in my heart {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} and when someone asks why I believe as I do, I'll tell them why I have my hope in Christ. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} 16But I'll give my answer with courtesy and respect {71 Clean-Conscience Prayer, Heb. 10:22} so that when attackers curse me, they'll become ashamed when they see my exemplary life and conduct. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 17If it is Your will that I suffer, it is better that I suffer for doing right than for doing wrong. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

18Lord, thank You that Christ once suffered for my sins, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} the just for the unjust, that He might bring me to You, being put to death in the flesh, but raised by the Spirit. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 19Christ descended into hell to preach to people in prison 20because they were disobedient to You and refused to repent, like those who rejected Noah's preaching, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} even when You waited patiently while Noah was building the ark. But only eight persons were saved from that terrible flood 21which was a symbol of baptism. The water is a picture of judgment for sin that Christ suffered on the cross, whereby we received cleansing for our sins by His death. And we received the promise of eternal life because Christ was resurrected; {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} 22then He entered heaven to sit at God's right hand, {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} and now angels in heaven are subject to Him. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}

When we are saved, we should have a clear conscience before God. Peter gives a picture of the basis of our salvation, namely, baptism. We are not saved by water baptism, but by its true meaning, that is, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Because our sins are forgiven and we have new resurrection life, our consciences are clear and we can pray to God. Lord, because my sins are forgiven and I have new life, I come praying to You for the things I need. Hear me because of what Christ has done for me. I have a clear conscience to ask those things because of Christ. Amen.

1 Peter 4

Attitudes About Suffering

1Lord, I know Christ suffered when He was tortured. Therefore I will also be ready to suffer for my faith and I will have the

same attitude as Christ. I will not suffer in my body because of personal sin. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} [2]Therefore I won't let sin have domination over me and I will always do Your will. {533 Will of God-Prayer, Eph. 5:17} [3]I have lived too long to go back to my unsaved ways, giving myself to sex, debauchery, drunkenness, orgies, and worshiping idols. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [4]My unsaved friends think I'm strange for not indulging myself in the same evil activities they do; they laugh at me in scorn. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [5]But they will have to give account to You who judges the living and the dead, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and then they will be punished for the way they lived. [6]This is why the gospel was preached to those who died in the flood: {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} their physical life suffered in the flood, but their spirits live so they will appear before You in judgment. [7]The world will soon come to an end, {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} and I will be clear-minded and self-disciplined so I can pray for all who don't know You and do Your will. {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13}

Peter tells us to "watch unto prayer" (4:7, KJV). A watchful attitude concerning the coming of Christ means (1) we keep clean from sin; (2) we keep accounts short; (3) we pray for both saved and lost people; and (4) "we love His appearing" (2 Tim. 4:2). Lord, I confess all known and unknown sin so I'll be ready when You come. I will live each day as though it is the last day and I look forward to Your return. Amen.

[8]I will love everyone because love makes up for my faults, {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [9]and I will feed and give hospitality to those who need it. [10]You have given me special abilities that I will use them to help others, {448 Spiritual-Gift Praying, 1 Peter 4:10} being careful to pass on Your kindness. [11]If You call me to preach, {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} I will allow You to speak though me and if You lead me to help others, I will do it in Your strength. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} Lord, I want You to be glorified in my life through Jesus Christ. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} To Christ be glory and power, forever and ever. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9}

Peter teaches that we all must use the spiritual gift God has given us. "As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God...as of the ability which God giveth" (4: 10, 11, KJV). Then we must pray for (1) wisdom to know our gift; (2) God's anointing on our ministry; (3) time to use our gift; and (4) results from our ministry. Lord, thank You for my spiritual gift. Help me understand how best to use my gift, where to use it, and when to use it. Lord, use my gift and anoint it for spiritual results. Amen.

12I will not be surprised when painful trials come, because trials are not an unusual thing for Christians. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} 13I will be glad that I can suffer as Christ did, {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} then I will rejoice when His glory is revealed. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 14When people curse and blaspheme me as a Christian, I will have Your blessing resting on me. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 15My suffering will not be for crimes such as murder or theft, or even for sins such as hurting people or gossiping. 16When I suffer as a Christian, I will not be ashamed but will praise You that I bear Christ's name. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 17Time will come when judgment begins among God's followers. If I will be judged for my failures, how much more will the unsaved be judged? {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 18If the righteous will barely make it through judgment, how much more punishment will the ungodly have? 19So when I suffer for doing Your will, I will keep doing right. I will trust my soul to You, the faithful Creator, for You will never fail me. {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Peter tells his readers not to be surprised when suffering and trials come because that is part of the Christian life. When we suffer for Christ, we identify with Him. He gives several attitudes the believer should have when suffering for Christ (4:12-19). Lord, I don't like physical pain, nor do I like it when I'm embarrassed for my faith. But You suffered for me, so I'll suffer for You. Be with me in my pain, help me through it, and use my testimony to glorify Christ. Amen.

1 Peter 5

Serving Christ in View of His Return

1Lord, Peter spoke to church elders because he was an elder, {8 Aged-Prayer, Ps. 90:10} a witness of Christ's suffering, {250 Intercessory Prayer for Nations, Matt. 28:19} and one who will share in His glory. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} 2Peter told elders to feed the flock {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} that God has entrusted to them, ministering as overseers, not because they have to, but because they are willing to do what You want them to do. Peter told them, "Don't do it for money, but serve eagerly and 3don't be dictators over God's people, {67 Church-Boss Rejection Prayer, 3 John 9} but be an example that everyone in the flock can follow. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 4When the Chief Shepherd shall appear, they'll receive a crown of glory that will never tarnish." {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10}

5Peter told the younger men to follow the leadership of the older men, {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} and the rest were to clothe themselves in humility and serve one another because You oppose the proud but give grace to the humble. 6Therefore I will bow before You, so You can lift me up. 7I will put the weight of all

my problems on You. {59 Care-Casting Prayer, 1 Peter 5:7}

Peter tells us, "Casting all your care upon Him; for He careth for you" (5:7, KJV). How do we cast? We tell God we're giving Him our problems and concerns, then we do it by yielding the consequences of everything to God. Lord, I give You my cares; take care of the results. When I need wisdom and You want me to handle them for You, show me what to do. I will work hard, but leave the results with You now; they are Your concern. Amen.

[8]I will be watchful for attacks from my enemy, {11 Alert-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:13} satan who prowls as a hungry lion, looking for prey to feed on. {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer, 1 Peter 5:8} [9]I will stand firm against satan, {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} knowing Christians throughout the world are undergoing all kinds of suffering. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13}

We are told, "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (5:8). Therefore we must pray as we are on the lookout for satan. We pray (1) to recognize him; (2) to be alert to how he will attack us; (3) to know how to defend ourselves; (4) to protect others from his harm; and (5) for God to put a hedge of protection when we can't defend ourselves (Job 1:10). Lord, help me see satan's next attack and give me wisdom to protect myself. Give me strength to protect myself and give me wisdom to escape from him. Put a hedge of protection around me and my family so we will be safe when we don't know he's coming. Amen.

[10]After I suffer for a while on this earth, {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} You who have grace will call me to eternal glory with Christ. But now You can protect me, make me stronger, {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} and confirm me. [11]To You be all power, forever and ever. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9}

[12]I am encouraged to learn how You bless believers who are going through the same kind of sufferings that try me; therefore I will stand firm. Peter sent this letter by Silas, whom he trusted. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9} [13]The church in Babylon sent greetings along with Mark [14]greeting all believers in all peace; peace to all in Christ. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14}

Lord, I never like to think about suffering, but Peter reminds me that all Christians will have some suffering; help me suffer in Your will, to Your glory. Amen.

2 Peter

Ch 1: Learning Virtue from the Scriptures..... 1845
Ch 2: Warning Concerning Apostasy 1847
Ch 3: The Return of Christ..... 1849

2 PETER

Key Words: *Know, Knowing,* and *Knowledge* (occurs 3 times)

Key Verse: "*Then* the Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptations and to reserve the unjust under punishment for the day of judgment" (2 Peter 2:9 NKJV).

Theme: Peter was aware that martyrdom was near (1:14), just as Paul was also aware that his martyrdom was near (4:6). Yet both men were not bitter or fearful, but they rejoiced in serving Jesus. Both men saw apostasy creeping into the church. Peter traces apostasy to false teachers (2:1-3), and he shows how false teaching leads to filthy ungodly living.

Note the sections in 2 Peter. The believer's salvation is validated by the practices of Christian virtues (1:4-14); Peter recalls the transfiguration of Christ (1:15-18); prophecy is inspired and authoritative (1:19-21); false teachers bear certain marks (2:1-3-3); and Jesus will return (3:4-13); and spiritual diligence and steadfastness is encouraged (3:14-17). *Lord, keep me from heresy and false teaching and give me spiritual insight to sniff out any trace in my life. May I be faithful to You in mind, body, and belief. Amen.*

2 Peter 1

Learning Virtue from the Scriptures

[1]Lord, teach me to be as bold as Simon Peter, who wrote a letter addressed to Christians who had obtained the same precious faith he received. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} Lord, I too have that precious faith and I stand in Your righteousness and that of my Savior, Jesus Christ. {270 Justification-Based Prayer, Rom. 8:28-31} [2]May Your grace and peace be multiplied in my life as I grow in knowing You and the Lord Jesus. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10}
[3]Your divine power has given me all things that relate to life and godliness, so I will grow as I know You who called me to a life of excellence and goodness. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [4]You have given me Your precious promises that through the Word of God I have received a divine nature {38 Bible-Application Prayer, Heb. 4:12} which is the new man with new desires to obey You. {125 Divine-Purity Praying, 2 Peter 1:3}

God has promised "divine power [and] all things that pertain unto life and godliness" (1:3). God's power is not for just anything we desire, but for our "need" to be godly. God's power is not for a luxurious lifestyle or to fulfill our dreams. It's for godly living. Lord, forgive me for dreaming of riches, luxuries, and gadgets. Teach me to dream of godliness. Lord, I want to be like You. Amen.

5Therefore I will add character to my faith {194 Good-Things Praying, Heb. 13:21} so I will do the right thing in the right way. I will add Bible knowledge {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} to my character so I will always know what to do to please You. {451 Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Prov. 1:2, 3} 6I will add self-control to my biblical knowledge {427 Self-Control Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:5} so I will be steadfast in knowing and doing right. I will add godliness to my steadfastness so that I'll have a basis for becoming more godly. {419 Sanctified-Praying, Heb. 10:14} 7Finally, I will add brotherly love to my godliness {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15} so that my godly life results in a loving relationship to all. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}

The Christian is instructed to know God. Peter tells us God has given us His divine power so we can know God fully (1:3). Then Peter lists a number of qualities we need that will help us know God (1:5-7). Lord, my passion is to know both Your person and power. This is not a selfish prayer for some outward display of power, but I want to know You intimately and experience strength to overcome my sinful nature and inhibitions. Give me a daily ability to know You deeper each day. Amen.

8When I abound in these traits, I will not be ineffective or unfruitful in my walk on this earth. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} 9Those Christians who don't have these godly traits are blind, and {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} they have forgotten that their former sins are forgiven. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} 10I have been called to salvation, chosen by You, I will be diligent to demonstrate Your call in my life. If I do all these things, there is no danger that I will ever fall away into sin, {469 Surety-Praying, 2 Peter 1:10} 11and I will eventually be given admission to Your eternal kingdom to live forever with my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. {82 Confident-Praying, 1 John 5:13}

Peter exhorts us to strive to make our salvation a "sure" thing. Why are some Christians not sure of their salvation? They have (1) sin in their life; (2) ignorance of Scripture; (3) false teaching about assurance, (4) doubts; (5) unanswered prayers; (6) unfulfilled Christian obligations; and (7) they were never saved in the first place.

12Throughout eternity, You'll continually retell these truths to me, even though I know them now and hold them firmly. {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} 13Peter said it is his duty to remind every one of these truths as long as he is in the body,

that is, the tent. {126 Doctrinal-Prayer, 1 Tim. 3:15-16} 14Peter knew his time to leave the tent was coming soon just as the Lord Jesus predicted his death. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3}
15Therefore Peter wrote these things so that after his departure, believers everywhere would be able to recall these things. {181 Future-Blessing Prayer, Heb. 11:21}
16Peter did not make up a myth when he went preaching the power of the coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} but he saw with his eyes the majesty of Jesus. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} 17Peter was honored on the Mount of Transfiguration to hear the Father speak, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 18Peter actually heard the voice that came from heaven. {36 Better-Jesus Praise, Heb. 1:4, 8:6}
19Therefore I hold more certain than ever the word of prophecy and I will give careful attention to that word for it shines like a bright light in a dark world. It will shine until the day of Christ's return, which is the morning star arising in our hearts. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7}
20I understand and believe that no prophecy of Scripture can be interpreted and understood in isolation, but every verse must be interpreted in light of all Scripture. 21No word of prophecy was written by human initiative and all the words men wrote in the Bible were inspired by the Holy Spirit. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32}

Lord, thank You for Your Word that saves me. Help me to master the Scriptures, and then meditate on them and live a godly life that's taught therein. Amen.

2 Peter 2

Warning Concerning Apostasy

1Lord, there were false prophets living when the Bible was written just as there are false prophets today. These false prophets will subtly introduce dangerous heresies, they will deny You who redeemed them, {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} and eventually they will cause their own destruction. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 2Many will follow their filthy immorality, and by their lives will discredit the truth of God. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} 3In their lust they will try to make many people their disciples, {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} but their foolish arguments make their judgment inevitable. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
4I know You didn't spare the angels that sinned but bound them in chains {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and threw them in hell, so they must wait for the judgment day. 5And You didn't spare any of the people who lived before the flood and You completely destroyed the world with a flood except Noah, who spoke for You and his family of seven. {480 Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} 6Later You reduced the cities

of Sodom and Gomorrah into a heap of rubble and completely destroyed them as a fearful example to those who refuse to live by Your laws. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 7Yet You delivered Lot {109 Deliverance-Prayer, Ps. 34:6} and declared him righteous even when he was distressed at the sin of his day. 8Lot saw and experienced the filthy sins as he lived among sinners, and those sins tortured his soul day after day. 9I know for certain that You can rescue the righteous who are surrounded by temptation because You delivered Lot, {476 Temptation-Victory Prayer, Luke 22:40} and I know that You reserve Your punishment for the wicked until the day of judgment comes. {108 Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer, Ps. 94:23}
10Lord, I know Your judgment is reserved especially for those who indulge in their lusts {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} and despise authority. {287 Looking-Back Prayer, Luke 9:62} These wicked are arrogant and presumptuous and they dare to scoff at the Glorious One, the Lord Jesus Christ. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6}

Peter used several illustrations of those who were condemned for false teaching: (1) false teachers in Israel; (2) angels who sinned; (3) the generation who rejected Noah's preaching; (4) Sodom and Gomorrah; and (5) those who denied the deity of Jesus Christ in Peter's day. The result of false teaching was that they (1) rejected Jesus; (2) condemned Christianity; (3) taught for greedy money; (4) used filthy language and living; (5) were engaged in sexual excess; and (6) faced judgment in this life and the next. Lord, I want to know and believe true doctrine. If I hold any small tenet of false teaching, show me my error. Remove spiritual blindness. I yield to the Holy Spirit's eyes; help me look at Scripture through His eyes. Help me be accurate in all my beliefs. Amen

11Even the angels who are more powerful than they, never criticize these evil men before Your presence. 12Lord, these evil men are as dumb as animals which You gave us to eat and do our work, and they laugh at the great powers of the unseen world. But they will be destroyed in their own corruption and be destroyed with satan and the demons in hell. 13These men who do their evil in broad daylight are cancerous spots who revel in sin even when they come to Your house to eat. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 14They look everywhere for adultery, try to seduce the unsuspecting, and they are cursed because they magnify their greed. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} 15They have left the right path to follow the path of Balaam, {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} who tried to profit from his sin. 16The donkey rebuked Balaam with the voice of a man to restrain him from his sin. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} 17False teachers are like wells without water, they are like storm clouds without rain; the dark underworld is reserved for them. 18With their proud works they tempt

new converts to return to sin {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} who have just escaped the pagan world. They use lust to coax new believers back into sin; [19]they promise freedom, but they are slaves themselves because they are dominated by sin. {401 Resistance-Prayer, John 9:31} [20]If anyone escapes the pollution of this world and allows himself to be enslaved again, {53 Bondage-Breaking Prayer, Rom. 7:20} his second state is worse than his first one. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [21]It would have been better if he never learned the way of holiness. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} [22]He is like the proverb that says, "The dog returns to his own vomit," and "A pig that is washed returns to wallow in the mire." {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Peter described the person who is really saved through "fully knowing our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ" (2:20, NKJV). But after salvation they went back to the world of sin and false teaching and "they are entangled" (2:20, NKJV). Peter condemned those who entrapped Christians with false doctrine. Therefore we are to pray for those who are so entangled. Lord, keep me from false doctrine; I ask for wisdom and strength to help others entangled in false doctrine. I don't know how those who are so entangled can pray, so I intercede for them. Amen.

2 Peter 3

The Return of Christ

[1]Lord, Peter wrote this second letter, and in both letters he tried to motivate people to spiritual thinking {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} [2]so they would remember the words of the prophets and keep the commands of the apostles of the Lord Jesus Christ. {140 Ephesians' Church-Prayer, Rev. 2:4-6}

Peter wrote his two letters to motivate his readers to have "pure minds" (3:1) which means to think on the words of Scripture and the commands of Jesus. Pure thinking comes from a pure mind that is filled with the Word of God. Lord, I want my prayers to be pure. I will read and memorize Your Word so I will have a pure mind. I yield myself to You and repent of evil thoughts so I will not have a filthy mind. Fill my mind with Your purity, and I will be pure. Amen.

[3]Peter wanted to remind them that scoffers would come in the last days following their own evil lusts. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [4]Scoffers will say, "Where is His coming?" They will add, "Ever since our fathers died, everything goes on as it has since the beginning of creation." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [5]They deliberately close their eyes to the fact the earth was formed out of the waters by Your command. [6]They also forgot that the earth was covered by water [7]and that the present heavens and earth are being maintained by You, and

that one day You will judge this earth by fire. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Some will scoff at the promises of Jesus' return. It is their desire that Jesus will not return because scoffers know they will be judged. Scoffers want Christianity to fail and they want to continue their evil ways. They have enough "God consciousness" that motivates them to deny the things God promises, but scoffers are like those who denied the coming flood announced by Noah (3:5, 6). Lord, I do not scoff at the predictions of Your return, even when You delay. I believe You will come again because You said it, so I will prepare for it and live as if Jesus were coming today. Amen.

[8]Lord, I will never forget that a day with You is a thousand years, and a thousand years is only a day. {392 Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer, Ps. 97:5} [9]I realize some people think You are slow about keeping Your promises, as some people measure slowness, but You will keep Your promises in Your time. {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} Lord, I know You do not want anyone to perish but You want all people to repent and trust You for salvation. [10]Lord, You will come as a thief in the night {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} when the heavens will pass away with a thunderous noise, and the elements will dissolve with fire, and the works on earth will be burned up with fire. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [11]In view of all these things, I will live godly; I will live a good life, looking for Your return. {527 Walk in the Spirit-Prayer, Gal. 5:16, 25} [12]That is the day when the heavens will disintegrate with fire and all the elements will melt. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [13]My hope is set on the new heavens and the new earth which You have promised is where the righteous will live. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [14]I will wait in hope for these things, and be found in You without blemish or spot at Your coming. I know why You are waiting to return. {455 Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Titus 2:1} [15]You are giving us time to get this message of salvation to as many as possible. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [16]Paul wrote about these same things in his letters, yet some of his comments are not easy to understand. Some people who are unlearned and rebellious deliberately have twisted his writings to mean something quite different from what he meant, just as they do other Scriptures that are disastrous to them. {48 Blinded-Prayer, James 4:2-3} [17]Peter wrote to us about these false teachers so we can watch for them, and not be fooled by them, but that we may stand firm on biblical doctrine. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [18]I will grow in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ. To Him be all glory both now and forever. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18}

Peter tells his readers to "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ" (3:18). Note: (1) it is possible to grow; (2) God expects us to grow;

(3) some are not growing; and (4) it is possible to not grow but to stagnate and become spiritual pygmies. Since it is possible to grow, then we should pray for that growth. Lord, I want to grow in Your grace and I want to know You better. Give me a passion to grow, and put within me a spirit of discipline to pay the price for growth, for spiritual growth never comes without effort. Amen.

1 John

Ch 1: Fellowship with the Father because of the Incarnation of Christ 1854
Ch 2: Test of Fellowship with the Father 1855
Ch 3: How Believers Relate to Each Other 1858
Ch 4: Warning against False Teachers 1859
Ch 5: You Can Know You Are God's Child 1861

1 JOHN

Key Word: *Know* (occurs 32 times)

Key Verse: "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may *continue to* believe in the name of the Son of God" (1 John 5:13).

Theme: John writes an intimate family letter to his "little children," telling them to love one another to demonstrate they are born again. He expects them not to sin, and treats sin as a child's offense against their heavenly Father. There is no personal greetings from John as found in Paul's letters, nor are there greetings to those who receive this letter; probably this is because John intended this letter to be read in all the churches.

The apostle sets a stark contrast with darkness, death, falsehood, and hate in this letter. Against that dark background, John taught the child of God should have assurance of their salvation. Therefore John uses the word *know* to give them many reasons for inner confidence.

He maintains, "Now he who keeps His commands abides in Him, and He in him. And by this we know that He abides in us, by the Spirit whom He has given us" (3:24 NKJV). *Lord, I love You with all my heart; give me that same love for others. I know Christ is in my heart; give me confidence of faith so I'll have an assurance of salvation. Amen.*

John 1

Fellowship with the Father because of the Incarnation of Christ

[1]Lord, I have heard the message that is from the beginning, which my spiritual eyes have seen and looked on, and my hands have handled—the WORD OF LIFE. {85 Consensus-Prayer, Acts 15:18} [2]Eternal life was manifested to me, I have seen it; and now I witness to others and tell them about eternal life which was with You the Father, and manifested to me. {24 Assurance-Prayer, James 1:6; Heb. 11:6} [3]That which I've seen and heard, I tell others that they may have fellowship with me as I have fellowship with You, and with Your Son, Jesus Christ. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} [4]John has written these things to give me heavenly joy.

[5]Lord, I worship You because You are light and there is absolutely no darkness in You, so now I declare this message to everyone. {535 Word-Praying, John 1:1, 14} [6]Lord, if I tell people that I have fellowship with You and yet I walk in darkness, I lie and deny the truth. {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} [7]But when I walk in the light as You are the light, I have fellowship with other believers, and the blood of Jesus Christ cleanses me of all my sins. {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3}

One of John's dominant themes is "light." Because "God is light," we must not walk in darkness, but in the light. Light walking is (1) obedient fellowship with Jesus (1:7); (2) interactive fellowship with other believers (1:7); (3) not hating (2:9); and (4) abiding or living in the light (2:10). Lord, I want to walk in Your light, and reflect light to the unsaved. Help me not stumble, but walk confidently toward Your purpose for my life. Amen.

[8]Lord, if I tell people I have no sin in me, I deceive myself, and I don't have Your truth. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} [9]When I confess my sins, You are faithful to forgive my sins, and cleanse me from all unrighteousness. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} [10]If I were to say I've never sinned, I make You a liar and Your Word doesn't control me. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32}

"Prayer is relationship with God" and is best reflected in fellowship-praying. When we walk in the light (1:7) and all our sins are dealt with (1:8-11), then we can fellowship-pray. Lord, the best experience of prayer is fellowship-praying, so I seek a close, intimate relationship {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} with You. I want to know Your heart and what plans You have for me. Amen.

1 John 2

Test of Fellowship with the Father

[1]Lord, because You told me not to sin, I won't do it, but when I slip and sin once, Jesus Christ stands at Your right hand to plead forgiveness for me. {6 Advocate-Intercession, 1 John 2:1}

Jesus is our High Priest who represents us to the Father in heaven. Jesus is called an "advocate" (2:1, KJV) which is a legal term for a lawyer, that is, a person who represents someone before a judge when that person has broken the law. So Jesus is our lawyer who pleads to the Father for forgiveness after we sin. Jesus pleads His blood as the legal payment for sin. Lord, don't punish me for my sin. Jesus is my lawyer; He asks for my forgiveness based on His blood that pays the price for my sin (1 Peter 1:18-20). Thank You for Your mercy that forgives me. Thank You, Jesus, for being my lawyer. Amen.

[2]I know Jesus has forgiven all my sin and He didn't die for me alone, but for the whole world. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10}

The word "propitiation" is a legal term that means satisfaction (1 John 2:2, KJV). When Jesus paid the price for our sins (1 Peter 1:18-20), He satisfied our account. Our record in heaven is clean, and our sins are forgiven. "Not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world" (2:2, KJV). This doesn't mean the whole world is going to heaven, as some universalists claim. No! The blood of Christ was sufficient for them, but only those who repent and believe will go to heaven. Then the blood of Christ is efficient to forgive their sins. Why do people go to hell? Because of unbelief! Lord, I believe, thank You that Your blood was efficient to forgive my sins. Lord, I pray for the unsaved; Jesus' blood is efficient for them if they will believe. Amen.

[3]I have confidence that I'm Your child because I keep Your commands. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} [4]Those who say that they know You but don't keep Your commands are liars and they don't have the truth. {449 Spiritual-Growth Prayer, 2 Peter 3:18} [5]But those who keep Your Word have Your love in their hearts; that's why I know I'm Your child. {191 God-Pleasing Prayer, Heb. 11:5} [6]Because I abide in You, I ought to live the way You walked. [7]Lord, John didn't write anything new in his letter; he just repeated the original commands You gave us, and that commandment is found in Your Word. {355 Pleasing God-Prayer, 1 John 3:22}

[8]Then John added what is new about the old commands; {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [9]those who claim to be in the light but hate their brother are in darkness until now. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [10]Those who love their brother live in Your light; these persons will not stumble in darkness. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [11]Lord, those who hate their brothers live in the darkness of sin, and walk in darkness and they don't know what they're doing, because the darkness of sin has blinded their eyes. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [12]Lord, John has written to new children in the faith to let them know their sins are forgiven. {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [13]Lord, John has written to those mature fathers in the faith because they have known You from the beginning. Lord, John has written to young men because they overcame the evil one. Lord, John has written to children in the faith because they know You. [14]Lord, John has written to those mature fathers who have known You from the beginning and You have overcome the evil one.

[15]Lord, I will not love worldly attractions, or anything else that will pull me away from You. Those who love the world do not love You, the Father. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15} [16]Because worldly attraction involves the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, these are not from You, but are from the evil one. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [17]I know the world will pass away, as well as fleshly lust, but I will live forever by doing Your will. {96 Crucifixion-Prayer, Gal. 2:20}

John tells believers, "Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world" (2:15, KJV). Then John explains, "For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world" (2:16, KJV). Because lust is intrinsic to our nature, we must pray to insulate ourselves from our sinful lusts. Lord, keep me from being controlled by my lusts. I yield to You; give me a pure heart that's not dominated by sinful lusts. May I love You so deeply that sinful lust would have no place in my life. Amen.

18 Lord, John has written that we live in the last days and that the antichrist will come in the future. Because the spirit of the antichrist is already here, we know he will come. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 19 Many Christians have stopped fellowshiping with us, which demonstrates they have abandoned their faith, for if they were of us, they'd still have fellowship with us. But because they went out from us this proves they were not believers. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20} 20 Lord, I have an anointing of the Holy Spirit so I can know spiritual things. {244 Insight-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} 21 John wrote to us because we know the truth, and that no lie comes from the truth. {499 Truth-Living Prayer, 3 John 4} 22 Those who deny that Jesus is the Messiah are liars, and they have the spirit of antichrist because they deny both You the Father and the Son. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 23 Those who deny the Son don't have Your presence in their lives, and those like me, who have the Son, also have You. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} 24 I will continue in the message I heard from the beginning, and when I continue abiding, I will fellowship with You and the Son. 25 Then I have the promise which is eternal life. 26 John wrote to tell me about those who try to deceive me. 27 But Lord, I still have the anointing You gave me at salvation, so I don't need anyone to explain truth to me. {184 Gifts with Prayer, 2 Cor. 9:7}

28 That anointing gives me basic spiritual understanding so I will abide in the truth that has been taught me. {186 Goal-Striving Prayer, Phil. 3:10-14} 29 Lord, I know that Jesus Christ is righteous so all those who obey the truth taught by Him are born of God. {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12}

We have "a gift" to enable us to know the truth of God (2:27). The King James Version calls it "the anointing." This refers to the Holy Spirit who helps us understand spiritual truth. Jesus said, "The Holy Ghost... shall teach you all things" (John 14:26). Again Jesus said the Holy Spirit "will guide you into all truth" (John 16:13). So to learn more spiritual truth and understand it better we must be rightly related to the Holy Spirit and ask Him to help us. Lord, I need the Holy Spirit to help me understand spiritual truth. I yield to His full control of my life. Take away darkness and evil thoughts; help me understand spiritual truth. Amen.

1 John 3

How Believers Relate to Each Other

[1]I often think about the love of You—the Father—for me and the fact that You call me Your child because I really belong to You. When the world refuses to acknowledge You, it also refuses to recognize my salvation. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5}

John writes that we are "called His children, and we really are..." (3:1, LB). Therefore we should approach the Father like a child which means (1) because of our intimate relationship; (2) because parents are obliged to provide and protect their children; (3) because parents are the first line of care; and (4) because parents are obliged to teach and correct their children. Lord, I come to You with my needs and requests. Protect me, help me, teach me, and provide for me. I am Your child; teach me how to live, and tell me how to pray. I want to please You. Amen.

[2]Yes, I am already Your child, and I can't imagine what our fellowship will be like in heaven. I do know this much about my future life when Jesus comes, I'll be like Him because I've seen Him in the Word of God. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [3]Everyone who agrees with me about our future relationship will keep themselves as pure as You are. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

[4]Anyone who keeps on sinning breaks Your commands because sin is breaking Your law. {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} [5]I know Jesus became a man to take away sin and that there is no sin in Him. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} [6]So when I stay close to Jesus, I won't be sinning and those who sin continually were not saved in the first place and they don't know Him. {271 Knowing Christ-Prayer, Phil. 3:10} [7]I am Your child, so I won't let anyone deceive me and I will live holy because You are holy. {117 Diligent-Person's Prayer, Prov. 4:23} [8]Those who constantly sin belong to the devil since sin began with the devil and he constantly keeps sinning. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [9]I know the Son of God has come to undo all that the devil has corrupted with sin. {162 Father-Cry Prayer, Gal. 4:5} [10]Because I have been born again, I don't constantly sin because I have a new nature that tells me what to do. This is how you tell the difference between a child of God and a child of the devil. Whoever constantly sins and doesn't love other Christians, is not in Your family. {490 Transformation-Prayer, Rom. 8:29} [11]I have heard Your message from the beginning that I am commanded to love other believers. {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} [12]I will not be like Cain who killed his brother because he was not Your child, {410 Righteous-People Prayer, 1 Peter 3:12} [13]and I won't be surprised when the world hates me. {470 Surprise-Response Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [14]When I love other Christians, it proves I have been delivered from death and hell and I have eternal life. {282 Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer, 2 Cor. 4:3-4} [15]If I refuse to love a believer, it proves I am

just the same as a murderer, and murderers don't have eternal life. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} 16I know true love from the example of Jesus Christ, because He died for me. Because of this I ought to live for others. {294 Love-Growing Prayer, Phil. 1:9} 17If someone has money and professes to know You, yet refuses to give to a needy Christian, how could Your love live in Him? {219 Help-Prayer, Ps. 108:12, 13} 18Therefore I will not love in words only; I will show my real love by the things I do. {218 Help the Oppressed by Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9} 19Only by actions can I be sure that I am Your child, and my conscience will be clear when I come to Your presence. 20When my conscience makes me feel guilty because I sin, I realize You know everything about me for You are greater than my conscience. {208 Guilt-Motivation Prayer, Col. 3:12-13}

There are two kinds of guilt. First is legal guilt when we are guilty before God for having sinned and broken God's law. The second is the experience of guilt because we don't live a perfect life. So, we may feel guilty because of our imperfections. Experiential guilt makes us feel guilty, and we lose our inner peace (legal peace) before God. If we don't have experiential peace, we can get answers to our prayer (3:21). But experiential guilt can destroy our confidence in prayer and block answers (3:21). Lord, I come in prayer because I stand perfect before You. But sometimes my experiential guilt destroys my confidence to pray. So then I'll remember "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John 1:7, KJV). Then I'll pray confidently. Amen.

21Therefore, when my conscience doesn't convict me, I can come to You with my request in prayer to get what I ask, because I am keeping Your commands. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} 22And this is Your commandment that I believe in the name of Your Son, Jesus Christ, and that I love believers as You commanded us. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7} 23Because I keep Your commands, I know I live in You, and You live in me. {23 Asking-Prayer, Matt. 7:7}

When we "do those things that are pleasing in His sight" (3:22), then "whatsoever we ask, we receive of Him" (3:22, KJV). How can we please God to get our prayers answered? "Without faith is it impossible to please Him" (Heb. 11:6). When we truly believe God exists and we diligently pray, then God is pleased. Lord, I confess that You are the Creator of all things and that You exist today. I come praying with all my heart. Be pleased with the requests I make. Amen.

24The Holy Spirit gives me this assurance. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5}

1 John 4

Warning against False Teachers

1Lord, I will not believe every person who claims to be a Christian, but I will test his spirit to see whether he is from You,

because many false teachers are going around. {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1}

Because there will always be false teachers, we are commanded to "try the spirits" (4:1) to determine if they are from God. A false spirit will not confess that Jesus Christ is fully God. At the same time they must confess Jesus was fully man. Jesus was never more God than when He was fully man. He was never more fully human than when He was fully God. Jesus is the God-Man. He was never half-God and half-man. Jesus was fully God and fully man at the same time, and will always be so in the future. Lord, I confess Your deity, You are God who died for me. Lord, I confess Your humanity, You are perfect man who now intercedes for me before the Father. Amen.

[2]Every spirit that acknowledges that Jesus Christ has come in the flesh is from You; every spirit that denies Jesus had a body is not from You. {262 Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Heb. 7:24-25} [3]Those who deny Jesus was human are antichrists, who were predicted to come, and are now here. If Jesus didn't come in a body, He couldn't lived a perfect life, nor could He have died, nor would He have bled to redeem us, nor could He have been raised in His physical body. {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} [4]Lord, I will be victorious over false teaching because greater is the Holy Spirit in me, than the spirit of the world. {340 Overcoming-Prayer, 1 John 4:4}

We should overcome evil when we pray because "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (4:4, KJV). Therefore, when evil overcomes us, it is because we have not claimed the power and victory of the One in us, "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col. 1:27). Lord, forgive me when I forget to claim Your power and I get my eyes off You. I know You are powerful; it's my lack of faith that keeps me from claiming Your victory. Amen.

[5]Those who speak the language of the world get attention from the world; they are not from You. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [6]But I am Your child and I know You listen to me and those who belong to You, listen to me; this is how I tell the spirit of truth from the spirit of falsehood. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}

[7]Lord, I pray Your children will love one another since love comes from You, and everyone who is born again has been given the gift of love. {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1} [8]Those who fail to love other people have never known You because You are love. {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [9]Your love for me was revealed when You sent Your only Son into the world, so that I could have life through Him. What is love? {359 Power-Praying, Rom. 1:16} [10]Not that I loved You, but that You loved us and sent Your Son as a sacrifice to take away my sins. {481 Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer, Ps. 106:1}

We should love one another because (1) we are commanded to do so (4:7); (2) God first loved us; (3) it reflects our love to God (4:8); (4) God gave Himself for us, so we give ourselves to others (4:9); and (5) God who lives in us is love, and He loves others through us (4:16). Lord, I'm overwhelmed with Your love; teach me to love You in return, and then teach me to love others. I know You indwell me; let Your love shine through me. Amen.

11 Since You have loved me so much, I ought to love other believers. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8}
12 No one has ever seen You at any time, but as long as I love other believers, You will live in me, and Your love will be seen through me. {431 Servanthood-Prayer, Mark 9:35} 13 Thank You for putting the Holy Spirit into my heart as a proof that You live in me, and I live in You. {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18}
14 Furthermore, John saw with his eyes and writes to tell us You sent the Son to save the world. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 15 Those who acknowledge that Jesus is Your Son lives in You, and You in them. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} 16 I know You love me deeply because I feel Your love for me. You are love, and whoever lives a life of love, lives in You, and You live in them. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 17 Your love will be complete in me when I stand perfect before the judgment seat of Christ. {292 Love-Abounding Prayer, Phil. 1:9}
18 There is no fear in love, because perfect love drives out fear. Those who do not love are fearful because they do not know what will happen to them in judgment; that proves they are not Your children. {164 Fear-Motivated Prayer, Ps. 56:3} 19 So, my love for You comes because You first loved me; {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38}
20 Those who say, "I love God" but hate a fellow Christian whom they can see, cannot love You whom they cannot see. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} 21 So this is the summary of love: anyone who loves You must also love his brother or sister. {296 Loving-People Prayer, James 2:8}

Lord, I love You with all my heart, mind, and body; keep me always in the center of Your will. Amen.

1 John 5

You Can Know You Are God's Child

1 Lord, I know I am born again because I believe Jesus is the Messiah. And all who love You, love Your children also. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5} 2 I know I am Your child because I love You, and I do what You have commanded me to do. 3 This is what loving You means—keeping Your commands because they are not difficult. {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38}
4 I know I am Your child because I have victoriously overcome the lust of the world by faith. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor.

2:14} [5]Who else can overcome the world? Only those who believe Jesus is the Son of God. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15}

God gives His children an inner witness through the Scriptures that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and those who know Him get their prayers answered. Lord, I know I am Your child because I invited You into my heart and Your Scriptures reinforce this experience. Thank You for an inner assurance that I am saved. Amen.

[6]Jesus came by water and blood; His blood was shed to cleanse us from sin, and water stands for our Spirit baptism into the body of Christ, the church. {17 Anointed-Truth Praying, 1 John 2:27} [7]The Holy Spirit is another witness that I am Your child; the Holy Spirit witnesses in me that I am born again. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} [8]These three, the blood, water, and Spirit, all agree that I am Your child. {10 Agreement-Prayer, Matt. 18:19} [9]Many people accept a man's witness to the truth, {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} [10]but Your witness is much greater. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3} [11]I know I am born again because I have Your witness within. {281 Life-Receiving Prayer, John 10:10} [12]Everyone who believes in Your Son has life, those who reject Your Son make You out to be a liar, but I know I am born again because of Your testimony in Your Word that You have given us Your Son. {64 Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Eph. 3:17} [13]Those who have the Son have eternal life, and I know I am born again because I have Your Son in my heart. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5}
[14]I also have assurance because You said those who have the Son have eternal life. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [15]I also know I am born again because You hear my prayers, and I know You will answer my prayers because You do not hear and answer the prayers of unsaved people. {83 Confident-Praying in God's Presence, Heb. 13:5} [16]Lord, I will pray for those who commit a sin that does not lead to death and You will give them life. {248 Intercessor's-Prayer, Rom. 8:34} [17]There is a fatal sin which ends in death; I will not pray on this occasion, all wrongdoing is sin, but not all sin is fatal. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

The Bible describes a "sin unto death" and tells intercessors not to pray for such a one. Apparently the "sin unto death" is a repeated sin by a believer that leads to premature death. Since God knows the time of death for all people, there are some believers He brings home before that predetermined date. Lord, keep me safe from sin; may I not be blinded by sin so that I commit a "sin unto death." May I not sin ignorantly so that I harden my heart beyond repentance. May I always be sensitive about sin and seek Your forgiveness by the blood of Christ. Give me a passion to live sinlessly. Amen.

[18]I know I am born again because I do not continually practice sin because the Son of God protects me from the evil one.

{387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [19]I know I am born again because I realize all non-Christians are lost, but Your children have this spiritual insight. {241 Inner-Assurance Praying, 1 John 5:10} [20]I know the Son of God has come into my heart to give me spiritual understanding to know You, and I know You are the true God who gives eternal life. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [21]Lord, I will watch out for anything that takes Your place in my heart. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17}

The word "know" is the key word in this chapter as John tells us how we can know we have eternal life. Many Christians doubt if they are going to heaven, but John says we can be assured of salvation when (1) we have Christ (5:12); (2) we accept Scriptures' teaching (5:11); (3) God answers our prayers (5:14-15); (4) we have a new nature that overcomes sin (5:18); and (5) we have spiritual insight and our spiritual blindness is removed (5:20). Lord, thank You for eternal life and for the assurance that I can know I am saved. Thank You for removing my doubts and giving me innate assurance that I am going to heaven. Amen.

2 John

Ch 1: Live the Truth 1865

2 JOHN

Key Word: *Truth* (occurs 4 times)

Key Verse: "The Elder, to the elect lady and her children, whom I love in truth, and not only I, but also all those who have known the truth, because of the truth which abides in us and will be with us forever" (2 John 1, 2).

Theme: The key word "truth" is attached to love in the phrase "in truth and love" (v. 3). In this way John continues the theme of love in his first letter. Truth is the body of revealed truth, that is, the Word of God. And love is the defining attribute of Christ's followers. Because "many deceivers are entered into the world" (v. 7), John tells his "children" to mark these persons, have no fellowship with them in their house, nor greet them (v. 10). He writes as an "elder" which is a reference to his office. "The chosen lady" is probably a reference to the church that received this letter. If he had written to a specific lady, he probably would have used her name, as he does with other individuals (3 John 9, 12). The "elect lady" was probably a reference to the Ephesian church from which John writes. *Lord, I love Your church and will fellowship with it. I also abhor false teaching and will separate myself from them. Amen.*

2 John 1

Live the Truth

1 A letter from the elder John, to the church who is an elect lady and her children whom I love in truth: {291 Love One Another-Prayer, 1 John 4:11} "I and everyone in the body of Christ love you in the faith because the Word of God dwells in your heart {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1} 2and in ours. {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} 3Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father." {498 Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer, 2 John 1}

The key phrase in this book is "love in the truth" (v. 1). You can't have one without the other. If we fulfill the royal law of love, but it does not grow out of love; it is not enough. The opposite also applies; we are not committed to the truth of God's Word if we don't love others. Let us pray that we may balance both by being filled with both. Lord, I am committed to Your truth; help me demonstrate it with love to all. And may my love not be mushy soft; may Your

love flow to me from the Scriptures, and then flow to others. Amen.

4I am glad that I found your children walking in truth {218 Help the Oppressed by Prayer, Ps. 10:8-9} and obeying God's Word.
5Now I urgently remind you of the important principle that you love one another; this is the command I wrote to you from the beginning {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38} 6that when we love one another, we keep His words. {293 Love-Expression Prayer, John 21:15}

Lord, give me a deeper love for other Christians and help me express it; help me receive love from others, and in that relationship may our love grow to overcome all our weaknesses. Amen.

7"Watch out for false teachers who believe and teach that Jesus Christ was born only with a human body, and that He was not deity. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} These false teachers are deceivers and antichrists. 8Keep a watchful eye {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} that you do not lose the prize for which you and I work. Be constant so you receive your full reward for being faithful in all things {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} because if you wander from the teachings of Christ, you will lose God's influence in your life.

The King James Version calls these false teachers deceivers, and The Living Bible calls them false leaders. Whatever names they are called, we must guard ourselves against those who teach that Jesus Christ did not come in the flesh. We must pray (1) for God to take away spiritual blindness concerning their heresy; (2) to understand the truth of Jesus Christ taught in the Scriptures; and (3) to have the ability to teach the truth of Jesus and warn against their heresy. Lord, open my eyes to understand all that is taught about Jesus in the Scriptures; I will study diligently to learn as much as I can. Help me stand strong against false teachings about Jesus, and help me warn others against heresy. Amen.

9Those who remain true to Christian doctrine {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} have both the Father and the Son. {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3}
10If anyone comes teaching that Jesus Christ is not equal in nature to the Father, do not receive him or give him hospitality, nor recommend him to other churches because those who support him {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} 11will become partners in his false teaching.
12I have many things to explain, but I will not write them with pen and paper. We will both be satisfied when I come and speak personally with you {166 Fellowship-Praying, 1 John 1:3} about these things. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20}
13The children of your "sister" greet you.

Lord, I believe You inspired every word of the Bible, so it is accurate and I can rely on it to know the truth. Keep me from using my opinions to interpret Your Word; I yield to

the Holy Spirit to guide me to understand the Bible so I can accurately know and teach Your will to others. Amen.

3 John

Ch 1: Watch Out for Church Ditators..... 1870

3 JOHN

Key Words: *Love in truth* (3 John 1)

Key Verse: "The Elder, to the beloved Gaius, whom I love in truth" (v. 1).

Theme: John writes to a church where Diotrophes had exercised control over the congregation to his own selfish purposes. Diotrophes had rejected an apostolic letter and authority, and wouldn't receive visiting preachers (v. 10). John no longer writes as an apostle (because the day of apostles was ceasing) but as an elder (v. 1), using the authority that comes with congregational recognition to deal with Diotrophes. John spells out a believer's responsibility as a member of a local church in the days of coming apostasy.

The key is to remain faithful to "the truth," the Word of God. But that doesn't mean obstinate faithfulness, but to "love in truth" (v. 1). *Lord, I will look to You as my authority in all things. I will find truth in the Word of God and will follow it. Don't let me fall into the snare and spirit of Diotrophes. Keep me loving at all times. Amen.*

3 John 1

Watch Out for Church Dictators

1 This letter is from the elder John to the well-beloved Gaius, a church leader whom I love. {42 Blessing a Person-Prayer, Num. 6:23-26} 2 "I am praying for you to prosper physically as you prosper spiritually. {370 Prayer-List Prayer, 1 Tim. 2:1 ff.} 3 I rejoiced when I heard from different traveling ministers that you are standing for the truth, {500 Truth-Praying, John 18:32} and you are living by the truth. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 4 Nothing could make me happier than to hear that those I led to Christ are faithful to the Word of God." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

John was happy to hear that those he led to Christ were "walking in the truth" (v. 4). Since truth is that which is consistent with itself and corresponds to the real world, so "truth living" is a consistent Christian life the way it is supposed to be lived. Lord, I pray that I would know the truth, live the truth, be a testimony to the unsaved, and glorify You in all I do. Amen.

5"Dear Friend, thank you for giving hospitality to the traveling preachers and missionaries who came through your town. 6They told the church in Ephesus of your friendship and help. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 7Thank you for sending them on their way {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} with a financial gift because they travel for the Lord without a salary, and they refuse to take money from the unsaved, even though they attended their meetings and received their ministry. 8Remember, the churches have the responsibility to care for them financially, thus becoming fellow workers with them in the truth." {295 Love-Praying, Matt. 22:37-38}

Lord, thank You for those men of God who teach me the Word of God; may I grow spiritually because of their ministry. Use their ministry to edify the whole body of Christ, and supply all their temporal needs. Amen.

9"I previously wrote to the church {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} to take care of them, but Diotrephes, who loves to boss the church, refused to listen to my advice. 10If I am able to come, I will show you the evil things he is saying against the Ephesian church. {374 Praying against the Lies of Your Enemy, Ps. 31:18} He refuses to allow the preachers we sent to carry out their ministry, nor will he allow others in the church to listen to them; he kicks them out of the church." {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22}

John rejected Diotrephes who acted like a church boss when he rejected ministers John sent to the church. Technically no human is the church boss; the church is led by Jesus Christ, its Shepherd (1 Peter 3:4), and human leaders should be possessed by Christ and lead for Christ. We should pray (1) for Christ to lead the church; (2) for the church to grow and serve Christ; and (3) against those who want to "boss" the church for their own egotistical purposes. Lord, I love Your church and I will follow You as its leader. I will work in Your church and will do all I can to build it up. Amen.

11"Dear Friend, do not follow his terrible example, but pattern your life after a good example. When the believers in your church do what is right, {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} they prove they are God's children. 12Everyone recognizes Demetrius does the right things, so receive him when he delivers this letter to you because I know he will tell you the truth and answer your questions. 13I have many things to tell you but I can't write them because I hope to see you soon, then we can talk about them. {478 Testimony-Prayer, Acts 22:3} 14Peace to you. Friends here send their love; give everyone a special greeting from me." {47 Blessing-Prayer, Gen. 49:28, KJV}

Lord, it's so easy to be blinded by our own self-importance; keep me from being egocentric and tyrannical like Diotrephes. May I humbly see my place in the whole body of

Christ and fit in; may believers love to be around me because I build them up. Lord, may I be sensitive to leaders and followers in the church; may I build up Your body, not tear it apart. Amen.

Jude

Ch 1: Sinful Living Leads to Doctrinal Heresy 1875

JUDE

Key Words: *Fight for the faith* (Jude 3)

Key Verse: "Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (v. 3).

Theme: This brief letter describes the way apostasy was creeping into the early church and predicted it would be even greater in the future. Jude warned about the consequences of apostasy and challenged the readers to "fight" against its every appearance. He ends his letter sharing the things that will protect against apostasy: living in the word (v. 20); prayer (v. 20); fellowship with believers (v. 21); hope (v. 21); serving Christ (v. 22); evangelism of the lost (v. 23); separation from sin (v. 23); and resting in assurance (v. 24).

Jude was one of the 12 apostles, and he is identified as "not Iscariot" (John 14:22). Perhaps that is because his name was the same as Judas, the betrayer of Christ; Jude had a lifelong struggle to free his identity from Judas, the ultimate apostate. Therefore Jude was qualified to deal with apostasy. He changed his name from Jude to Lebbaeus, Thaddaeus. Later in life he returned to the Latin form of his original name, Jude. Jerome, an early church father, called him Trionius, "the man with three names." *Lord, I believe everything You said in the Bible. I will not add to it or take away from it. I will do what the Bible commands, and will live what it teaches. Keep me from selfish speculation about Your Word. Amen.*

Jude 1

Sinful Living Leads to Doctrinal Heresy

[1]Lord, I thank You for Jude, a servant of Jesus Christ; thank You that he wrote to me and to believers everywhere who have obeyed Your call, and You keep them in the faith of Jesus Christ. May I experience Your daily presence in my daily walk with You; {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [2]Lord, I receive Your mercy, peace, and love. {305 Mercy-Appreciation Prayer, Hab. 3:2} [3]Jude had planned to write about the wonderful truths of the salvation we share in common, {415 Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Rev. 7:10} but he found it necessary to urge us in this letter to be prepared to

defend the complete faith that You have once for all given to me, {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} [4]because some have infiltrated the churches who are the ones I have been previously warned about. These people were condemned {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} for denying Your truth and have turned Your freedom into an opportunity to sin. As a result they have rejected the authority of my Master, Jesus Christ. {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

Jude tells us there will be a terminal date when all revelation and inspiration for Scripture will end. He refers to "the faith" which is "once delivered unto the saints" (v. 3). That means the writing of Scripture will come to an end. God has said what needs to be said for our salvation and growth in Christ. Now we have in the Bible everything we need to know about prayer. So, we shouldn't complain about what we don't know about prayer; all we need to know is there in the Bible for us. We need to study every page of Scripture to learn as much as God has revealed. Then we need to pray more earnestly, with more faith, about more topics. If there's any limitation to prayer, it's not with God or His Word; it's with us and our limitations and weaknesses. Lord, help me to learn all I can about prayer that's written in Your Word. Help me pray with all the knowledge, faith, and ability that I have. Amen.

[5]Lord, I rejoice that You delivered Israel from the slavery of Egypt, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} even though You later destroyed those rebels who went back to sin. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [6]I also read about the sinless angels who rebelled against You that You threw them into hell to be chained until the day of judgment. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

Lord, help me remember that when Christians give in to sexual sins they are blinded by their lusts, and they lose their understanding of truth, just as Israel was rebellious of You and became blinded to heresy. Lord, keep me sexually pure and give me strength to live right, so I will know the truth, and correctly live by it. Lord, help me remember You created angels sinless and beautiful, yet You punished them for their sin. Help me live a holy life. Amen.

[7]Finally, I read about those in Sodom and Gomorrah who lusted after sexual sin, including unnatural lust of men with men. You destroyed those cities with fire as a warning to us that there is punishment in hell for those who give themselves to sin. {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17}

[8]Lord, today false teachers still rebel against You by living their sinful immoral lives, defiling their bodies, {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} laughing at those in authority over them and despising Your messengers. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [9]Not even Michael dared to denounce the devil over the corpse of Moses but said, "The Lord rebuke you." {114 Devil-Defensive Prayer,

1 Peter 5:8} [10]But these false teachers will mock anything they do not understand {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} and like animals they do anything they feel like doing; by giving into their lusts, their actions become fatal. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [11]May these false teachers get what they deserve. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} May they be punished like Cain who killed his brother; may they get the same reward as Balaam who cursed Israel. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} They have rebelled against spiritual leadership just as Korah; may they share his same fate of falling into hell. [12]They are a dangerous threat to our fellowship at the Lord's Table because they come just to get a good meal. {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} They are like rain clouds that are blown over the farm that bring no rain to give life to the fields. They are like barren fruit trees that give no fruit, so let's dig them up in winter like the other fruitless trees. [13]They are like raging waves that threaten the ship of faith, also they are like shooting stars that burn out and give no light. {438 Sin unto Death-Prayer, 1 John 5:16}

Lord, help me recognize false teachers and separate myself from them and their influence. Stop their spread of evil to religious people who follow their lusts, not the Word of God. Amen.

[14]Enoch, who lived seven generations from Adam, knew about these false teachers when he preached and predicted, "You will come with millions of saints {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} [15]to pronounce judgment on all those who reject You and judge the wicked for all the wickedness they have done, and to punish those who speak defiantly against You." {269 Justice-Prayer, Ps. 7:17} [16]False teachers are complainers, malcontents, doing only what their desires—lusts—drive them to do. They boast and brag about their spirituality, and they give "lip service" to leaders in the church, but they do it to their advantage. {352 Perverted-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17-18}

Lord, Jude had godly hatred for false teachers who destroy people with their false teaching; Give me a passion to be true in all I know and believe. Amen.

[17]Lord, I remember our Lord Jesus Christ told the apostles [18]that in the last days there would be scoffers who will live according to their sinful lust. {331 Old Nature-Praying, Eph. 4:22, 23} [19]These false teachers will split churches, and stir up arguments, because they do not have the Holy Spirit to teach them truth or to convict them of their evil imaginations and sin. {504 Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Heb. 3:12} [20]Lord, I commit myself to becoming strong in Your faith; I will pray in the power of the Holy Spirit. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [21]I will keep myself within the constraints of Your love and wait patiently for Jesus Christ to give me eternal life.

Jude tells us to be "praying in the Holy Ghost" (v. 20). How does that happen? Do we pray through the Holy Spirit much as a person addresses a judge through a lawyer? Or do we let the Holy Spirit use our words as He fills us and prays through us? Or do we pray in the name of the Holy Spirit as we pray in the name of Jesus, that is, with His authority? Or does the Holy Spirit just help us to pray much like someone helps us write a letter or a request? The answer—all of them. Holy Spirit, fill me to pray effectively, and help me phrase my request to get an answer from the Father. My passion is to pray in the Spirit. Amen.

[22]I will have mercy on those who have doubts, and I will try to help those who argue against You. {304 Mercy-Prayer, Ps. 6:2} [23]I will point them to You by being kind to them; some You will save by snatching them from the flaming hell. I will be careful I'm not pulled into their sin and into hell itself. I will hate everything about their sin, being careful not to be contaminated by their lusts. {537 World-Rejecting Prayer, 1 John 2:15}

Jude exhorted his readers to show mercy on the weak, and to pull innocent believers out of the fire by having "compassion, making a difference" (v. 22, KJV). Isn't that what we do by prayer and humbly serving others, that is, "we make a difference in their lives"? Lord, I pray for my Christian friends that they would grow in Christ, serve You wholeheartedly, and glorify You. I deeply want my intercession for them to make a difference in their lives. Amen.

[24]Now I praise You because You can keep me from falling, and You can deliver me faultless into Your glorious presence so that I am happy and preserved in Christ. {460 Stability-Prayer, Eph. 4:13, 14} [25]To You, the only God who saves me through our Lord Jesus Christ, to You be glory, majesty, authority, and power in the ages past, now, and forever in the future. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

Lord, Jude probably hated false teachers because he was mistaken for Judas Iscariot. No wonder he hated false teachers so deeply. Keep me close to Your truth all my life. Amen.

Revelation

Ch 1: John's Vision of Christ 1880
Ch 2: Ephesus 1882
Ch 3: Sardis 1885
Ch 4: Seeing the Throne 1887
Ch 5: Who Is Worthy? 1889
Ch 6: The Seven Seals 1890
Ch 7: The 144,000 1892
Ch 8: Silence in Heaven 1893
Ch 9: The Judgment of Trumpets 1894
Ch 10: The Strong Angel 1896
Ch 11: Two Prophets in Jerusalem 1896
Ch 12: A Woman Gives Birth to a Son 1898
Ch 13: The Antichrist and the False Prophet ... 1899
Ch 14: Jesus and Worshipers 1901
Ch 15: The Temple in Heaven 1903
Ch 16: The Seven Bowls of Judgment 1904
Ch 17: The Great Whore—Religious Babylon 1905
Ch 18: Economic Babylon 1907
Ch 19: Hallelujah! 1909
Ch 20: The Millennium—One Thousand Years ... 1911
Ch 21: The New Heaven and New Earth 1912
Ch 22: Life in Heaven 1914

REVELATION

Key Words: *I saw* (occurs 24 times, that is, John saw a vision from God)

Key Verse: "Blessed *is* he who reads and those who hear the words of this prophecy, and keep those things which are written in it, for the time *is* near" (Revelation 1:3).

Theme: The emphasis of this book is Jesus Christ, not judgments, tribulations, and persecution. This book is "The revelation of Jesus Christ" (1:1). We see a threefold picture of Christ. First, His eternal nature; "who is and who was and who is to come" (1:8). Second, His death, "He washed us from our sins in His own blood" (1:5). Third, His return, "Behold, He is coming with clouds, and every eye will see Him" (1:7).

The book is divided into three time events. First, the past, "the things which you have seen" (1:1-20); second, the present, "things which are" (2:1-3:22); and third, the future, "things which shall be hereafter" (4:1-22:21).

Revelation is a difficult book to interpret; don't get sidetracked by what you don't understand. Emphasize what you understand and practice it. There are many prayers contained in this book, learn to pray them, "even so, come, Lord Jesus!" (22:20). *Lord, I know You will return to raise all believers to be with You. I don't understand all the details of the future, but my hope and security is that I'll be with You. Amen.*

Revelation 1

John's Vision of Christ

[1]Lord, I want a revelation from You so speak to me, and teach me truth. Tell me where You've been and who You are! {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} Unveil to me the future judgment on this earth, and the events surrounding Your rapture and return. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} But most of all, unveil Jesus to me just as You sent an angel to reveal to John the things that are to come in the future; reveal them to me. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [2]John wrote down everything he heard and saw. {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [3]Now, may I read it and learn. Lord, bless me as I read Your revelation, and enrich my life with what I learn,

because the time of Your return is close. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6}

The book of Revelation is about Jesus Christ, "The Revelation of Jesus Christ...to His servant John" (1:1). It's not primarily about tribulation, judgment, trumpets, and visions—although these things are included. The primary thing God wants to show us is Jesus Christ. So John writes about the greatness of Jesus and the greatness of what He has done for us, Jesus loved us "and washed us from our sins in His own blood" (1:5). As you read this chapter, circle or highlight everything you see about Jesus; His names, titles, symbols, metaphors, and descriptions. Why so many descriptions about Jesus? Because He is so great. Lord, I bow at the feet of Jesus to worship Him for His majesty. I thank Him for all He's done for me. I magnify Him for being a great God, yet He touches me personally. Jesus, You are my all in all. Amen.

A Letter from John

[4]Lord, John wrote to seven churches in Asia Minor, {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} praying peace and grace for them from Jesus Who is, Who was, and Who is coming. {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} [5]Jesus, I worship You the Faithful Witness, the Firstborn from the dead, the Ruler of the kings of the earth. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [6]Jesus, I thank You for loving me, for freeing me from sin by Your blood, and giving me the intercessory role of a priest forever and ever. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6}

When Jesus Christ was revealed to John, the apostle responded, "To Him be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen" (1:6, KJV). Think of every superlative of goodness and greatness—they all belong to Jesus. Lord, I worship You because You are the Son of God and the Son of Man. You are equal with the Father in power and authority. Yet You are the Son, separate in person. I worship You. Amen.

[7]Lord, Jesus is coming with clouds, just as He left the earth with clouds. I will see Him, along with every other person; even those who crucified Him. And they along with every other person who rejected Him will mourn because they are not ready to meet Him. {153 Faith-Eyes Praying, Matt. 21:21} [8]Lord, I worship Jesus, my Alpha and Omega. He is the Lord God Almighty. He was, He is, and He is coming. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21}

John on Patmos

[9]John suffered because of his faith; he was patiently kingdom-bound. John was imprisoned on Patmos Island because he preached Jesus and witnessed to lost people. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [10]On a Sunday the Holy Spirit filled him, {167 Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Eph. 5:18} and from behind he heard a voice as loud as a trumpet. {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} [11]The voice was Jesus who told John, "Write down everything I show you

and send it to seven churches: Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicea." {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18} 12Then John turned to see the person speaking to him. He saw seven golden candlesticks in a circle, {259 Jesus' Response-Prayer, Rev. 1:10} 13with Jesus—the Son of Man—standing in the middle. Jesus had on a long robe tied with a golden band sash. 14John could barely make out His head because His hair was shining brilliantly, like the sun reflecting off white snow. The eyes of Jesus were aflame with anger, burning through the lies and sins of sinners. 15His feet gleamed like polished bronze, and His voice thundered away every other sound like mighty waves breaking on a rocky shore. 16Jesus had seven stars in His right hand. The words of His mouth cut like the sharpest sword. His face glistened like the blinding sun. {192 God-Recognition Prayer, Eph. 3:20-21} 17Lord, John fell at His feet like one dropping dead {264 Jesus-Worship Prayer, Heb. 1:6} and I too fell to worship at His feet. "Do not be afraid," Jesus told us, "for there is no fear to those who worship Me."

Sometimes God surprises us. He answers a prayer we didn't expect, or sends an unexpected person or event into our lives. John was praying one Sunday when Jesus came to visit. John was so surprised, he said, "I fell at His feet as though dead" (1:17). How do you respond when God surprises you? Are you scared? Excited? Do you laugh? Weep? Shout? Or do you bow your head in worshipful gratitude? When John saw the glorified Jesus...flashing...shining...glowing...brilliant...John fell at Jesus' feet, and I think he worshiped. Lord, when You surprise me, I'll worship. Anytime You do something wonderful for me I'll worship. There's no better place than to be at Your feet, worshiping You. Amen.

18Jesus said, "I am the First and the Last, I am the Living One who lives eternally." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} Jesus continued, "I was dead but now I am alive; I will live forever and ever; I have the keys to death and hell."
19Lord, You told John to write all he saw as it happened, and You showed him what was coming. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} 20The seven stars in the hand of Christ were the seven pastors of the seven churches. {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} And the seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches to which he is writing. {69 Church-Praying, Matt. 16:18}

Revelation 2

Ephesus

1John wrote to the leaders of the church at Ephesus, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} "This is the message of the One holding the seven stars, Who is walking in the middle of the churches." {66 Church Leadership-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:12-14} 2Jesus knows everything that the Ephesian Christians do, realizing their hard work and patience in trials. Jesus knows they don't tolerate sin among their members,

{430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} and they test imposters claiming to be preachers, {477 Test the Spirits-Prayer, 1 John 4:1} revealing their false teaching. {421 Sarcastic-Worship, John 19:2-3} [3]Jesus knows they have patiently suffered for Him, without giving up and quitting. [4]Jesus has some complaints about the Ephesians—they have lost their first love for Him. {140 Ephesians' Church-Prayer, Rev. 2:4-6} [5]Lord, when I lose my first love for You, I will remember those times when I was first saved and go back to doing what I originally did. Lord, Jesus said He will come and remove their testimony if they do not repent; {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} their candlestick will no longer stand with other churches. But Jesus notes some good things about them: {426 Searching for God in Prayer, Heb. 11:6} [6]They hate the deeds of the lustful Nicolaitans, because You hate fleshly sin. {424 Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer, Prov. 21:24} [7]Jesus warned them, "Those who have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches. Those who live victorious over sin will eat from the tree of life in Paradise." {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14}

Jesus commends the Ephesian church for several reasons: (1) they didn't tolerate evil people; (2) they tested and rejected false teachers; and (3) they hated false teaching. But Jesus found some things wrong in the church; these are the things about which we should pray: (1) they lost their first love (2:4); and (2) they forgot where they used to be spiritually. Lord, forgive any coldness or lax efforts You find in my heart. Cleanse me from sin and restore me to loving worship and dedicated service. I'm going back to the place I was when I was saved. I'm coming back to You. Amen.

Smyrna

[8]Lord, John wrote to the leader of the church at Smyrna, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} "This is the message from the First, and Last, the One who died and came back to life." {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [9]Jesus knows all their trials and sufferings, and He knows their poverty {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} while they are rich in heavenly treasures. Jesus knows the slanderous accusations against them by religious people who claim to know God, whose house of worship is satan's home." {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [10]Jesus says, "Don't be afraid of coming sufferings. {465 Suffering-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:12, 13} Some of you will be tested by imprisonment and you will be persecuted for a time. {479 Testing Response of Prayer, James 1:12} Even if you have to die for Me, be faithful, for you will receive the crown of life. {491 Trial-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:7} [11]If you have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} Those who are victorious have nothing to fear in the second death." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22}

Jesus warns of coming persecution, that is, they will be slandered, imprisoned, and even martyred. Jesus warns the devil will test them, but He challenges them, "Be faithful, even to the point of death" (2:10). Lord, You know my future. You know when trials will come and when I will suffer for my faith. Strengthen me, prepare me, and be with me. Amen.

Pergamum

12Lord, John wrote to the church leader at Pergamum, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} from Jesus who has the sharp sword to divide between error and truth. 13Jesus knows that where they live is the place where satan rules and controls. Jesus knows that they are holding firmly to His name {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} and do not deny Him when persecuted. Jesus knows Antipas, who was a faithful witness and who was martyred before their eyes by the followers of satan. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} 14But Jesus has some complaints against them; {90 Correcting Others-Prayer, Titus 1:13} some "Christians" have been following Balaam {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} who taught Balak to compromise and caused Israel to commit adultery and sacrifice to idols. {220 Heresy-Condemning Prayer, 2 Peter 2:6} 15Jesus also knows that some "Christians" have accepted the teachings of the Nicolaitans. {277 Legalistic-Warning Prayer, Phil. 3:1-3} 16Jesus tells them, "Repent, {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} or I will come to judge you with the truth of the Word of God. 17If they have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches. {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2} Those who are victorious will receive hidden manna from heaven to strengthen them, {40 Bible-Comforting Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:18} and their new names will be engraved on a white stone. And no one knows what it is, but those who receive it." {402 Responsibility-Praying, Ps. 5:7}

Pergamum was influenced by false doctrine, "the teaching of Balaam" (2:14) that is, idolatry and the "teaching of the Nicolaitans" which is clericalism (a special class of priests who claimed infallibility). False doctrine is serious; it's where "satan lives" (2:13). The Pergamum prayer is to change the heart first (2:16) before changing the mind; second, to repent of the "war" they have against God (2:16), and third, to listen to the Spirit (2:17). Lord, keep me from false doctrine; I give my heart to You. Keep my mind from false beliefs that corrupt my soul. Amen.

Thyatira

18Lord, John wrote to the leader of the church of Thyatira, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} "This is the message of the Son of God, who has eyes penetrating like a flaming fire, whose feet will judge all sin." 19Jesus knows all about them—their good works, and their love, faith, and patience, and that

they are still growing in grace. {121 Disentanglement-Prayer, 2 Peter 2:20} [20]But Jesus has a complaint against them—they permit a woman like Jezebel {84 Confronting-Evil Prayer, Eph. 6:10 ff.} to teach and prophesy among them. She entices Christians away from the true faith by getting them to commit adultery and sacrifice to an idol and eat its food. {433 Sexual-Defense Praying, Prov. 7:18} [21]Jesus tells her to repent and change her ways, but she has not given up her adulterous ways. {441 Sin-Stopping Intercession, 1 John 5:16} [22]Jesus will bring suffering to her life, and those who commit adultery with her will suffer intently unless they repent. {494 Trouble-Praying, 2 Cor. 1:4} [23]Her children will die prematurely under judgment, so all churches will realize that Jesus continually searches deeply into hearts {272 Knowing-God Prayer, 2 Peter 1:3} to give people what their behavior deserves. {409 Reward-Prayer, 1 Cor. 3:14} [24]Jesus does not condemn faithful Christians in Thyatira who have not followed the teachings of Jezebel, nor learned the "deep secrets" of satan. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [25]Jesus tells the faithful ones to hold firmly to their faith until the second coming. {138 Endure-Hardship Prayer, 2 Tim. 2:3} [26]Those who are victorious and continue serving until the end will receive power over the nations. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [27]They will rule with Jesus Christ by absolute authority like a rod of iron in the millennium, and crush all rebellion against righteousness. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [28]Then Jesus will reward them with the morning star. [29]"If they have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

This church was caught up in the sins of Jezebel, that is, sexual sins. Even though this church tried to hold on to good "deeds... love...faith..." it was corrupt. How can we pray for such a church and/or person? Pray for them to realize God's coming judgment (2:22). Pray for them to realize God "searches hearts and minds" (2:23) and then to know what the Spirit is saying to them (2:29). Lord, keep me from sin; guard my heart when temptation comes my way. I want to be pure in thoughts and actions, be pleased with my life and testimony. Amen.

Revelation 3

Sardis

[1]Lord, John wrote to the leader of the church at Sardis, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} "This is the message from the One holding the seven spirits of God and the seven stars." Jesus knows their reputation as an alive church, yet they are inwardly dead. {463 Strength-Prayer, Gen. 17:1} [2]"Wake up, and revive what little you have left because you are about to die." Jesus has not seen anything in them that is commendable to God. [3]He tells them to remember what they hear, {303 Memory-Praying, Ps. 77:11} and to hold on to the gospel. He tells them to repent and wake up; {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt.

3:2, 8} otherwise, He will come unexpectedly to judge them like a thief in the night. {529 Watchful-Prayer, 1 Peter 4:7} [4]Jesus says there are a few Christians in Sardis who haven't dirtied their clothes with evil. They are fit to walk with Him because they are clothed in spotless garments. {516 Victory Over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12} [5]Those who are victorious will be dressed in white. Their names will not be blotted from the Book of Life, and Jesus will acknowledge them to God the Father. {297 Man in the Glory-Prayer, Heb. 7:24, KJV} [6]"If they have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches." {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

This is a prayer for the believer and/or church that has basic truths or doctrines, but they are (dead) not active in their life or service. It is a prayer to (1) wake up; (2) strengthen what they believe; (3) obey what doctrines they know; (4) realize they will be punished for inactivity; and (5) realize the blessings they could have when they "conquer" and walk with the Lord in white. Lord, stir my heart to action; help me live and serve wholeheartedly, just the way I believe. Amen.

Philadelphia

[7]Lord, John wrote to the leader of the church of Philadelphia, {41 Bible-Prayer, John 15:7} "This is a message from Jesus, the Holy and Faithful One, who has the keys of David, from the One who can open what no one can shut, and shut what no one can open." {364 Praise for God's Sovereignty, Gen. 45:5} [8]Jesus knows all about the Philadelphians. They have an open door of opportunity that no one is able to shut. Jesus knows they are not a strong church, yet they have kept His commands, and have not denied His name. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} [9]Jesus will judge those in the false church who wrongly claim to be Christians, {231 Hypocritical-Prayer, Matt. 6:5} making them bow at His feet at the Great White Throne Judgment, and acknowledge that the Philadelphian church was right. [10]Jesus will protect the Philadelphian Christians in the hour of the Great Tribulation, which will come upon the whole world, testing believers to determine their faithfulness. {413 Safe-Keeping Prayer, Ps. 4:8} [11]Jesus wants them to hold firmly to their faith, and not let anyone take away their rewards, because He will be with them. {94 Crown of Righteousness-Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:8} [12]Jesus will make those who are victorious over sin like a pillar in the temple of God, {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and they will be tested no more. Jesus will write God's name on them, and they will be inhabitants of the New Jerusalem, the city that will come down from God in heaven. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [13]"If you have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches." {285 Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Heb. 1:2}

This is a prayer for an active church that is serving according to its knowledge. It

has little to criticize. Pray for people and/or churches like this: (1) thank God they have obeyed truth (3:8); (2) recognize they withstood "the "synagogue of satan" (3:9); (3) pray for their endurance (3:10); and (4) claim the promise, "I will write on him the name of my God" (3:12). Lord, I want to believe and live like those in Philadelphia; keep me from sin and false doctrine. Hold me fast and I will be held securely. Write Your name on me and possess me. Amen.

Laodicea

14Lord, John wrote to the leader of the church at Laodicea, "This is the message of Jesus, the faithful and true Witness, the One who created all things." 15Jesus knows that they are not hot or cold, but He wants them to be one or the other. 16Because the Christians at Laodicea are lukewarm, {440 Sin-Realization Prayer, Eph. 4:22} He will spit them out of His mouth. {275 Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Prov. 13:4} 17The Laodiceans are claiming to be rich and that they have everything they need, {101 Deceitful-Heart Prayer, James 4:3} but they don't realize they are wretched, miserably poor, blind, and naked. 18Jesus warns them to buy from Him gold purified by fire that will make them truly rich. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} Jesus tells them to dress themselves in righteousness, like pure white robes to cover their spiritual nakedness. Put spiritual ointment on their blinded eyes, so they can have spiritual insight. {450 Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Ps. 119:18} 19Jesus says, "I am the One who rebukes and disciplines all of My followers whom I love. Therefore, repent from your indifferences, and take a stand for righteousness and diligence." {399 Repentance-Prayer, Matt. 3:2, 8} 20Jesus says, "I am standing at the door of this opportunity, knocking to see if you will open to Me. If you hear My voice and open the door, I will come in to spiritually feed you." {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} 21Those who are victorious will share the throne of Jesus just as He was victorious over death and took His place at the right hand of the Father. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} 22"If you have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen to what the Holy Spirit is saying to the churches." {286 Listen-Prayer, Matt. 18:19}

This is a prayer for an individual and/or the church that is lukewarm (3:16). God hates their indifference and threatens to "spit you out of My mouth" (3:16). God describes the lukewarm believer...as miserable, pitiful, poor, blind, and naked (3:17). Lord, I confess I am lukewarm at times; stir up the fires and cause me to burn for You. Show me areas in my heart where I've not surrendered to You. I will yield to serve You with all my heart. Amen.

Revelation 4

Seeing the Throne

1John looked toward heaven and his eyes saw an open door and {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} his ears heard Your inviting voice say, "Come

up here." Your voice penetrated the air like a trumpet. You promised to show John the things that will happen in the future. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} [2]John yielded himself to the Holy Spirit {224 Holy Spirit-Praying, Jude 20} who whisked him through the open door into heaven. John saw a throne in the center of heaven, and You were sitting on the throne. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [3]Coming from You were white rays like the flashes of a diamond and red beams like the glistening of a ruby. There was a rainbow circling the throne with a backdrop of emerald green light. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} [4]Lord, John saw 24 thrones surrounding Your throne, with 24 symbolic saints sitting there. The saints had golden crowns on their heads, and they were all dressed in white. [5]John saw flashes of lightning coming from Your throne, and he heard the rumble of thunder in the background. John saw seven burning lamps giving light, which represented the sevenfold ministry of the Holy Spirit. {488 Torn-Veil Prayer, Mark 15:38} [6]John saw a sparkling crystal sea {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} in front of Your throne and there was not a ripple on its mirror-like surface. On the four corners of Your throne, John saw four angels who looked in every direction as they guarded Your throne.

The 24 elders before the throne of God represent us. When they worshiped, they "cast their crowns before the throne" (4:10, KJV). The crowns represent our awards for faithfulness and achievement in serving Christ. But even when we are awarded for these acts of service, we recognize Christ indwelt us to give us a desire to serve God. Christ works through us for all our achievements. And any righteousness we have is not ours. We are justified, which means we are declared righteous and we stand before God in the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Who could wear a crown of achievement when we know it is "not I, but Christ who dwells in me" (Gal. 2:20, KJV)? Lord, I am not worthy of salvation, so I worship You for saving me. I am not worthy to serve You, so I cast my crowns at Your feet. You deserve them and I praise You for the privilege of serving You. Amen.

[7]The first looked like a lion to represent royalty; the second looked like an ox to represent work; the third was like a man to symbolize humanity; and the fourth looked like an eagle that soars above all. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [8]The winged creatures could see everything in all directions, at all times. Day and night they worshiped God, crying out, "Holy...Holy...Holy, is the LORD GOD ALMIGHTY, Who was...Who is...and Who is to come." {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} [9]Then the angels gave glory, honor, and thanks to You who sits on the throne. {46 Blessing the Lord-Worship, Ps. 103:1} [10]The 24 saints fell on their faces before You, worshiping You who lives forever. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} The saints took the crowns from their heads

and offered them in worshipful appreciation to You who originally rewarded them with the crowns. The saints cried in praise, {95 Crown-Casting Worship, Rev. 4:10} [11]"You are worthy, our Lord and God, to receive our glory, honor, and power." Then they cast their crowns at Your feet, because You created the earth and all the heavens and by Your will everything exists. {93 Creation-Inspired Worship, Ps. 19:1, 2}

Everyone in heaven worshiped God as Creator, because He "hast created all things, and for Thy pleasure they are and were created" (4:11, KJV). If God had not created all things, there would be nothing to worship and praise Him. So in this chapter (Revelation 4), God is magnified for His creative power, and in the next chapter, He is worshiped for providing salvation (5:12-14). Lord, Creation is greater than I can even imagine, so my worship goes beyond the human words I use. Accept the worship of my heart that marvels at Your creative power, genius, and artistic beauty. Amen.

Revelation 5

Who Is Worthy?

[1]Lord, John saw a scroll in Your right hand; there was writing on both sides of each page, and it was officially sealed with seven seals. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [2]John saw a mighty angel who asked with a loud voice, "Who is worthy to open the seal and open the scroll?" [3]No one was worthy in heaven, or on earth, or in hell to open and read what was in the scroll. [4]John wept bitterly because no one could open the scroll, [5]but one of the saints on one of the 24 thrones said, "Do not weep for there is One who is worthy." Only Jesus, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, and the Root of David, is worthy to break the seven seals of the scroll, because Jesus has triumphed over satan who once ruled the universe of souls. {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [6]John saw Jesus the Lamb, standing next to Your throne, standing between the winged creatures guarding the throne and the 24 saints sitting on 24 thrones. The Lamb, Jesus, had been sacrificed. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} All Your wrath had been satisfied. The whole work of salvation—"It is finished." [7]The Lamb, Jesus, took the scroll out of Your hand. [8]Then the four winged creatures bowed to Jesus, followed by the 24 saints who also bowed. {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} Each one sang worship to the Lamb. Then they poured out all the worship praise of all believers, of all time. {12 All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Rom. 1:17} [9]Then they sang a new song, "You are worthy to take the scroll and break the seals to open the scroll, because of the sacrifice of Your blood purchased salvation for all people, of every language, from every tribe, and from every nation. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [10]You have made them priests to intercede and serve in Your kingdom."

The earth had been dominated by the devil for he was "the god of this world" (2 Cor. 4:4). But the death of Jesus—a lamb slain—had redeemed individuals, but also had lifted the curse on nature and in a "head blow" destroyed the power of satan. Then Jesus opened the seal—the title deed of heaven and earth—to reveal what tribulation and judgment would be poured out on the earth at the end of time. Then, God would make "a new heaven and a new earth" (21:1) where all His children will live forever with Him. Lord, the earth is beautiful, but it's nothing like it will be after Christ comes to change everything. I praise You for Your plan of the ages. I bow before Your power that will make it happen. Amen.

[11]Lord, in John's vision he heard the music of an innumerable choir of angels {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} gathered around Your throne. John said there were ten thousand times ten thousand angels, plus thousands upon thousands [12]who were shouting, "The Lamb who was sacrificed is worthy to open the seals, for He has power, wisdom, riches, strength, honor, blessings, and glory." {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12}

Jesus will be worshiped in heaven because His death "redeemed us to God by Thy blood" (5:9, KJV). Then those redeemed ones, and angels, elders, and everyone in heaven will cry, "Worthy is the Lamb who was slain" (5:12). Lord, I join my voice with their voices to say worthy is the Lamb who was slain for me. You have all "power, and riches, and wisdom." You have all "strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing" (5:12, KJV). Amen.

[13]Then John heard worship from everything that has breath—everything in heaven, everything that lives on earth, and in the seas and even hell itself. They worshiped You sitting on the throne, and Jesus who had the scroll in His hand, saying, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} "All praise, honor, power, and glory to You and to the Lamb." [14]And the four guarding winged creatures and the 24 saints also worshiped saying, "Amen!" {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

Revelation 6

The Seven Seals

[1]Lord, John saw the Lamb break the first seal, and unroll the scroll. Then one of the four winged creatures with a voice sounding like thunder shouted, "Come!" [2]John saw a white horse, and the rider was holding only a bow—no arrows. The rider was given a victor's crown, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} and he went from one battle to another.

[3]When Jesus broke the second seal, another winged creature shouted, "Come!" [4]John saw a second horse who was bright red. The rider was given a huge sword and commanded, "And take peace from the earth and get people to slaughter one another." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

[5]When Jesus broke the third seal, another winged creature shouted, "Come!" John saw a black horse, and its rider held a pair of scales to measure things. [6]The winged creature cried, "A loaf of bread or three pounds of barley for forty dollars but there is no oil or wine available anywhere." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

[7]When Jesus broke the fourth seal, a fourth winged creature cried, "Come out!" [8]John saw a sickly pale horse, and its rider was named Plague; hell was snatching up all who died. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} A fourth of the earth's population was killed by Plague, using war, famine, disease, and wild animals.

[9]When Jesus broke the fifth seal, John saw under an altar all those who had been martyred for witnessing Your Word, and being faithful in holy living. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} [10]The martyrs cried to You, "How much longer will You wait before taking vengeance on those who have killed us?" {235 Imprecatory-Prayers, Ps. 109:8 ff.}

God's people who were martyred for the cross of Christ are praying impatiently, "How long, O Lord?" (6:10). They are asking, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost Thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth?" (v. 10, KJV). This is not just a prayer of vengeance and retaliation. This is a prayer (1) for God to fulfill His promise to judge sin; (2) for iniquity to finally get its reward; (3) for truth to prevail; and (4) for the violated law to be satisfied. Lord, I know You will judge the world. Come, Lord Jesus, to reward Your martyrs and punish their murderers. Lord, I trust You to keep Your promise. I pray, "When?" Amen.

[11]Each martyr was given a white robe of righteousness {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} and told to rest until the coming judgment, because there would continue to be martyrs until the second coming of Christ. Those martyrs would be killed just as others had been martyred. {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13}

[12]When Jesus broke the sixth seal, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} there was a violent earthquake, the sun didn't shine, and darkness covered the earth. [13]The stars began to fall like figs dropping from a tree when a wind storm shakes it; everything was pitch black. [14]The mountains and islands of the sea shifted from their original locations. Everyone panicked and hid themselves in caves. [15]Kings, government leaders, military commanders, rich and poor—all people tried to hide. {142 Escaping-Danger Prayer, Acts 12:5} [16]They cried for the rocks to cover and hide them [17]from the wrath of the Lamb, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} because they wouldn't survive Your coming judgment.

When the unsaved have been punished greatly for their sins, they cry out for relief. While technically this is not a prayer to God, it is a request to be shielded from their God-inspired torture. Can they escape? The

Bible answers, "No one" (v. 17). Lord, I worship You for cleansing from sin; because Christ suffered for my sins, I don't need to suffer. I don't have to beg to escape from punishment for sins because Christ submitted to punishment for me. Thank You for forgiveness. Amen.

Revelation 7

The 144,000

[1]Lord, John saw four angels holding back the wind to prevent it from blowing on land or sea. [2]Next, John saw another angel coming from the sunrise, carrying the seals of God. {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} [3]A voice cried, "Seal the servants of God first before you do any damage on land or sea." {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} [4]Then John heard there were 144,000 sealed Jews who came from all the tribes of Israel. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [5]Twelve thousand came from each tribe—Judah, Reuben, Gad, [6]Asher, Naphtali, Manasseh, [7]Simeon, Levi, Issachar, [8]Zebulun, Joseph, and Benjamin.

The 144,000 represent Jewish evangelists who will preach the gospel of Jesus Christ around the world during the tribulation (7:4). They were martyred. "These are they which came out of the great tribulation; they have washed their robes...in the blood of the Lamb" (7:14). Today not many Jews are saved because they are judicially blinded (2 Cor. 3:6-16); they are a nation that is rejecting Christ (John 1:11; 19:15). But when Jesus returns, Israel will be saved (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26). In heaven the 144,000 Jewish martyrs will praise God for their salvation, joined by all other Christian martyrs who were raptured, "a great multitude, which no man could count" (7:9). They will worship, shouting, "Salvation belongs to our God" (7:10). Lord, I praise You for not forgetting Your martyrs. I praise You for Your faithfulness. I praise You for saving them, as You have saved me. Amen.

A Large Crowd of Worshipers

[9]In addition to the 144,000, John saw another great multitude from every race, language, and nation, standing before You and Jesus, the Lamb, wearing white robes and holding palm branches. [10]They cried out in worship, {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} "Salvation comes from You who sits on the throne {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} and from the Lamb who died for us." {538 Worship-Jesus Prayer, Rev. 1:6} [11]Then the angels formed a huge circle around the 24 saints and the four winged creatures. The angels bowed to the ground and worshiped, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [12]"Amen! Praise and glory and wisdom and thanks and power and strength be to You our God forever and ever. Amen!" {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9} [13]Lord, one of the saints asked John, "Who are these dressed in white robes? Where did they come from?" {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} [14]John asked the Lord Jesus to tell him who these

people were. Jesus said, "These are the martyrs who were killed in the Great Tribulation; therefore their robes are washed in the blood of the Lamb." {173 Forgiveness-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:10} [15]Now they stand in front of God's throne {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} to worship Him day and night. {488 Torn-Veil Prayer, Mark 15:38} [16]The Lamb will take care of them so they will never hunger nor thirst, nor suffer anything ever again. [17]The Lamb will satisfy their need for food, {452 Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Ps. 23:1} and will quench their need for water, and You will wipe away any remembrance of pain or suffering.

The martyrs are described as those who "serve Him day and night" (7:15). The word "serve" is latreuō which means "to minister." How do we minister to God? Ministry means, "to meet the need of someone by preaching, teaching, or counseling." Does God have needs that we must serve Him? Didn't Jesus say, "The Father is seeking...worship" (John 4:23, ELT)? Since the Father wants worship, then we serve God by giving Him worship. We call it the church worship service. We don't go to church to be served. No! The pastor, ushers, and musicians don't serve the people. All join together to worship God as we exercise our spiritual gifts, and give worship to God. Lord, I come to serve You with my worship. I come to minister to You with my worship. I come to worship because You want it from me. I come to worship because it's the expression of gratitude from my heart. Amen.

Revelation 8

Silence in Heaven

[1]All eyes in heaven focused on the Lamb as He broke the final seal on the scroll. There was great silence in heaven as the Lamb prepared to return to the earth as it was time for the second coming of Christ. [2]Lord, seven angels stood before You, and You gave them seven trumpets. Then You told them to be prepared to announce judgments coming to the earth.

There was a great silence in heaven as the judgment of the seals ended and Jesus is ready to return to earth. When something great is about to happen, don't we get still and quiet? Maybe we're too scared to move or speak. Maybe it's great anticipation. Perhaps it's like holding our breath. When God is about to do something in our lives, we should worship silently before Him because (1) we know God will work; (2) we trust God's sovereignty; (3) we surrender to His actions; and (4) we anticipate His intervention in a problem or introduction of something new. Lord, I am quiet and silent before You. I'm not moving. I worship You for all You've done in the past, and for what You will do in the future. I'm waiting. Amen.

[3]Another angel went to the altar in heaven with a large amount of incense to mix

with the prayers of God's people {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 4to offer to You who sits on the throne the sweet-smelling fragrance of prayers that ascend up to worship You. {354 Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Rev. 8:4} 5When the angel threw fire from the altar to the earth, thunder rumbled, lightning crashed, and an earthquake shook the earth. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

John describes prayers as "the smoke of the incense, together with the prayers of the saints, went up before God" (8:4). Dwellings in Bible times didn't have ventilation, so musty or unpleasant smells remained in the buildings. Sweet-smelling incense was burned as a remedy, but also it is a picture of prayers that pleased God. Have you ever thought of your prayers pleasing God? Lord, I want to please You with the words I pray and the heart attitude I bring to You. Teach me to be concerned with You and not myself as I pray. Amen.

The Seven Trumpets

6Then the seven angels with seven trumpets prepared to blow their message of coming judgment. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 7Lord, when the first angel blew his trumpet, hail and fire rained down on the earth. One third of the earth was set on fire, one third of the trees and one third of the green grass was burned up. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
8Lord, when the second angel blew his trumpet, something like a great mountain of fire was dropped into the oceans. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 9One third of the salt water was polluted as with blood. One third of the living things in the oceans and one third of the ships were destroyed.
10Lord, when the third angel blew his trumpet, 11a huge burning star named Wormwood fell on a third of all the rivers and streams. The fresh waters became bitter as persimmons so that many people died who drank the water. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}
12Lord, when the fourth angel blew his trumpet, a third of the sun quit shining, and light from a third of the stars went out. Daylight was shortened by one third, and the night was blacker than usual. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 13Lord, John saw an angel like an eagle fly over heaven announcing, "How terrible it will be for the inhabitants of the earth." The next three trumpet judgments will be much worse than the original four. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

Revelation 9

The Judgment of Trumpets

1Lord, the fifth angel blew his trumpet and one of God's servants that came from heaven to earth had the keys to the bottomless pit. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 2Smoke poured out of it when it was unlocked, so the sun and sky were darkened. 3The smoke spawned locust-like demons, and they spread where the smoke blew. {268 Judgmental-Praying,

Acts 5:4, 9} [4]The locust-like demons attacked people who didn't have God's seal on their foreheads. [5]The sting didn't kill anyone, but gave constant pain like a scorpion's sting. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21} [6]People wanted to die, but death escaped them. {100 Death-Prayer, Rev. 9:6}

In this judgment people will be in such horrible torment that they will pray for death. But their prayers will not be answered, because "death shall flee from them" (9:6, KJV). This is when God's wrath is poured out on them. God hides the keys to death, and no one will die until it is God's time. Lord, I pray to live—to live for You—help me glorify You with my life. When it comes my time to die, give me "dying grace." Amen.

[7]The locust-like demons looked like horses armed for battle {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} having faces that looked human, with crowns on their heads, [8]and women's hair, and teeth like lion's teeth. [9]They wore body armor as strong as steel, and the noise of their wings sounded like the charge of horses and chariots into battle. [10]Their tails stung like a scorpion, and the sores they left ached for five months. [11]The king of them was the angel from the bottomless pit, whose Hebrew name is Abaddon, and his Greek name is Apollyon. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [12]One woe is past, there are still two more woes to come.

[13]Lord, when the sixth angel blew his trumpet, John heard a voice from the altar before the throne, {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11}

Where is God? God is omnipresent, which means He is everywhere present at the same time. The indwelling presence of God dwells in our hearts. The institutional presence of God is in His church on earth (2:5). The localized presence of God is in heaven on His throne. We can come into His presence at any time and at any place, but the picture in Revelation 9 happens in God's localized presence in heaven. Lord, I come into Your presence because You're in my heart (Gal. 2:20), but I also worship You in Your church on Sunday. Then on special occasions, it seems I enter Your very throne room in heaven to pray to You. Thank You, Emmanuel (God with us), for Your presence in my life. Amen.

[14]saying, "Release the four demons kept captive beyond the Euphrates River for this hour. [15]They will kill a third of the remaining population of the Earth." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]Then John heard that there were 200,000 locust-like warriors. [17]John saw the locust-like demons like riders on horses. {520 Vision-Praying, Josh. 14:12} Some had red armor, others had blue armor, and the color of the rest was yellow. The horses looked as if they had lion heads. [18]Smoke, fire, and brimstone blew from their mouths, killing one third of the remaining population. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]Their power was in their mouth and tail, their tails were like snakes

that were able to kill with their bite. [20]The population of the world that escaped their wrath did not repent of their evil, nor did they stop worshiping demon-idols made of gold, silver, bronze, stone, and wood—idols that can't see, hear, or walk. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [21]Nor did they quit murdering, stealing, committing sexual sins, or practicing witchcraft. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1}

Revelation 10

The Strong Angel

[1]Lord, John saw another mighty angel come down from heaven, {14 Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Heb. 2:7} surrounded by a cloud with a rainbow about his head. The angel's face shone like the sun, and his feet like fire. [2]He had in his hand a small open book. He planted his right foot in the oceans and his left foot on land. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [3]He shouted louder than a roaring lion. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [4]Then seven thunder-judgments rolled across heaven. John was prepared to write what he saw when a voice stopped him saying, "Keep secret the message of the seven thunder-judgments; do not write them down." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [5]The angel standing in the oceans and on the land lifted his right hand to heaven [6]and swore by You who lives forever, {521 Vow-Prayer, Rev. 10:6} You who created all of heaven and everything on the earth. The time of waiting is over and {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} [7]Jesus will come when the seventh angel blows his trumpet. Then Your secret intentions will be fully realized. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [8]Lord, John heard a heavenly voice telling him to get the little book. [9]So John asked the angel to give it to him. The angel said, "Read it as you would devour a meal. It will upset your stomach, but it will be sweet as you eat it." [10]As John read the book, the angel's words came true. {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} It tasted sweet as honey, but it turned his stomach sour. [11]The book contained a message for John to preach and write, a message of what will happen in the tribulation to rulers, people, ethnic groups, and nations. {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15}

Revelation 11

Two Prophets in Jerusalem

[1]Lord, John was given a measuring stick and told to go measure the temple in Jerusalem, the altar, and find out how many people worship there. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [2]John was told not to measure the outer court because Gentiles gather there, and they will destroy the temple after 42 months. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [3]You promised to send two witnesses—Enoch and Elijah who had not died on earth but had gone to heaven. {358 Powerful-Ministry Prayer, Acts 2:4} They prophesied in Jerusalem for 1,260 days. [4]They came as the fulfillment of the two olive trees and the two lamps which stood before Your

throne. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [5]When enemies attacked these two, they were able to do judgment-miracles to destroy their enemies. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [6]They prayed that it would not rain, {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} and they turned water into blood, and sent plagues—as Moses did—on their enemies. [7]After three and a half years, the antichrist came from the bottomless pit to fight them and finally killed them. {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} [8]Their corpses were left in the main street of Jerusalem, [9]so unsaved people could see they were dead and put their trust in the antichrist. People from every nation, ethnic group, and language saw their bodies for three and a half days. {412 Sacrificial-Prayer, Heb. 13:15} [10]The unsaved rejoiced, thinking their torment was over and the suffering caused by the tribulation was past. Nonbelievers celebrated and gave presents to everyone, thinking these two who had brought plagues on the world were now dead and their troubles were over. [11]Lord, after three and a half days You breathed life into the two witnesses. Just {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} as everyone had seen their dead bodies, now everyone saw them being raised from the dead. {163 Fear of God-Praying, Heb. 5:7} [12]Then a loud voice shouted to Enoch and Elijah, "COME UP HERE!" They went to heaven as their enemies watched. {411 Running a Good Race-Prayer, Gal. 5:7} [13]Immediately a violent earthquake shook Jerusalem, a tenth of the city was destroyed, and seven thousand people died in the earthquake. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Those who lived in Jerusalem—the Jews—were fearful, and began praising You, the God of heaven. {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

God Will Rule Forever

[14]The second woe is past; the third woe is coming quickly.

People don't have authority; only God has authority. In this chapter two witnesses (Enoch and Elijah, the only two who went to heaven without dying) came back to preach from the city of Jerusalem (11:8). They have authority to stop rain (11:6) and to do miracles. We know Elijah shut the heavens by prayer because "he prayed earnestly" (James 5:17-18). While we don't have authority, we have access to God's authority by prayer. Lord, I realize I can do nothing by myself, so I pray for Your authority to get done the things I need done. Amen.

[15]Lord, when the seventh angel blew his trumpet, you brought all people into Your presence where they saw the original temple in heaven. There was shouting, telling heaven and earth, "The kingdoms of this world have become the kingdoms of Christ, and He will reign forever and ever." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [16]The 24 saints bowed in worship to You, prostrating themselves on the ground, {150 Face-Down Worship Prayer, Rev. 11:16} [17]saying, "We give thanks to You, the Almighty Lord God, You who are, You who were, and You who will always exist

because You have exercised Your omnipotent power, and have begun to reign on the earth." [18]When You judged the nations in wrath, they were angry and not remorseful or repentant. Now is the time to punish the wicked and reward Your servants and Your prophets, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} and those small and great who revered Your name, because You destroyed those who destroyed the earth and Your followers. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]Lord, then the temple in heaven {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} began to open for all to see, and behind the veil everyone could see clearly—all saw the sacred chest. {306 Mercy-Seat Praying, Heb. 9:5} Suddenly there were flashes of lightning, rumbling thunder, an earthquake, and violent hail on earth.

Revelation 12

A Woman Gives Birth to a Son

[1]Lord, then John saw a woman in heaven clothed with the sun, with the moon beneath her feet. The woman was the nation Israel from whom God promised the Deliverer would come. [2]The woman was with child and she was constantly persecuted by satan because he wanted to prevent the Deliverer from being born. {249 Intercessory Prayer for Jews, Rom. 10:1} [3]Lord, John also saw satan as an enormous dragon controlling seven nation-rulers with ten horns and a crown on each head. [4]Satan pulled one third of the fallen angels with him when he was banished from heaven to earth. Lord, satan wanted to devour the Deliverer so He wouldn't be born. {334 Opposition-Intercession, 1 Thess. 2:18} [5]The Child was the Messiah who will one day rule over the earth. The Child completed Your work on earth, and You received Him back into heaven. [6]Then the woman fled into the wilderness where God had prepared a place for her. He fed her there 1, 260 days.

[7]There was war in heaven where Michael the Archangel fought against the devil and his fallen angels. {105 Defensive-Warfare Prayer, 1 John 4:4} [8]Satan was cast out of heaven to earth to complete his evil desires on earth. [9]Satan, who is also called the devil or the serpent, tried to lead the whole world into sin. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [10]Lord, You shouted with a loud voice, "Victory, and power, and rulership now belong to Me." You shouted, "Now Jesus Christ can rule because satan is cast down and he will no longer persecute Christians; {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} he will no longer accuse the brethren to Me." {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}

Satan constantly accuses us "before our God day and night" (12:10). What defense do we have? First, we have Jesus the High Priest who constantly intercedes for us (Heb. 7:24-25), and second, the Holy Spirit is also praying for us (Rom. 8:26-27). Third, we can pray for protection as we pray against evil forces (Eph. 6:10-12). Lord, I know satan accuses me to Your face because of my sin and mistakes. Forgive me. Give me power to

overcome sin, and give me victory by Your Holy Spirit. Amen.

[11]Satan is defeated by the blood of the Lamb and by the faithfulness of martyrs who did not hold onto life in the face of death. [12]You said, "Let heaven and its citizens rejoice, but to those on earth beware." Satan is angrily coming to persecute believers because he knows his time is short. [13]When satan found himself cast to the earth, he turned his anger against the Jews because Jesus the Messiah came from them. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} [14]During the last half of the tribulation, Israel escaped to the wilderness, away from the devil who persecuted her. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} Israel stayed in the desert fortress of Petra for three and a half years. {111 Desert-Praying, Mark 1:12} [15]During the last half of the tribulation, satan used every scheme to destroy Israel. [16]But satan's schemes were stopped in the desert. {387 Protection-Prayer, Isa. 43:2, 3} [17]Then satan determined to punish every follower of Christ left on the earth.

There is continued war in the heavenlies between satanic forces and angelic forces. It centers on satan's hatred for Christ and the Jewish people from which Christ was born. To this day satan hates the Jews. We should pray against satan in the power of the Lord (Jude 9), and pray for the peace of Jerusalem (Ps. 122:6), always remembering "greater is He that is in you, than he that is in the world" (1 John 4:4). Lord, raise up a "hedge" to protect me and my family from satan (Job 1:10). I pray for Your people the Jews, that they would recognize Jesus as their personal Messiah, and that You would protect the nation of Israel. Amen.

Revelation 13

The Antichrist and the False Prophet

[1]Lord, John saw a terrible animal emerge from the sea. It was the antichrist, the false messiah. The antichrist had in his hand seven nation-rulers, and the antichrist had crowns on his ten horns. He controlled the ten nations of the revived Roman Empire. [2]The antichrist was like a leopard, but ferocious like a bear, and wanted to rule like the king of the jungle—the lion. Satan gave the antichrist the same power he possessed, and allowed the antichrist to rule the world for him. [3]One of the antichrist's seven heads had been killed, but the antichrist came back to life. [4]As a result, multitudes marveled and followed him. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [5]The antichrist, in a very persuasive speech, blasphemed You, {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10} [6]and slandered Your temple and those who follow You. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [7]Satan gave the antichrist power to fight against Your people, to overcome them for three and a half years, and to rule every ethnic group, language, and nation. [8]Everyone worshiped the antichrist {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} except those whose names were in the Lamb's Book of Life,

and those whom the antichrist had killed. {260 Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer, Heb. 2:9-10, 18} [9]Lord, You said, "Those who have ears to hear spiritual messages, listen carefully to what will happen." [10]Christians will be arrested, taken away, and imprisoned; other believers will be killed. This will be an opportunity for Your children to demonstrate their endurance and faith. {137 Endurance-Prayer, 2 Thess. 3:5}

[11]Lord, John saw another terrible animal emerge from the sea who tried to look like a lamb, but he had a haunting voice like satan. The second animal—the false prophet—served the antichrist, and propagated his influence everywhere. [12]He pointed out the antichrist's fatal wound and told everyone that he had been raised from the dead, persuading everyone to worship the antichrist. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [13]The antichrist brought down fire from heaven just as You sent fire on Pentecost. {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} [14]The false prophet did miracles to convince everyone to follow the antichrist. The false prophet erected a statue to the antichrist, showing the wound that killed him, yet also showing that the antichrist was now alive. [15]The false prophet breathed on the statue of the antichrist so that it spoke his word. Those who refused to worship the antichrist's statue were put to death.

Lucifer fell from his lofty position as an angel (Ezek. 28:12-15) because of his pride when he declared, "I will be like the Most High" (Isa. 14:14). Lucifer also has the names Dragon, Serpent, Devil, and "Satan, which deceiveth the whole world" (12:9, KJV). Satan wants to replace God, and get the worship given to God. In this passage the Dragon (satan) and the wild animal (the antichrist) are worshiped. All idol worship from the beginning until today is actually not veneration to a carnal likeness, but to the spirit or power represented by an idol. Idol worship is actually demon worship (1 Cor. 10:20). Did you see that the world during the tribulation will be forced to worship an (idol) image of the antichrist (13:14-15)? Lord, I will worship You and not an image of the antichrist. I will not be fooled, but will give You my whole heart. Protect me and keep me in the hour of trials. Amen.

[16]The false prophet ordered everyone to be branded with the brand of the antichrist on their forehead or right hand. Everyone was branded no matter how young or old, rich or poor, slave or citizen. [17]And no one could buy or sell anything unless they were branded with the name of the antichrist or his number. {113 Devil Worship-Prayer, Rev. 13:4} [18]Anyone can calculate the number of the antichrist—it is 666.

There is a satanic tri-unity, that is, satan wants to replace the Father, the antichrist (the beast) wants to take the place of Jesus Christ, and the false prophet (19:20) wants to take the place of the Holy Spirit. Just as on the day of Pentecost the Holy Spirit filled each disciple when "there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat

upon each of them" (Acts 2:3), so in the tribulation the false prophet "maketh fire come down from heaven on the earth in the sight of men" (13:13). This satanic miracle will make people believe in the antichrist and satan, just as the miracles in the Bible made people believe in Christ and God the Father. Lord, I believe in You because of the miracles I read in Scripture, but even greater, I know You have saved me because You live in my heart. I will not be deceived by any pseudo-miracles by satan or any of his representatives. Amen.

Revelation 14

Jesus and Worshipers

[1]Lord, John saw the Lamb—Jesus standing on Mount Zion in the city of Jerusalem; {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} with Him were 144,000 martyrs. They had Your name written on their foreheads. {316 Name of Jesus-Prayer, John 14:13} [2]John heard a groaning sound like a roar of a great waterfall, like rolling thunder over the plains. Yet the sound was pleasing, like the singing of a choir accompanied by harps. {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} [3]The martyrs were singing a new song in front of Your throne. The four winged creatures were worshiping with them, so were the 24 saints on their thrones. Only the 144,000 could learn the new hymn because they had been redeemed from the suffering and tribulations of earth. {394 Redemption-Worship, Rev. 5:12} [4]These had not defiled themselves spiritually and they were as pure as virgins. Because they had followed the Lamb in persecution, they were redeemed from tribulation. They are a first fruits offering to You. [5]They never told a lie, and their lives were blameless. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1}

The 144,000 martyrs in heaven sing a song that no one else knows, perhaps because no one else had given the supreme sacrifice of their lives to God. They were probably singing praise to God, and they are our example that we can sing our prayers, worship, and gratitude to God. They were first in line and followed the Lamb wherever He went. Lord, I sing, "Holy, Holy, Holy" in worship to You. Let the music of my heart and the words of my mouth glorify You. Amen.

The Time for Judgment

[6]Lord, John saw an angel flying over heaven, announcing the end was near. The good news has been preached to all people—to every ethnic group, language, and nation on earth. {145 Evangelistic-Praying, Acts 4:31} [7]The angel shouted, "Fear God and praise Him, for His time has come to sit in judgment; everyone worship the Creator of heaven and earth." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} [8]Another angel followed, saying, "Babylon is fallen because she made many people intoxicated with the wine of sexual pleasure."

The angel said to the unsaved, "Fear God, and give glory to Him" (14:7). Fear means

being scared, and we should be scared of God because He can condemn to eternal hell. But fear also means reverential trust, and we should come into His presence with the reverence we would give to a king. We reverentially trust Him to save us. Fear also has the meaning of awe, and we should stand in awe of His great creative power and results. Lord, I am afraid of Your wrath, I come to You through Jesus' blood to accept me. I come to You as the sovereign King and Ruler. I stand in awe of Your great creative power. The majesty of Your universe beings me to my knees. Amen.

9Lord, John saw another angel shouting, "All people who worshiped the antichrist and branded themselves with his brand, must drink the wine of judgment that is poured out by God who is angry against sin." 10They will be tortured in the presence of Your holy angels and the Lamb, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and the smoke of their torture rises forever and ever. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 11There will be no relief for them day or night because they worshiped the beast and his statues, and accepted his branding in their right hand and foreheads. 12Lord, John wrote, "Christians must remain faithful in persecution because the antichrist will be judged, and the unsaved will be punished." {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 13Then John was told to write, "Happy are those who die in the Lord during the tribulation." {99 Death-Facing Prayer, Ps. 88:3} The Holy Spirit said, "They will rest from their trials, forever in the Lord, for their good works will follow them." {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Dead saints have three great reasons to rejoice: first, they "die in the Lord" (14:13), which means they were faithful to God right up to death; second, they are now enjoying rest from their labors; third, the results and influences of their good works continue after their death. Lord, thank You for saints I've known who are now with You. Thank You for their labors, and the fact that the influence of their works continues. I am a better person for having known them. Amen.

Time of the End

14Again, John looked to see Jesus, the Son of Man, {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12}—sitting on a cloud with a golden crown on His head. He had a sharp sickle in His hand ready to go to work. 15Another angel came out of the temple and shouted to Jesus who was sitting on the cloud, "The time has come; use the sickle on earth, for sin is ripe and ready to be harvested. The people of the earth have gathered to fight You." 16Then He swung His sickle against all unsaved people, gathering them for judgment before Your throne. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 17Another angel who also had a sickle came out of the temple. 18Then another angel shouted, "Put Your sickle to work to cut all the grapes from the vine of the earth because sin is abundantly ripe." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 19So the sickle was put to the harvest, and

filled the winepress of God's anger with the people of the earth. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [20]It was the battle of the valley of Armageddon, and blood ran in a river two hundred miles long and as high as a horse's bridle. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9}

Revelation 15

The Temple in Heaven

[1]Lord, then John saw another spectacular sign in heaven: seven angels held seven bowls of wrath to pour out on the earth. This was the final and complete judgment of God. [2]Lord, John then saw a sea without a ripple on its surface and the sea had glowing fire in the water. Standing by the sea were those saints who had triumphed against the antichrist. They had refused to worship his statue so they had not been branded with the number 666. [3]They had harps and were singing the victorious song of Moses, of how he defeated the Egyptians. They also sang the song of the Lamb—Jesus, who had given them victory over the antichrist. "Great and wonderful is everything You do, Lord God Almighty. {60 Character of God-Prayer, 1 Thess. 5:24} [4]Just and true are all Your ways. You are the King of the nations. Who would not reverence and praise Your name, for You alone are holy? All nations will come before You to worship and adore You, for the righteous things You've done." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

A crowd was singing Moses' song of deliverance (from Egyptian servitude) and redemption (from sin). All of God's people can join in this song. In singing they extol (1) God's greatness and marvelous works (13:3); (2) God's righteousness and truth; (3) God's sovereignty over the nations; and (4) God's holiness in judgment. Lord, I praise You for Your great and marvelous works; thank You for Your work in me. I praise You for Your righteousness and truth that guides me. I praise You for the way You sovereignly guide my life. I praise You for Your holiness. Amen.

[5]Lord, John saw another awful scene in heaven. {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} [6]An angel was distributing the last seven judgments—last, because they were to exhaust God's anger to sin. John saw the temple of God opening, and he could look into the most holy place. Out came seven angels each with a different judgment from God. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} Each angel had a pure white linen robe and a golden sash around his waist. [7]One of the winged creatures around the throne gave the seven angels seven bowls filled with the anger of God. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [8]Smoke from the glory of God filled the temple, so that no one could enter until the seven bowls of judgment were finished. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

Revelation 16

The Seven Bowls of Judgment

[1]Lord, John heard a voice shout from the temple {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} to the seven angels, "Go pour your seven bowls out over the earth." [2]The first angel poured his bowl on the earth, and ugly painful sores broke out on all people who had the brand 666 and worshiped the antichrist statue. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[3]The second angel emptied his bowl on the oceans, and they turned to blood; every living thing in them died. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9}

[4]The third angel poured his bowl into the rivers and springs. They also turned to blood. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [5]Then the angel said, "Lord, You live now, and You lived in the past. You are holy in Your judgments. [6]Because evil people have shed the blood of Your saints, {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} so You have given them blood to drink. This is what they deserve." [7]The angel at the altar responded, "Yes, Lord, God Almighty, Your punishments are true and just." {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8}

[8]The fourth angel emptied his bowl on the sun, so the sun scorched people as if they were burned with fire. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [9]People cursed You for sending these judgments because they were severely burned by the sun, but they would not repent and turn to You. {189 God-Haters' Prayer, Ps. 2:2, 3}

[10]The fifth angel emptied his bowl over the throne of the antichrist, and his empire was plunged into darkness. People bit their tongues in pain. [11]They continued to curse You, and they refused to repent of their evil. {341 Pain-Praying, Ps. 38:6, 20, 21}

[12]The sixth angel emptied his bowl over the Euphrates River, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and all the water dried up. And the armies of the East crossed the dry river bed, heading to invade the Promised Land. There came a message from the mouth of satan, and the antichrist, and the false prophet, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} "To all the kings of the nations of the world, join us in fighting God Almighty. We will finally do away with the Jews and fight the God of the Jews." [13]The three foul spirits that came out of their mouth like frogs {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [14]were demons sent to deliver the message and convince the kings to wage war. {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [15]Then God attacked them unexpectedly, just as a thief in the night {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17} catches victims when they do not expect violence. [16]All the armies of the world came to fight God at the battle of Armageddon. {18 Anticipating His Return, Rev. 16:17}

[17]The seventh angel emptied his bowl into the air, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} and a voice shouted, "The end has come," for the last bowl was the second coming of Christ. {456 Spiritual-Understanding Prayer, Eph. 3:18} [18]Then there were flashes of lightning, rolling thunder, and a violent earthquake that shook the earth, more violently than ever before.

[19]The city of Jerusalem was split into three parts, and the cities crumbled to the earth. The city of Babylon was not forgotten; it was punished with the violence of its crimes. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [20]The islands of the ocean disappeared and no mountain was left standing. [21]Storms of hail each weighing one hundred pounds fell from the sky. And the more fierce the punishment from God, the more people rebelled and cursed God. {5 Accusation-Prayer Protection, Rev. 12:10}

Many believe that when the seventh seal is opened Christ will return. When those in heaven see it, they are too stunned to speak, "When He had opened the seventh seal, there was silence in heaven" (8:1). Others believe the sounding of the 7th trumpet refers to the return of Christ. Then loud voices say, "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (11:15, KJV). Still others say that at the seventh bowl Christ will return because there Jesus fights the battle of Armageddon to destroy His enemies (16:13-17). Then it is announced, "It is done" (16:17), the same words Jesus said when He finished suffering for sins, "It is finished" (John 19:30). Lord, You will punish the world for its sin, just as Jesus was punished for our sins. Thank You for the finality, "It is done," that lets me know the full and final price is paid. Amen.

Revelation 17

The Great Whore—Religious Babylon

[1]Then one of the seven angels with bowls spoke to John, "Come, I will show you the punishment for the prostituted followers of the antichrist." {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [2]The kings of the earth have committed sexual sins by worshiping in this vile temple. They have made the whole world sin against God by forcing them to partake of her adultery. [3]John was taken in the Spirit to see the prostitute, riding on a scarlet red animal. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} It had seven heads who were ruling leaders, and ten horns representing the revived Roman Empire. Blasphemy was written all over her. [4]The prostitute was dressed in purple and red with gaudy jewelry of gold and pearls. She was drinking a cup of disgusting filthy fornication. [5]On her forehead was written, {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} "Babylon the Great, mother of all prostitutes." [6]The prostitute was drunken with the blood of martyrs whom she had killed. {349 Persecution-Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:12} John stared at the prostitute in alarm.

[7]The angel said, "Don't be horrified. I will explain who the prostitute is and the beast she rides. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [8]She is the follower of the antichrist which was alive, but she died; she will come up from the bottomless pit to eventually be judged for all her ways. Those whose names are in the Lamb's Book of Life will be dumbfounded by this

reappearance. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

John the writer was amazed at the things he saw. The angel told him, "This calls for a mind that has wisdom" (17:9). That means when we don't understand when we read about the end times, we can pray for spiritual understanding. But prayer alone is not enough. Remember the theme of the book of Proverbs, "Give yourself to learn knowledge (facts) so that you may gain wisdom (understanding)." Lord, I will study the facts of Revelation and put facts together, comparing verses with verses. I will study diligently; teach me the truth of Your return and the events of the end times. Give me understanding and make me wise. Amen.

9"The seven heads represent seven rulers who live in a city with seven hills. 10Five leaders have already fallen, a sixth now reigns and the seventh is yet to come. 11The scarlet red animal is the eighth ruler. He will come up from hell but will be judged and returned there. 12The ten horns are ten kings who don't yet have power; they will rule in the future for a short time, 13providing their strength and authority for the antichrist. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 14They will war against the Lamb at Armageddon. But the Lamb is the Lord of lords and King of kings {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} and He will defeat them and their followers." {58 Call-Prayer, Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15} 15The angel continued his explanation: "The waters beside the prostitute are all the people who follow the antichrist from every people group, language, and nation. 16But the ten rulers and the antichrist will turn against his followers, stripping them of their rituals and power. 17God will influence the minds of sinful people to do His pleasure until He comes to judge the antichrist and his followers." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 18The woman is the antichrist who has evil influence to control the kings of the world.

Babylon has always opposed God. Those in Babel rebelled against God in building a tower-temple to the heavens until God changed their language (Gen. 11:1-9). Babylon was the nation that destroyed Jerusalem and the temple in 587 B.C. (2 Chron. 36:10-21). The future "people group" that will rise up against God will be "Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots" (17:5). Babylon will get wealth from "the kings of the earth" (17:2). She will be guilty of all types of sexual sins and rebellion against God. She will make an alliance with the antichrist. She will destroy believers and Jesus (17:6). Babylon will get political power from seven kings (17:10) and ten kings (17:10). Ultimately, the Lamb will destroy "Babylon's empire." Lord, I pray against antichrist and his kingdom. He will try to rule the world with power, money, and fear. But eventually, You will rule the world, all the ethnic groups of the world, and all the people of the world. I'm on the winning side, even if I lose my life in battle, I will eventually win. Amen.

Revelation 18

Economic Babylon

[1]John saw another angel come from heaven, whose brightness shined to all the earth. {27 Authority-Prayer, Rev. 11:6} [2]He shouted, "Babylon is fallen, Babylon is fallen, which is the den of demons. Every filthy spirit and every detestable idea also lives there. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [3]All the nations have been intoxicated with her proposition to sin. All the world leaders have committed adultery with her and grown rich from her extravagance." {135 End-Times Prayer, Rev. 22:20} [4]Then John heard a voice from heaven, "Come out from her, people of God. Do not share in her crimes and sins. {430 Separation-Prayer, 2 Cor. 6:17} [5]God in heaven knows about her sins. {74 Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Ps. 67; Matt. 6:9} [6]She will be treated as she treated others; she will be paid back double what punishment she gave out. [7]Every one of her sinful pleasures and luxuries will give her grief and misery. She boasts that she is a queen on a throne and she is not sorry for anything she's done. [8]Judgment will fall on her in a single day and she'll suffer disease, mourning, and hunger." {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[9]You, Lord God, who has great power, will burn her up. The world rulers, who have fornicated with her, will weep and mourn for they lose everything. {274 Last-Days Prayer, 2 Tim. 3:1} [10]When they see the smoke of commercial Babylon burning, they will stay away at a safe distance and cry, "Alas!...Alas! Our great city Babylon, a mighty city was destroyed in a single hour." [11]All the business people of the earth will weep and mourn over her [12]because no longer will anyone be able to buy gold, silver, jewels, pearls, fine cloths, perfumes, costly furniture, and sculptures. [13]They also cry for lack of oil, flour, wheat, meat, and automobiles. And no one will work anywhere because there is no money to pay anyone to do anything. [14]The expensive things they loved are gone, never to return. All the ease and pleasures have ceased. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [15]The business people who made a fortune out of commercial Babylon will stand at a safe distance to wring their hands and grieve {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [16]saying, "This is terrible; what are we going to do?" Everything that was beautiful and fine and comfortable was destroyed in a single hour. [17]All the fashionable clothes, accumulated wealth, exquisite meals, entertainment, and vacations were all destroyed in a single hour. All the captains of ships and people who made a living from the sea, stayed at a safe distance, watching the smoke as commercial Babylon burned, {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} [18]crying, "There has never been a civilization like this and we won't see anything like this again. [19]That great city—commercial Babylon—that kept us rich through her excesses, was ruined in a single hour." {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14}

[20]Yet, there was rejoicing in heaven, from all the saints, apostles, and prophets, for You judged an economic system that persecuted them. You judged a way of life

that rebelled against righteousness. {493 Triumphant-Praying, 2 Cor. 2:14} [21]Then a mighty angel lifted a huge millstone and threw it into the ocean saying, "So shall this commercial way of life never be heard from again. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [22]Never again will there be the sound of music, dancing, reverie, and the laughter of pleasure seekers. Never again will there be the sound of machines in factories or the ring of cash registers, or any business ventures. [23]There will be no electricity, so everything will be dark. Every machine that runs will shut down. There'll be no laughing like people in love, and no one will achieve their heart's desire. All your luxuries, entertainment, and pleasures will be gone forever, for in commercial [24]Babylon is founded the blood of martyrs who were destroyed by her way of life." {94 Crown of Righteousness-Prayer, 2 Tim. 4:8}

Babylon of the future is more than the city of Nebuchadnezzar. It could be a nation, or probably like Nebuchadnezzar's empire, a culture that will embrace the entire near East, or what is called the Arab world. However, throughout history it was wrongly thought that the name "Babylon" was the city of Rome. There seem to be two sides of Babylon. First, Babylon in chapter 17 is the political-religious empire that is a mixture of confederation of world kingdoms, held together by fear, brutality, and false religions. This first Babylon is an ecclesiastical kingdom that includes all apostate Christendom and all false religions. The second Babylon is seen in chapter 18, which is the economic or business empire that makes the nations rich. The first Babylon is destroyed by the beast or antichrist because he didn't want to share power or glory with anyone else. The second is destroyed at the second coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation. It seems inconsistent with the Bible's teaching of mercy and praying for your enemies to read that heaven would "rejoice over her" (18:20). The King James Version suggests "Rejoice over her, thou heaven, and ye holy apostles and prophets" (18:20). How can we explain this inconsistency? Aren't we to have mercy and pray for our enemies? Perhaps our prayers would lead to their salvation. If a Christ-hater like Paul could be converted, why couldn't those who persecute us be saved? But the picture we see here is at the triumphant coming of Christ in judgment. It's too late to get saved. We should glorify God because He is doing what His Word promised. God will judge sin with the judgment He promised. God will do what He does as God, so we praise Him for who He is. Lord, it's hard for me now to celebrate when people are judged for their sin and rebellion. I don't celebrate what happens to them, I celebrate You, and rejoice in who You are and what You do. You do all things right and I'm glad for that. You do not judge out of bitterness or remorse, You judge according to truth. I rejoice that Your truth marches on. Amen.

Revelation 19

Hallelujah!

[1]John heard the roar of a great multitude, {290 Loud-Rejoicing Prayer, Ps. 100:1} shouting, "HALLELUJAH, victory and glory and power to our God." It was all heaven worshiping You because Christ was getting ready for His return to earth. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6} [2]The crowd shouted, "God judges accurately and God punishes fairly. He has condemned the religious prostitute who corrupted mankind with her adultery. God has avenged the death of the martyrs that the evil prostitute has killed." {197 Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer, Rev. 14:13} [3]Lord, the crowd sang to You, "HALLELUJAH! The smoke from the judgment of the prostitute goes on forever." {211 Hallelujah-Praise Prayer, Rev. 19:1}

The word HALLELUJAH was a standardized call to temple worship in the Old Testament. The Greek is "Alleluia," a form of the Hebrew "Hallelujah," which means "praise the Lord." It is both a command and an invitation of opportunity, and was an expression of joy, praise, thanksgiving, and exaltation. So John heard the people of heaven shout HALLELUJAH because of two great facts. First, Babylon and its evil world system was being judged by God. Second, Jesus is coming to destroy evil and all those who rebelled against Him, and to establish His kingdom. Lord, I join those in heaven shouting HALLELUJAH. I call to everyone I know to join me in praise, thanksgiving, and exaltation of Jesus. He rules my heart; then He will rule all the world. My joy spills out in shouts of Hallelujah. Amen.

[4]Then the 24 saints before the throne and the four winged creatures around the throne fell on their faces to worship You, the God of judgment, crying, "AMEN, we agree with Your judgment. AMEN, Your will be done forever."

Worshiping God

[5]Lord, a voice echoed out over the multitude, "Praise our God, all His servants, great and small who reverence Him." {366 Praise-Worship of God, Gal. 1:5} [6]John heard the immense crowd roar like thunder, "HALLELUJAH, the reign of God over the earth is about to begin. {542 Worship-Roar Prayer, Rev. 19:6}

[7]"Let us be glad and rejoice because the marriage supper of the Lamb is ready. Jesus will be united with His Bride, the church. The Bride is ready because she is made pure by the blood of the Lamb. [8]She is dressed in fine white linen, which is made from the good deeds of the saints." {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29}

Those in heaven shouted their worship of God "as the voice of many waters, and as the voice of mighty thunderings" (19:6). There's a time to worship quietly in your heart. There's also a time to shout your worship as loud as you can, because your heart is filled and you can't contain yourself. You seize the moment with shouting. Lord, my heart fills

with love and praise to You. When I can't contain it any longer, I shout as loud as possible, JESUS IS LORD. Amen.

9The angel told John to write, "God has said, 'Blessed are the saints who are invited to the wedding supper of the Lord.'" {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 10Lord, John fell at the feet to worship the angel, but he said, "No, don't worship me since I am a servant of God like you. Worship God." The angel explained that the purpose of the prophetic words he had given John was to tell all about Jesus. {544 Worthy-Worship Prayer, Rev. 5:9}

Every emotion of our heart is expressed in prayer, so there is a time to "rejoice and be glad" in the presence of God for what He has done for us in the past, and for what He is doing at the present time. The people of heaven are worshiping God and saying, "Let us rejoice," because Jesus is coming to finally judge sin on the earth and reward His saints. Lord, I rejoice in the past forgiveness of my sins. Thank You for cleansing. But I rejoice now at the prospect of Your coming and what You will do to punish evil and reward Your followers. I shout HALLELUJAH. Amen.

Jesus Returns

11Lord, then John saw heaven open, {519 Vision-Motivated Prayer, Prov. 29:18} and riding a white horse was Jesus, Who is called Faithful and True. Jesus was ready to make war with all the armies gathered in the valley of Armageddon to oppose Him and His plan for the Holy Land. 12His eyes as blazing fire saw into the hearts and rebellion of all people. He wore a crown, symbolic of His rulership over all the earth. {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} He had a name embroidered on His garment that no one knew but Him. 13The name of Jesus was the Word of God, and His garments were covered with the blood of those He had defeated. 14An enormous army followed Him. They wore white symbolizing their purity, and they rode white horses. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} 15Jesus held the sharp sword of justice to strike down those who rebelled against Him, and He will rule them with an iron grip. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} 16On His robe is written, "King of kings and Lord of lords." Now He will tread over His enemies as grapes are crushed in the winepress.

17Lord, John saw an angel standing in the sun, shouting to all the birds of heaven, "Come eat the bodies of those who fought against God and His plan." {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 18The dead included all the generals, soldiers, horses, and citizens—great and small. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 19Lord, John had seen the antichrist gather the world leaders to make war against Jesus, the One riding the conquering horse. 20Lord, John then saw the antichrist was taken prisoner with the false prophet who had worked miracles, {422 Satanic-Prayer, Rev. 13:13} deceiving those who were branded with 666, and who worshiped the statue of the antichrist.

These two were thrown into the fiery lake burning with brimstone. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [21]All the rest were killed under the judgment of God, and the birds had a feast on their flesh.

Revelation 20

The Millennium—One Thousand Years

[1]Lord, next John saw an angel descending from heaven with the key to hell. He had an enormous chain, [2]and when he overpowered satan, who is also called the serpent, the devil, and the dragon, [3]he chained him and threw him into hell to remain there one thousand years. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} Then the angel shut the entrance and sealed it to make sure the devil would not deceive people until the one thousand years were over. At the end of that time, satan would be released for a short period of time. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

[4]John saw the followers of the Lamb who had the authority to rule for Christ, sitting on thrones of authority. Then John saw the martyrs resurrected to new life; they had been beheaded because of their testimony. They had not worshiped the beast or his statue, nor had they been branded in their hearts or forehead with the brand of the antichrist, 666. They reigned with Christ one thousand years. {405 Resurrection-Inspired Praying, 1 Cor. 15:50} [5]The unsaved dead were to be judged after the one thousand years, and they were not resurrected yet. [6]The saved were raised in the first resurrection; the second death holds no power over them. They will be priests who worship You for one thousand years, and they will reign with Christ for one thousand years. {516 Victory Over Trials-Prayer, James 1:12}

The Bible calls us "priests of God." We should do spiritually what the Old Testament priest did physically in the tabernacle/temple: (1) they prayed for the people; (2) they offered sacrifices to God for the people; (3) they worshiped God; (4) they attended to the sanctuary (a place where God dwelt); and (5) their holy lives were dedicated to God as a testimony to the congregation. Lord, I come to You as a priest to pray for others, especially those who can't intercede for themselves. I pray for forgiveness for Your people. I also pray for Your blessing and protection for them. May my prayers be acceptable in Your sight. Amen.

[7]When the one thousand years end, satan will be released out of his prison. [8]He will go out to deceive the ethnic groups of people scattered over the face of the earth, that is, Gog and Magog, and organize them for battle, so many they are almost impossible to count. [9]They will march and surround God's people and His beloved city. But fire will come down from heaven and destroy them.

[10]The devil, who betrays, was thrown into the lake burning with fire and sulphur, joining the antichrist and false prophet, where they will be tormented day and night forever and ever.

The Great White Throne

[11]Lord, John saw you sitting on the Great White Throne, the place all unsaved people feared and hated. And now no one could deny judgment had come and no one could escape their time of judgment. [12]John saw the unsaved dead, all important and common persons, being summoned to appear before the all-knowing Judge. The Lamb's Book of Life was opened, and all whose name was not there was condemned to hell. The book of the works was then opened to determine the severity of their punishment. [13]All graves gave up their dead, so did the oceans; also, those in hades gave up its dead so that all could be judged. [14]Then all those who were guilty of death were thrown into the Lake of Fire, which is the second death. [15]Any names not found in the Lamb's Book of Life were thrown into the Lake of Fire.

Revelation 21

The New Heaven and New Earth

[1]Lord, You showed to John the new heavens and the new earth {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} because the first heavens and earth were burned up in fervent heat. The new earth didn't have any seas.

[2]John saw the holy city—the new Jerusalem coming down from Your presence in heaven, as beautiful as a bride at a wedding. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [3]Then John heard a loud voice announcing, "God is now making His home among people. He will live among them, and they will be His people. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} [4]He will wipe away every tear from their eyes. {347 Peaceful-Living Prayer, Heb. 12:14} There will be no more death, sickness, or pain; all sorrows of the past are gone." {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14} [5]Lord, You who sit on the throne announced, "I am making everything new!" Then You told John, "Write this down, for this is the way it will happen." {495 True-Heart Praying, Heb. 10:22} [6]Just as Christ on the cross said of sin, "It is finished," so You will say of life on this earth, "It is finished." Then Jesus said, "I am the Alpha and Omega, I am the beginning of all things, and I am the purpose of all things. I will give water from the well of eternal life to anyone who thirsts for Me. {485 Thirst-Praying, Rev. 22:17} [7]This is My gift to those who are victorious. They will be Your children, O Father in heaven, and You will be their God. {77 Communion-Prayer, Phil. 3:8-10} [8]You reserve the Lake of Fire for unbelievers, cowards, those speaking obscenities, murderers, sex offenders, idolaters, and all liars—that will be their second death."

The City Walls

[9]Lord, one of the seven angels who had the bowls of judgment said to John, "Come, I will show you the Bride, the wife of the Lamb." {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} [10]Then John was carried away in a prophetic vision to a high mountain where he saw the new Jerusalem, the holy city coming down from God. [11]It was filled with the Shekinah glory of God, {188 God-Glorifying Prayer, Ps. 96:8} and

it sparkled like a dish of precious jewels, and it was crystal clear. [12]The walls were very high and very wide, and there were 12 gates, guarded by 12 angels. The names of the 12 tribes of Israel were written on the 12 gates. [13]There were three gates on each side—north, south, east, and west. [14]The walls were built on 12 foundation stones, and the names written on them were of the 12 apostles who had followed Jesus. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [15]The angel held in his hand a golden rod to measure the city and walls. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [16]He measured 1,500 miles from side to side and from top to bottom. The city was foursquare, as long as it is wide, and it is high. [17]Next he measured the thickness of the walls; they were 216 feet across, according to his measurement. [18]The city was constructed of transparent gold; one could see through it like glass. {389 Purity-Praying, 2 Peter 3:1} The walls were like jasper; the 12 foundations were garnished with jewels. [19]The first foundation was like jasper, the second foundation was like sapphire, the third foundation was like chalcedony, the fourth foundation was like emerald, [20]the fifth foundation was like sardonyx, the sixth foundation was like sardius, the seventh foundation was like chrysolite, the eighth foundation was like beryl, the ninth foundation was like topaz, the tenth foundation was like chrysoprase, the eleventh foundation was like jacinth, the twelfth foundation was like amethyst. {215 Heaven's-Prayer, 1 Thess. 4:13, 14} [21]The 12 gates glistened like a pearl, and the streets were paved with pure gold, as clear as transparent glass.

We expect the place where God dwells to be beautiful because (1) He is there; (2) He gives beauty, order, and meaning to any area He inhabits; (3) we give to God the best and most beautiful of what we have; and (4) God purifies everything He touches to make it beautiful. Lord, my prayers are not lofty or eloquent, nor are they persuasive. My prayers are simple and from my heart. When You accept my prayer because of Jesus, then my prayer becomes beautiful. When You listen and answer, my prayers are elevated to the feet of heaven because You make them effective. Thank You for beautifying my prayers. Amen.

[22]There was no temple in the city {420 Sanctuary-Prayer, Rev. 21:22} because people worshiped You and the Lamb everywhere. [23]The city did not need the sun or moon for light because it was continually lit by Your Shekinah glory and the Lamb. {283 Light-Praying, 1 John 1:7} [24]The people who are saved will walk in the light, and everyone—including all kings—will glorify You. [25]The gates will never be shut; they remain open for there is no night there. [26]All the saved of the ethnic groups of people will bring their praise and worship to God in the city. [27]Nothing that is sinful and no one who is filthy or tells lies will be allowed in the city. The only ones there will be true believers whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of

Life. {318 New Birth Praise-Prayer, Titus 3:5}

A sanctuary is where God dwells so when we get to heaven there won't be a sanctuary because heaven itself is God's dwelling place. On earth a sanctuary was (1) the tabernacle in the wilderness; (2) the temple in Jerusalem; (3) the body of believers in the New Testament (Col. 1:27); and (4) the true church (Matt. 18:20; Eph. 1:22-23). In the Old Testament the believers needed to go to a place to experience God's presence, while today we can experience His presence in our hearts (Gal. 2:20) no matter where we are. Therefore we can pray anywhere, because we can experience His presence anywhere. Lord, I come to You right now in this place because You indwell my heart and You are present to hear my prayers. Amen.

Revelation 22

Life in Heaven

1 Lord, the angel showed John a sparkling clean river flowing from Your throne and the Lamb. {377 Presence of God-Prayer, Ps. 16:11} 2 It flowed down the middle of the central street of heaven. A Tree of Life grew on each side of the river, and a new crop of fruit grew each month that could be harvested each month. The leaves provided health for all people who will eat from the Tree of Life. {214 Healing-Prayer, James 5:15} 3 Lord, there is nothing evil in the city because Your throne and the Lamb are there. All Your servants will worship You continually. {541 Worship-Prayer, John 4:23} 4 Your servants will see the face of the Lamb, {254 Intimacy-Prayer, Luke 11:2} and His name will be on their foreheads. 5 There will be no night—no need for lights—for You will give light to the city. And You will rule Your people forever. {517 Victory-Prayer, 2 Cor. 2:14}

Jesus Is Coming Soon

6 Lord, the angel told John, "God's people can trust these words and descriptions of heaven. Be prepared, He is coming soon." You who tell the future to Your prophets sent Your angel to tell John these things that will soon occur. {136 End-Times Understanding Prayer, Rev. 17:9} 7 They are blessed who read this book and believe what it says. {213 Happy-Prayer, John 20:20} 8 Lord, when John saw and heard all these things that were about to happen, he lay prostrate to worship the angel who showed him these things. 9 The angel said, "No! I am a servant of Jesus like you are. Obey what the prophets say, 'Worship God!'" {327 Obedient-Prayer, Col. 2:6} 10 The angel instructed John not to close the book he was writing, 11 but he should tell everyone its message because the evil person will continue to do evil and the filthy will continue to do filthy things. Also good people will continue to do good, {195 Good-Works Praying, John 6:28, 29} and holy people will continue being holy. {223 Holiness-Prayer, 1 Peter 1:16} 12 Lord, Jesus said, "I am coming soon, and I'll have a reward for everyone, according to the deeds they have done. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} 13 I am Alpha

and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and Last of everything." {147 Exalt-Jesus Prayer, Phil. 2:11, 12} [14]Those who live by His Word can enter the gates into the city, and eat the fruit of the Tree of Life. [15]Prohibited from the city will be rebels, sorcerers, the sexually impure, murderers, idolaters, and those who love to lie. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5}

When we reach heaven, we will stand before God, "happy and holy." The world seeks happiness as a pleasant feeling, or escaping unpleasantness, or the thrill of a moment, or an elusive panacea. But a Christian seeks to put Christ first in everything, including good moments, and difficulties, and trials. Christians experience happiness as they please God, and they learn the greatest joy in life comes from God when they exalt Him in their thoughts and actions. Happiness is found on the road to Christian duty. Lord, I see Your glory in my life and my joy is in serving You and exalting You in my life. Even in difficulties I enjoy inner happiness that comes from You. And even in the greatest misfortunes or sorrows in life, I know You will guide my life and work all things together for my good (Rom. 8:28). Amen.

[16]Jesus sent an angel to tell John these messages for the churches. {15 Angel-Like Closeness to God, Heb. 9:5} Jesus was born in the family line of David. He is the Bright Star of the morning. {256 Jesus First-Prayer, Phil. 1:21} [17]Lord, the Holy Spirit and all believers tell the unsaved, "Come!" Let all those who are thirsty, "Come!" {72 Come to Jesus-Prayer, Rev. 22:17} All who want the water of eternal life may have it free. {489 Transfer-Faith Praying, 1 Sam. 7:8}

We are commanded, "Come," so when we are obedient to God, we approach His presence in prayer. Sometimes we are reluctant to approach God because of our sin or unbelief; but when we realize He has invited us, "Come," then we approach God in faith, expectancy, and assurance. We know He will give to us the things we ask. Lord, I come because You invite me to come. I come in weakness, doubt, and hesitancy; but I come. I come slowly and hesitantly, but I come. I come full of sin asking forgiveness, but I come. I come because You invite me to come. Amen.

Every Word Is Imperative

[18]Lord, John warned everyone who reads this book not to add anything to it, or God will add to their punishment. {268 Judgmental-Praying, Acts 5:4, 9} [19]And if any take away from the things in this book, God will take away their part in the Book of Life and in the holy city. {267 Judgment Prayer, Rev. 17:5} [20]Jesus who repeated the warnings said, "Surely I come quickly!" John agreed with Jesus and said, "Amen! Even so, come, Lord Jesus." {524 Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, 1 Thess. 1:10} [21]Then John gave the benediction, "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen!" {29 Backslider's-Denied Answers, 2 Peter 2:20}

God said, "There shall no man see Me, and live" (Exod. 33:20), yet in heaven we shall see God's face, the most wonderful thing in heaven that we will see. Today we can't see God for He is invisible and does not have a body, yet in our prayer we can enter God's presence to make intercession to Him because we come through the blood of Christ which makes a way for us (Heb. 4:16). Amen.

PRINCIPLES OF PRAYER

1 - Abandonment-Prayer (Pss. 42:9)

When we feel abandoned by God, we need to be sure we are looking for Him in the right places. Or maybe the reason we haven't heard from God is because we block Him out with our chatter. God may "forsake" us so that we will examine our motives to see if we are praying for the right reasons. Perhaps the truth is that God hasn't abandoned us, but we have forsaken Him. Our feelings of abandonment might also stem from wrong ideas about God. Therefore, when we feel abandoned, we usually search for God more intently or sincerely. Rather than blaming God for not being there, why not exercise faith and ask Him to speak when we don't know what we want God to do for us? Yield the outcome (and ourselves) to Him. "Your will be done" (Matt. 6:10). Abandonment sometimes leads to the death of our pleasure, our comfort, our ambitions, or even our immediate happiness. But God doesn't leave us in a state of turmoil when we abandon ourselves to His will. When we relinquish the desires of our heart and submit to God's will, we crucify our self-will to Christ and allow Him to transform our lives. "I will say to God my Rock, Why have You forgotten me? Why do I go mourning because of the oppression of the enemy?" (Psalm 42:9). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

2 - Abba-Prayer (Rom. 8:15)

The name "Abba" is a Hebrew term of our modern "Daddy" or "Papa." The name "Abba" is an intimate designation we give to God to reflect our close relationship to Him. Our heavenly Father is both powerful and transcendent, but He is also intimate and close by. Human fathers are supposed to relate to us as the heavenly Father, but many times they may not. When we approach our Abba, it's our heart speaking to His heart (Pss. 103:13; Isa. 66:13; Hos. 11:1-4; Mark 14:36; Luke 11:2; Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:6). (See *Fellowship-Praying, Intimacy-Prayer).*

3 - Abiding in Scripture-Prayer (John 15:7)

Jesus promised, "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). But that doesn't mean we can get anything or everything. We must meet the conditions, "Abide in Me, and My [Jesus] words abide in you" (John 15:7). We abide by (1) knowing the Scripture so we will ask only for God's will; and (2) by living God's Word that qualifies us for answers (John 14:20, 15:1-8; 1 John 3:22, 24). (See *Prayer, Scripture-Prayer, Word-Praying*).

4 - Absurd-Praying (1 Cor. 15:19)

Those who claim there is no resurrection are ridiculous, that is, they are inconsistent with reason or common sense. If one accepts the claims of the Bible with its supporting supernatural claims, then it is only foolish to reject the fact that Jesus rose from the dead. So those who pray to the Father through Jesus must acknowledge the resurrection of Christ. They must faith-base their entire relationship with God on the resurrection (Pss. 16:10; John 5:28-29, 11:25; Acts 4:2; 1 Cor. 15:19, 43, 44; Phil. 3:21; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). (See *Hypocritical-Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Unpardonable-Sin Prayer*).

5 - Accusation-Prayer Protection (Rev. 12:10)

Satan constantly accuses us to the heavenly Father, so we must pray constantly for spiritual protection and victory over evil forces. We must rely on the intercession of Jesus our High Priest, and the prayers of the Holy Spirit (Job 1:9, 2:5; Zech. 3:1-2; Luke 22:31-32; Rom. 8:26; Titus 2:8; Heb. 7:25; 1 John 4:4; Rev. 12:10). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer,* see various *Victory* prayers).

6 - Advocate-Intercession (1 John 2:1)

Our Advocate is Jesus. As our lawyer He represents us before God the Father—Judge. Jesus prays for our forgiveness based on His blood that paid our penalty. He, the Sinless One, was substituted for us, the sinners (Rom. 8:31; 2 Cor. 5:21; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:24-25, 9:4; 1 John 2:1). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer, Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Jesus' Name-Praying*).

7 - Affliction-Prayer (Pss. 102:2)

Seek God's forgiveness and acceptance when we are hurt, alienated, or suffering. This is a prayer to have our fellowship with God restored (Gen. 16:11, 29:32; Exod. 3:7, 4:31; 1 Sam. 1:11; 2 Sam. 16:12; Neh. 1:3; Job 30:16; Pss. 22:24, 102:2; 2 Cor. 2:4, 4:17; Phil. 4:14; 1 Thess. 1:6). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Persecution-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer*).

8 - Aged-Prayer (Pss. 90:10)

For those aged persons who enter a time of physical, mental, and spiritual weakness, we pray that God will keep them true to His standards and that God will protect them spiritually with the strength of Christ (Phil. 1:21) to remain faithful in all things (Noah: Gen. 9:20-29; Solomon: 1 Kings 11:1-4; David: Pss. 51:3-13). (See *Family-Heritage Prayer*).

9 - Agree-Bless Prayer (Matt. 18:19)

When the blessor and recipient of a blessing agree in prayer for a blessing, they ask in faith (See Matt. 18:19). (See *Agreement-Prayer*).

10 - Agreement-Prayer (Matt. 18:19)

Jesus made an incredible promise to answer us if we agree with another in prayer. We agree that God can and will answer any prayer. We agree in faith. We agree on the urgency of the request. We agree to be completely honest with each other and agree to confess all sin (2 Chron. 28:12; Jer. 32:39; John 17:11-21; Acts 1:14, 2:1-4, 4:32, 5:12; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 1:10). (See *Consensus-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying, Oneness-Prayer*).

11- Alert-Prayer (1 Peter 1:13)

This is our ready attitude to pray at any time and in any circumstance for any request. We should be ready to pray instantly because (1) we are commanded; (2) Christ indwells in us and He is with us at all times; (3) God is always available to answer; and (4) we should acquire an attitude of instant obedience (Acts 17:11, 21:18; Rom. 1:15; 2 Tim. 4:6; Titus 3:1; 1 Peter 1:13; Rev. 3:2). (See *Continual-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

12 - All Kinds of Faith-Praying (Rom. 1:17)

(1) We believe Christ died for our sins so we ask for forgiveness by faith; (2) We accept the fundamentals of faith and learn them; (3) We are declared righteous before God because of our faith; (4) Because Christ lives in us, we yield to His strength and live by His faith (Gal. 2:20); (5) We live according to biblical standards by faith; and (6) We discover our spiritual gift of faith and use it to live and serve God (Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17, 3:21; Gal. 3:11; Phil. 3:9; Heb. 10:38, 11:6-7). (See *Faith-Based Praying, Faith-Prayer, Faith-Validated Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Possibility-Prayer*).

13 - All-Time Praying (Heb. 7:26)

We can pray to God the Father at any time, knowing that Jesus is alive and receives our requests as He stands at the right hand of the Father and presents our petitions to Him (Job 19:25; John 14:19; Rom. 6:9; 2 Cor. 13:4; Gal. 2:20; Col. 3:3; Heb. 7:26). (See *Continual-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

14 - Angel-Appreciation Prayer (Heb. 2:7)

We should have a thankful attitude for all that angels do for us and for God's kingdom (Pss. 34:7; Matt. 13:41-42; Luke 16:22; Heb. 1:14, 2:7, 13:2). (See *Alert-Prayer, Angel-Like Closeness to God, Continual-Prayer, Persistent-Praying, Prevailing-Prayer*).

15 - Angel-Like Closeness to God (Heb. 9:5)

The pure gold seraphim on the mercy seat of the Sacred Chest remind us that we can be close to the presence of God. The angels were close to God because the presence of the Lord came to sit on the mercy seat in the Shekinah Glory cloud. The angels were (1) pure gold

which stands for holiness; (2) sculpted or beaten, which suggests they were God's masterpiece; (3) they had outstretched wings, symbolic of worship; and (4) they looked down to the mercy seat, the place where blood was applied to forgive sins (Exod. 25:17-22; Rom. 3:25; Heb. 9:5;1 John 2:2, 4:10). (See *Angel-Appreciation Prayer, Mercy-Seat Praying*).

16 - Anointed-Praying (Zech. 12:10)

The term "anointed" describes someone who is endued with spiritual power for preaching, teaching, singing, etc. It suggests the Holy Spirit is speaking through an "anointed person" to needy persons. *Anointed Praying* is when the Holy Spirit speaks through the prayers of the intercessor (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 8:15, 26-27; 1 Cor. 14:15; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 6:18). (See *Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Spirit-Helped Prayer, Spirit-Insight Prayer*).

17 - Anointed-Truth Praying (1 John 2:27)

We request the Holy Spirit to take away our spiritual blindness (2 Cor. 4:3-4) so we can understand spiritual truth. Because the Holy Spirit is our spiritual teacher, we must yield to His control of our lives, and ask Him to guide us in the study of the Word of God (Isa. 61:1; Luke 4:18; John 7:37-39, 14:26, 16:13; 1 Peter 2:23; 1 John 2:27). (See *Blind-Prayer, Insight-Prayer*).

18 - Anticipating His Return (Rev. 16:17)

We are commanded to watch for the coming of Jesus Christ, so we pray, "Even so, come, Lord Jesus" (Rev. 22:20); (Pss. 130:6; Hab. 2:1; Matt. 24:42, 25:13; 1 Thess. 5:6; Rev. 3:3, 16:17). (See *Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, Watchful-Prayer*).

19 - Anticipating-Problem Prayer (1 Thess. 3:4)

Because we can anticipate problems or dangers before they happen, we should pray about them to keep safe. Sometimes God solves a problem before it gets to us. At other times we end up in difficulty, and then we must ask God to help us solve the problem and/or ask for grace to live for Him in the midst of the problem. If we recognize God is the Lord of the storms, He will be our Lord in the storms of life (Acts 20:24). (See *Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer*).

20 - Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer (Gen. 49:28)

An anticipatory prayer is when you pray for someone based on the potential you see in them (Mark 11:22-24; Luke 6:38; John 15:11). (See *Agree-Bless Prayer, Bible-Bless Prayer,* and various *Bless* prayers).

21 - Approach Worshipfully (Heb. 12:22)

Your worship will be transformed when you realize you come to worship with angels and all the saints throughout time, and that you are coming in heaven's throne room where

God will judge all people, and that the focus of your worship is Jesus (Pss. 2:6, 48:2; Isa. 12:6, 28:16; Joel 2:32; Rom. 11:26; Phil. 2:8-11; Heb. 12:22; Rev. 5:11-14). (See *Worship-Jesus Prayer, Worship-Ministry Prayer, Worship-Prayer*).

22 - Appropriate-Blessing Prayer (Gen. 39:5)

This is when the recipient of a blessing both receives and acts on the blessing given to him. (See *Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer,* and various *Bless* prayers).

23 - Asking-Prayer (Matt. 7:7)

God loves to give things to His children. Therefore we ask of Him because asking reveals our confidence in His ability to do what we ask for. However, we must ask according to His will. Asking puts us in partnership with God in the great task of serving Him. Asking enriches our fellowship with Him. Asking deepens our dependence on Him because it is natural to want to be independent. (Matt. 7:7, 8; John 14:13, 14; 15:7, 16; 16:24). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Believing-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Praying*).

24 - Assurance-Prayer (Heb. 11:6; James 1:6)

Assurance Praying means coming to God knowing that He exists, that He will hear, that your requests are within the will of God, that you have met the conditions for getting prayers answered, and that you will get the request for which you are praying (Pss. 35:13; Matt. 7:7-9; Mark 11:23-25; John 14:13-14, 15:7, 15; 1 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 11:6; 1 John 5:14-15). (See *Confident-Praying, Faith-Eyes Praying, Faith-Prayer, Surety-Praying*).

25 - Atheist-Prayer (Pss. 14:1-2)

When a person rejects God and His truth, there is no other place for him to turn but to his evil nature. He may "pray" to himself that there is "no God." When we talk to an atheist, we should communicate to him that there is objective truth about God, and that there is a standard by which we all must live and all will be judged (1 Sam. 25:25; Pss. 14:1-2, 73:3; Prov. 1:7, 22; Luke 12:20; Rom. 1:28; Eph. 2:2). (See *Absurd-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Unpardonable Sin-Prayer, Unsaved-Prayer*).

26 - Atmospheric-Worship (Gen. 32:24-30)

Jesus told us, "The Father is seeking worship" (John 4:23, *ELT*). So when we worship the Father with all our heart, He comes to receive our worship. It's then we can experience His presence near us. It's like feeling moisture before it rains. When we feel God's presence, we then turn to Him in worship (Gen. 3:8, 15:1, 17:1, 18:1; Exod. 3:1-14; Job 38:1; Isa. 6:1 ff.; Ez. 1:3 ff.). (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Praise-Worship, Worship-Prayer*).

27 - Authority-Prayer (Rev. 11:6)

We recognize we have no authority and can accomplish nothing in ourselves; but when we meet God's conditions for prayer, we can ask God for the things we need done. Then we can pray with God's authority (Mark 11:28; Luke 9:1; 1 Cor. 15:24). (See *Jesus' Name-Prayer, Intercessor's-Prayer*).

28 - Avoid-Persecution Prayer (Acts 25:11)

Christians will suffer persecution (1 Peter 4:12), but they shouldn't suffer needlessly. There are times to flee and times to speak boldly. We should pray for guidance concerning those times (Matt. 10:16-42; John 15:18-25; Acts 25:11; James 1:2-12; 1 Peter 4:12-19). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer, Help-Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer*).

29 - Backslider's-Denied Answers (2 Peter 2:20)

This is a picture of the saved believer who once knew doctrinal truth, but returned to embrace sin like a hog returning to the mire. Peter says these people had "the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ," but are "defeated" (2 Peter 2:20). Their prayers for anything but repentance and restoration are denied before they call on God (Isa. 6:9, 10; Hosea 2:23; Acts 28:25-29; Heb. 12:17; 2 Peter 2:20). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer*).

30 - Baptized-Praying (Gal. 3:26, 27; Col. 2:11-12)

This relates not to water baptism, but to our spiritual baptism in Christ. Because we were baptized positionally into His death and resurrection, we have the spiritual benefits of both His death and resurrection. Now we stand perfect before the Father, so our prayers are accepted by the Father because they come through the Son. These prayers accomplish much more because they have the authority and/or power of Jesus' death and resurrection (Rom. 6:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 2:20, 4:5; Col. 2:10-12; 1 Peter 3:21). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer, Jesus-Agreement-Prayer*).

31 - Barriers to Prayer (Isa. 59:1, 2)

Instead of answering our prayers God sometimes allows an obstacle to attempt to dissuade us from praying, or to stop us from praying. (See *Hindrances to Prayer, Blocked-Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

32 - Basic-Praying (Heb. 6:1)

The essence of Christianity is *relationship* with God; therefore prayer is talking to God based on a relationship with Him. It is basic communication with Him (Prov. 4:18; John 1:1; 1 Cor. 13:10; Eph. 4:12; 1 Tim. 3:16; Heb. 6:1; James 1:4). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Prayer, Believing-Prayer, Definition of Prayer*).

33 - Beautiful-Prayer (Rev. 21:19)

God makes our prayers beautiful when we offer them according to biblical criteria for effective intercession. While our prayers may be weak, finite, and limited, when God receives them, our prayers become beautiful because everything God touches becomes beautiful (1 Sam. 16:12; Pss. 29:2, 149:4; Eccl. 3:11; Isa. 4:2, 52:1, 60:13; Rev. 21:19). (See *Believing-Prayer, Faith-Praying, Trusting-Prayer*).

34 - Believing-Prayer (Mark 11:24)

Sometimes God gives us faith or belief as we pray so that we know we will receive the request we seek. *Believing-Prayer* usually comes to those who (1) are yielded to do God's will; (2) have yielded the request they seek to God; (3) are praying according to Scripture; and (4) have met the conditions of prayer (Matt. 7:7, 18:19, 21:22; Luke 11:9, 18:1, 8; John 15:7, 16:23; James 5:18; 1 John 5:14, 15). (See *Faith-Based Prayer, Faith-Praying, Faith-Validity Prayer, Possibility-Praying, Trusting-Prayer*).

35 - Benediction-Bless Prayer (Lev. 6:23-26)

This prayer is invoking God's blessing on a church audience as it leaves a service so that God's special presence goes with each person (see Num. 6:24-26; 2 Cor. 13:14). (See *Mizpah-Benediction Prayer*).

36 - Better-Jesus Praise (Heb. 1:4, 8:6)

We exalt Jesus because He is so much better than all the means God used to bring salvation in the Old Testament. (Key word of Hebrews is *better.*) We praise the Father for sending Jesus, the final and ultimately (better) word on salvation (Heb. 1:4, 7:24-26, 8:6, 9:23, 10:34, 12:24). (See *Jesus-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Prayer, Jesus Worship-Prayer*).

37 - Better-Prayer (Heb. 8:6)

Our intercession will be better when we pray to God the Father through the excellency of Jesus our Intercessor. Because we stand perfect in Christ, our intercession is accepted (Gal. 3:19-20; Heb. 7:22-26, 8:6; 2 Peter 1:4).

38 - Bible-Application Prayer (Heb. 4:12)

This is a request that God will use the Bible to convict our unsaved family members and friends of their sin. It's a prayer that the Scriptures would open unspiritual eyes to understand the gospel so that they could see Jesus (Pss. 119:130; Isa. 55:11; Jer. 23:29; John 6:51; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 10:4; Heb. 4:12; James 1:18; 1 Peter 1:23). (See *Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, Bible-Prayer*).

39 - Bible-Bless Prayer (Num. 6:23-26)

This is a prayer when the blessor speaks the Word of God in blessing over the recipient (see 2 Cor. 13:14; Rev. 1:3). (See various *Bless* prayers).

40 - Bible-Comforting Prayer (1 Thess. 4:18)

Comfort comes when we base our feelings on Scripture and not on circumstances. The more we know the Bible and God's plan for our life, the better control we'll have over our feelings and mood swings, and the more effective our prayers will be (Isa. 40:1-2; Luke 21:28; 1 Thess. 5:13, 18; Heb. 12:12). (See *Abiding in Scripture-Prayer, Bible-Prayer, Word-Prayer*).

41 - Bible-Prayer (John 15:7)

When you quote the Bible as you are praying, your requests are biblical. You may claim what the Bible promises, or quote the prayers of someone in Scripture, or you may quote a Bible command to pray. We pray the words of Scriptures knowing God will hear and honor His Word. "If... My words abide in you, you will ask what you desire, and it shall be done for you" (John 15:7). (See *Abiding in Scripture-Prayer*, *Scripture-Prayer*, *Word-Praying Prayer*).

42 - Blessing a Person-Prayer (Num. 6:24-26)

When you ask God for His blessings on a person then God adds value to the life of that person. (See various *Bless* prayers).

43 - Blessing Children-Prayer (Lam. 2:19)

When we ask God to bless a child, God can add value to his life. "Lift your hands toward Him for the life of your young children" (Lam. 2:19). (See various *Bless* prayers).

44 - Blessing Expectation-Prayer (Rom. 2:4)

Be careful to pray a blessing that can flow out of the person's life or potential (see Gen. 49:28; Mal. 3:10; Rom. 2:4). (See *Anticipatory-Prayer, Trusting-Prayer* and various *Bless* prayers).

45 - Blessing of Victory in Warfare-Prayer (Eph. 6:10-18)

These words can be prayed by an intercessor interceding to God against spiritual oppression (from satan or demons), and for blessings on the recipient (see Gen. 14:19-20; Exod. 17:11-12). (See various *Bless* and *Victory* prayers*).*

46 - Blessing the Lord-Worship (Pss. 103:1)

How can we add value to God? The answer is very simple: We can't. We can't do anything to make God more valuable than what He is. However, when we "bless the Lord" we give

God something that He cannot give Himself. When we bless the Lord, we are adding His value to our lives as we recognize the greatness and goodness of God. We do this in worship. When we bless the Lord, we move out of ourselves to get closer to God than ever before. We become less absorbed with ourselves and more absorbed with God. When we bless God, we become more valuable to Him, hence we expand the work of God in the world (Pss. 103:1, 104:1, 146:1; Isa. 6:3; Luke 1:46-47; Rev. 4:8). (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, True-Worshipers-Prayer, Worship-Prayer*).

47 - Blessing-Prayer (Gen. 49:28)

We add spiritual value to another person when we pray/bless God into their lives and we ask God to add value to their lives (spiritually, financially, emotionally, or good relationships, etc.). A blessing makes the life of the other more enjoyable, useful, and profitable (Gen. 39:2, 21; Prov. 8:21; 2 Cor. 1:3-5). (See various *Bless* prayers).

48 - Blinded-Prayer (James 4:2-3)

We sometimes ask for the wrong thing in prayer because we love the wrong things in life. We must be yielded to God, then ask God to change our hearts so He can give us the requests He wants us to have (Gen. 29:11, 30; Luke 15:12). (See *Blocked-Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

49 - Blind-Obedience Prayer (Pss. 42:9)

Sometimes we don't feel as if God is hearing us. "*Why* do You hide Your face from me?" (Pss. 88:14). Perhaps God is testing us to see if we will obey Him. "Why have You forgotten me?" (Pss. 42:9). When we can't see what God is doing, the problem is with us, not God. The greatest expression of love to God in your life is blind obedience. Sometimes God wants to see us demonstrate blind obedience to Him when we don't feel His presence (Job 30:26; Pss. 13:1, 22:1-2; Isa. 40:27, 49:15). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Believing-Prayer, Faith-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer*).

50 - Blind-Prayer (John 11:22)

This is when you pray for an answer, and you don't know what you want, or what it is you seek, but you know God can do something. You know He will answer but you don't know how. "If you can believe, all things *are* possible to him who believes" (Mark 9:23; John 11:22; Heb. 11:17-19). (See *Believing-Prayer, Blind Obedient-Prayer, Faith-Praying*).

51 - Blocked-Prayer (1 Peter 3:7)

Our prayers are blocked because of sin, and it has many results in our spiritual life (Job 42:8; Pss. 66:13; Isa. 59:1, 2; Matt. 5:23, 24; Mark 11:22-27; Eph. 4:20, 6:18; James 4:2,

3; 1 Peter 3:7). (*See Hindrances to Prayer, Perverted-Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer*).

52 - Boldness Request in Prayer (2 Tim. 1:8)

Sometimes we let people intimidate us, or sometimes we just don't take an opportunity to speak for Christ. Therefore, we ask God to give us boldness to speak for Him (Isa. 51:7; Mark 8:38; Luke 9:26; Acts 5:41; Rom. 1:16; Eph. 3:13; 1 Peter 4:4). (See *Continual-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

53 - Bondage-Breaking Prayer (Rom. 7:20)

Those who don't yield their lives to Jesus Christ are controlled by their old life or old nature. Whether they live an outward moral life or whether they suffer bondage to sin, they are controlled by their "self-life" or the lust of the flesh, the lust of their eyes, or the pride of life. The secret of victory is surrendering to Jesus Christ and the power He makes available to do His will; and to live above sin (Luke 4:18, 9:23; John 8:34-36; Rom. 7:20; 2 Cor. 2:14; Phil. 1:21, 4:13). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer, Victorious Results in Prayer, Victory Over Temptation-Prayer,* see various *Victory* prayers).

54 - Brinkmanship-Praying (Pss. 91:3-10)

There may come a time when God's man or God's work is almost overwhelmed and defeated. We pray to God in a time of crisis because there is no other solution or deliverance but from God Himself. An illustration of *Brinkmanship-Praying* is when Esther said, "Fast for me...so I will go to the king...and if I perish, I perish!" (Est. 4:16). Like Esther, we must not blink in the face of danger, nor back away from a fight when the reputation of God is at stake. (See *Death-Facing Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer*).

55 - Brokenness-Prayer (Joel 2:12)

When we are convicted of our sin and we express a broken spirit, tears represent disappointment or anguish. Some weep because of sin. "Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning" (Joel 2:12). (Gen. 43:30; 2 Sam. 12:21; Pss. 126:6; Eccl. 3:4; Jer. 9:1; Lam. 1:16; John 11:31, 35; Rom. 12:15; James 4:9). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

56 - Burden-Prayer (Rom. 10:1)

In response to a burden that God gives, we intercede for our lost relatives and friends. A burden is a prayer obligation that may represent a family obligation, a relationship obligation, or a supernatural obligation given by God (Exod. 32:10; 1 Sam. 12:23, 15:11, 35; 16:1; Jer. 17:16; 1 Cor. 9:20-22). (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

57 - Calamity-Praying (Hos. 5:15)

God uses natural disasters, human problems, and other types of catastrophes to turn people's attention and prayers toward Him. Remember, "all things work together for good to those who love God" (Rom. 8:28); therefore we should pray to see God's larger plan developing in our lives when calamity strikes (Gen. 42:1-5; Jer. 8:14; Hos. 5:15). (See *Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer).*

58 - Call-Prayer (Gen. 12:1; Gal. 1:15)

This involves two actions. First, we must be listening for the call of God on our life; and second, we must be willing to do or be what God calls us to do. Many don't hear God's call because their spiritual ears are blocked with sin. Others have heard God's call in the past, but didn't follow it, so God hasn't called them again. If God calls we must answer, "Here *am* I! Send me" (Isa. 6:8) (Gen. 12:1 ff.; Exod. 3:1-10; Jonah 1:1-9; Luke 3:2; Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2, 9; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 5:4). (See *Worker's-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

59 - Care-Casting Prayer (1 Peter 5:7)

This is giving to God the concern of all our problems. God may want to solve the problem through us by giving us wisdom and telling us what to do. If we have yielded, consequences are left up to Him (1 Sam. 1:10; Isa. 30:6; Pss. 27:13, 14; 37:5, 55:22; Matt. 6:25-34; Phil 4:6; Heb. 13:5,6; 1 Peter 5:7). (See *Commitment-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer, Trusting-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

60 - Character of God-Prayer (1 Thess. 5:24)

Our prayers are to be based on God's nature and character (Mal. 3:6), not on our persistence, faith, or any other internal motive. You are asking God to answer because it is His nature to do what you ask (Gen. 18:23; 1 Thess. 5:24). (See *God-Glorification Worship, God-Pleasing Prayer, Jesus First-Prayer*).

61 - Child-Like-Praying (1 John 3:1)

We can approach God in a humble attitude because He is our Father, and we are His children (Jer. 3:19; Hosea 1:10; John 1:12; Rom. 8:14-17; 2 Cor. 6:18; Gal. 3:26-29, 4:5-61; 1 John 3:1). (See *Basic-Praying, Definition of Prayer, Trusting-Prayer*).

62 - Children of Promise-Prayer (Gal. 3:28)

Believers claim the promises made by the Father because they are the children of the Father, and they can claim the promises that are applicable to them (Acts 3:25; Rom. 4:13, 9:8-9; Gal. 3:29, 4:28). (See *Blessing Children-Prayer, Family-Heritage Prayer, Father-Cry Prayer*).

63 - Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer (Heb. 11:25)

We should make our decisions in prayer based on God's values and plans for our lives. By faith we must see God's core values and pray according to what He wants to do (Job 36:21; Dan. 1:8; Matt. 4:18-20; Mark 2:14; Acts 9:6; Heb. 11:25). (See *Commitment-Prayer, Vow-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

64 - Christ's Indwelling-Prayer (Eph. 3:17)

As we realize that Christ indwells us, we can pray that His strength will empower us to overcome temptation and live for Him (John 14:23, 17:21; 2 Cor. 4:10-11, 13:3-5; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21, 4:13; 1 Thess. 5:10; Rev. 3:20). (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer*, and various *Jesus* prayers).

65 - Christ Formed in Us-Prayer (Gal. 4:19)

This is a continual prayer that Christ will take more control of our lives and that His presence will shine through us to the world (Rom. 8:29, 13:14; Gal. 4:19; Eph. 4:24; Phil. 2:5; Col. 1:27, 3:10). (See *Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Crucifixion-Prayer, Transformation-Prayer*).

66 - Church Leadership-Prayer (1 Thess. 5:12-14)

We should intercede for our church leaders so that they may lead our local church effectively and so that we may grow in Christ and do more in Christian service (1 Thess. 5:12-14; 1 Tim. 5:17; Heb. 13:7, 17; 1 Peter 5:1-5). (See *Model Church-Prayer, Pastor-Prayer*).

67 - Church-Boss Rejection Prayer (3 John 9)

Instead of supporting and praying for a "church boss" who runs the church for his egotistical purposes, we must reject a leader who will not follow Jesus, the Shepherd of the Church (Matt. 20:20, 23:4, 8; Phil. 2:3-5; 1 Tim 6:3, 4; 1 Peter 5:4; 3 John 9). (See *Church Leadership-Prayer, Pastor-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

68 - Church-Multiplication Prayer (Acts 19:10)

Both Christians and churches should follow the "reproducing" principle found in Genesis 1:12. The life in a seed produces a plant with seeds that will continue the reproduction cycle. A church with the life-transforming message should produce another church, just like the original seed (Gen. 1:12, 8:22, 12:2-3, 22:18; Pss. 126:6; Matt. 13:8, 28:19-20; Acts 19:10; 2 Tim. 2:2). (See *Dream Motivated-Prayer, Evangelistic-Praying, Soul-Winner's Prayer, Vision-Praying*).

69 - Church-Praying (Matt. 16:18)

Jesus announced, "I will build My church," suggesting five strengths: (a) He was the church planter and building; (b) it would be planted in the future, that is, after His death; (c) the word "build" was continual, meaning He is building His church today; (d) the word "My" means the "church" belongs to Jesus, not the pastor, board, or congregation; and (e) the word church is *ecclesia* which means to gather out, so Christ will be continually gathering His people out of the world (Acts 2:47, 8:1; Eph. 3:10, 5:25-28; Col. 1:18; 1 Tim. 3:5; Rev. 2:1 ff.). (See *Dream Motivated-Prayer, Evangelistic-Praying, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

70 - Circumstantial-Prayer (Rom. 8:28)

When we pray, we ask God to work through circumstances to give us the answers we desire. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God" (Rom 8:28) (Gen. 50:20; Deut. 8:2-16; Pss. 46:1-2; Zech. 13:9; 2 Cor. 4:15-18; Phil. 1:19). (*Guidance-Prayer, Will of God-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

71 - Clean-Conscience Prayer (Heb. 10:22)

We come to God with a clean conscience (we never have a perfect life free from sin) because we have confessed our sin, and we are seeking to live by God's standards. When we know there is nothing between God and us, we can pray with honesty and sincerity. "Now we know that God does not hear sinners" (John 9:31). We come to God because of what Christ has done for us in His death, burial, and resurrection. We can have a clear conscience when we have claimed all the forgiveness Christ has provided for us (Acts 24:16; 1 Tim. 1:5, 19; Heb. 10:22; 1 Peter 3:12, 16). (See *Blocked-Prayer, Confessing-Prayer*, *Hindrances to Prayer*).

72 - Come to Jesus-Prayer (Rev. 22:17)

Our intercession for unsaved people to come to salvation is based on God's invitation for all to come to salvation. Jesus died for all (John 1:29); and He invited people to "Come to Me" (Matt. 11:28). The Holy Spirit and Jesus gave these words of invitation: "Come! And let him who hears say, Come! And let him who thirsts come. Whoever desires let him take the water of life freely" (Rev. 22:17). (See *Evangelistic-Prayer, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

73 - Comfortable Place to Pray (John 18:2)

A comfortable place to pray is where (1) prayer comes easy; (2) our memory motivates us to prayer; (3) it has present meaning; and (4) it is a place that guarantees future success because we successfully prayed there in the past (Gen. 2:15-3:23; 1 Kings 15:13; Luke 21:37 ff.). (See *Geographical-Prayer, Geographical-Renewed Prayer*).

74 - Coming-Kingdom Prayer (Pss. 67; Matt. 6:9)

When we pray, "Your kingdom come," there is a semi-conclusion attached to this request that directs its answer. We pray, "Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven" (Matt. 6:10). There are two ways God answers this request. First, we are seeking the future coming millennial kingdom of 1,000 years on earth. Second, we are asking for God's kingdom to rule on earth this day, as His kingdom is presently ruling in heaven (Isa. 2:4; Dan. 2:44; Matt. 4:17; Rev. 20:4). (See *Anticipating His Return, Government Leaders-Intercession*).

75 - Commitment-Prayer (Pss. 37:5)

In the prayer of commitment you surrender to God the things about which you are praying. The act of commitment is an issue of simple trust. Until you commit the answer to God, you may never see how deep its hooks have on your life. Everything in prayer comes down to simple faith, so we dedicate ourselves unreservedly to the answers for which we are praying (Pss. 22:8, 55:22; Matt. 6:25; Luke 12:22-30; Phil. 4:6-7; James 4:13-15; 1 Peter 5:7). (See *Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Trusting-Prayer, Vow-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

76 - Common-Sense Praying (Gen. 24:12-14)

We need to ask God to use our human initiative, skills, and hard work to help bring about the answer we seek from Him. This is not asking for a miracle or some other supernatural display from heaven (like angels) to do the work God has given to us. We ask God to bless and use us as we do the normal (common sense) things of life in communicating the gospel to lost people (Gen. 24:27; Neh. 1:11; Pss. 37:5; Prov. 3:5-6, 4:11, 18; 8:20; Rom. 8:28). (See *Problem-Solving Prayer).*

77 - Communion-Prayer (Phil. 3:8-10)

Prayer is basically a relationship with God, so in communion prayer we spend time fellowshiping with God. During this time we are seeking to experience God, meditating on God, or bowing before Him in speechless adoration. (See *Fellowship-Praying, Intimacy-Prayer, Meditation-Prayer, Oneness-Prayer*).

78 - Compliment-Blessing Prayer (Luke 6:31)

When you give a person a compliment and pray for him, God may use you to bless the recipient with stronger self-esteem (see Luke 6:31; 2 Cor. 1:3-5). (See various *Bless* prayers).

79 - Conditional-Prayer Promise (2 Chron. 7:14)

God does not answer when we quote in prayer a promise, if we don't meet the conditions of that promise. Usually we get frustrated when we unsuccessfully quote a prayer promise

and God doesn't answer. As a result, we question God's promise, or we question God's ability to answer. Usually the problem lies in our interpretation of these *seemingly* unconditional promises of the Bible. What may seem to be an *unconditioned* prayer promise in one verse may actually have some other conditions in other places in the Bible. Usually our motives behind our requests are suspect; we're not being sincere with God and are not asking in faith. God doesn't answer because He knows our heart. Sincerity alone is not enough; our prayers must also be tempered by biblical truth (Pss. 66:18, 81:8; Matt. 7:7-11; Mark 9:23; Luke 9:23; John 13:17, 14:13-14, 15:7). (See *Conditional-Praying, Fleece-Praying*).

80 - Conditional-Praying (Matt. 8:2)

Many times we pray conditionally because we are human; that is, (a) we don't know everything in Scripture that tells us how to pray and what to pray; (b) we are limited in our understanding; (c) we don't live perfect lives; and (d) we don't fully understand the perfect will of God in all things. (See *Conditional-Prayer Promise, Fleece-Praying, Yielding-Prayer*).

81 - Confession-Prayer (1 John 1:9)

We pray to acknowledge our sin(s) by (1) confessing them; (2) repenting of them; and (3) asking God to forgive us. Then we must determine to live above those temptations (2 Chron. 6:37-38, 7:14; Pss. 32:5, 51:2 ff.; Prov. 28:13; Dan. 9:4; Titus 2:14). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Propitiation-Intercession Prayer, Restorative-Prayer*).

82 - Confident-Praying (1 John 5:13)

We can pray with great confidence because of biblical proofs that assure us that we are God's children. Because of confidence we can pray with greater faith and get answers to our prayers (Rom. 8:14-17; 2 Cor. 5:1; Gal. 4:6; 2 Peter 1:10-11; 1 John 5:13). (See *Faith-Based Praying, Faith-Eyes Praying*).

83 - Confident-Praying in God's Presence (Heb. 13:5)

We can approach God confidently, knowing He will not leave us nor forsake us. We can pray confidently because of His presence with us (Gen. 28:15; Deut. 31:6, 8; Josh. 1:5; Pss. 37:25; Isa. 41:10, 17; Matt. 28:20; Heb. 13:5). (See *Assurance-Praying, Confident-Praying, Faith-Based Praying*).

84 - Confronting-Evil Prayer (Eph. 6:10 ff.)

This is almost spiritual warfare prayer because we are building a wall of protection against overwhelming temptations and trials that come from demons and satan himself. We are not just requesting God to do something positive for us, we are confronting evil that

would hinder our prayers and destroy our walk with God (Josh. 1:6-9; 1 Chron. 28:10-20; Pss. 138:3; Isa. 40:28-31; Hag. 2:4; Zech. 8:9-13; Eph. 1:19, 3:16, 6:10; 1 Cor. 16:13; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:1 ff.; 1 Peter 5:10). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Warfare-Protection Prayer*).

85 - Consensus-Prayer (Acts 15:18)

How do we pray about things or issues that are disagreeable among the brethren? The early church was divided on the matter of whether circumcision should be required for salvation. (1) They examined Scripture; (2) they listened to the opinion of those they trusted; (3) they examined the experiences of what God was doing; and (4) they trusted God in areas they didn't understand. "Known to God from eternity are all His works" (Acts 15:18) (Gen. 21:22-34). (See *Agree-Prayer, Agreement-Prayer*).

86 - Contentment-Prayer (Phil. 1:20)

We should ask God to give us an attitude of calm tranquility. However, contentment is a by-product of Christ controlling our life and attitudes. When you pray for contentment, go deeper. Yield your life and decisions to Christ and let Him control every part of your life. Learn to say with Paul, "For to me, to live *is* Christ, and to die *is* gain" (Phil. 1:21). To have contentment, you must have Christ (Phil. 4:11, 13; 1 Tim 6:6; Heb. 13:5). (See *Peaceful Living-Prayer,* and various *Jesus* prayers).

87 - Continual-Prayer (1 Thess. 3:10)

The Greek words "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17) do not mean "without stopping"; rather they mean "intermittently." We are to pray intermittently according to our needs, as a baby cries according to its needs. Automatic windshield wipers turn on automatically to clear the windshield at a pace equal to the amount of rain. In the same way we are to pray *intermittently according to the amount of problems we face.* "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you" (1 Thess. 5:16-18). (See *Alert-Prayer, All-Time Prayer, Asking-Prayer, Continue in Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

88 - Continue in Prayer (Luke 11:8-10)

Some of our prayers are answered immediately because of our faith or boldness. Other times we remain in God's presence to "continue in prayer." However, we don't change God's mind with the amount of time we pray as though we are "begging" or trying to "twist God's arm." Before our prayers can change things, our prayers must change us. We are conformed into God's image as we continue in prayer. (See *Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer, Wait-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

89 - Convergence-Faith Praying (1 Cor. 13:2)

Convergence is described by two interstate highways meeting in an interchange so that traffic from different directions converges together. *Convergence Faith* happens when our faith converges with our spiritual gift and calling from God. Not everyone can exercise faith to get results in teaching if that person doesn't have the spiritual gift of teaching. Or to put it in the positive, the one with the spiritual gift of teaching can have greater faith and be more effective in relationship to teaching. In my lifetime, I've seen Jerry Falwell exercise faith to build over 100 buildings on Liberty University's campus. I've seen Billy Graham, the evangelist, exercise faith to see millions accept Christ in his crusades. I've seen Yonggi Cho, Korean church planter and pastor, exercise faith to build the largest local church in church history. Therefore, each person will be most effective in praying when his/her requests are directed in accord with their spiritual gift and calling by God (Matt. 17:20, 21:21; Mark 11:22-24; Luke 17:5-6; 1 Cor. 12:9). (See *Faith-Based Praying, Faith-Eyes Praying, Faith-Praying, Faith-Validated Prayer*).

90 - Correcting Others-Prayer (Titus 1:13)

This is a prayer we use when solving a problem. We should pray for the one we are correcting, and for our attitude, for the problem to be solved, and for God to be glorified (Prov. 27:5; 2 Cor. 13:10; 1 Tim. 5:20; Titus 1:13, 2:15). (See *Correction-Response Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer*).

91 - Correction-Response Prayer (Heb. 10:9, 10)

This should be our response when God punishes us because of our sin. We never like correction, but it's good for us because God wants to make us to be holy like Him (Exod. 20:12; Deut. 21:18; Prov. 15:10, 19:18, 30:17; Eph. 6:1, 4; Heb. 10:9-10, 12:5-11). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer*).

92 - Covenant-Fulfilling Prayer (Pss. 55:22)

When God makes a covenant with His people, we must accept our responsibility to fulfill our part of the covenant (if it is a conditional covenant). (See *Commitment-Prayer, Vow-Prayer*).

93 - Creation-Inspired Worship (Pss. 19:1, 2)

We worship God for the wonderful universe He created, and for the evidences of His sustaining power in His universe. We are careful not to worship the creation, but God, the Creator who is vastly superior to His creation. We worship God for His power, wisdom, and artistic beauty that created the universe. Since the creation extends far beyond our comprehension, so our worship of God the Creator must go far beyond our human

limitation (Deut. 32:4; 1 Chron. 16:28-29; Job. 36:3; Pss. 19:1-2, 29:1-2, 68:34, 96:7-8; Rev. 4:11). (See *Creation-Inspired Worship, Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer*).

94 - Crown of Righteousness-Prayer (2 Tim. 4:8)

If we receive the crown of righteousness when we arrive in heaven, we should be grateful. We should cast our crown at the feet of Christ. This crown is called the martyr's crown because it's given to those who sacrifice their lives in death for Christ (1 Cor. 9:25; 2 Tim. 4:8; James 1:12; 1 Peter 5:4; Rev. 2:10, 3:11). (See *Crown-Casting Worship*).

95 - Crown-Casting Worship (Rev. 4:10)

We do not deserve any reward (that is, crowns). It is the indwelling Christ who motivates us to service, and who empowers our service. We stand before God in the righteousness of Christ, so we give all praise back to Him by casting our crowns at His feet. This is our response to any recognition or reward given to us by God (2 Chron. 7:3; Pss. 95:6, 115:1; Matt. 4:9-10; 1 Cor. 15:10-11; Rev. 4:10). (See *Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, Redemptive-Worship, Worship-Prayer, Worship-Roar Prayer, Worthy-Worship Prayer*).

96 - Crucifixion-Prayer (Gal. 2:20)

When Paul states that he has been "crucified with Christ" (Gal. 2:20), he was not *initiating* the crucifixion but *receiving* it. The *Prayer of Crucifixion* is more about yielding ourselves to God, than it is aggressively trying to eliminate sin in our life. When we pray the *Prayer of Crucifixion*, we take up all that the cross symbolizes—humiliation, degradation, death—and identify with the pain and trials of Christ. We "lose" our lives by giving up our earthly desires in order to pursue what Jesus wants for us. We become completely yielded, completely abandoned, and completely transparent before God. It means completely surrendering ourselves to God and allowing Jesus to act within us—by allowing Christ to "live out" His role in our lives. We die to our self-desires and find a greater spiritual energy in Christ. We die to our self-ambition and find a greater reason to live for Christ. But more likely, the *Prayer of Crucifixion* will occur in smaller ways as we daily and intentionally give up our life bit by bit to God. "But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world" (Gal. 6:14). (Luke 9:23, 27; Rom. 6:4-6; Gal. 2:19, 20, 5:24, 6:14; Eph. 3:16; Col. 1:28, 2:11-14). (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Old-Nature Praying, Transforming-Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

97 - Daily-Prayer (Acts 2:42)

The early church prayed daily and probably in many different ways, that is, in private, in groups, with family members, and in church. We should follow the Lord's exhortation that "men ought always to pray" (Luke 18:1). (1 Sam. 12:23; Isa. 55:1; Matt. 6:9, 7:7,

14:23; Acts 2:42, 10:9, 16:25; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 5:17; 1 Tim. 2:1). (See *All-Time Prayer, Continue in Prayer, First Prayer Each Day, Intermittent-Prayer, Lord's-Prayer, Morning-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer*).

98 - Daniel Fast and Prayer (Dan. 1:8)

The "Daniel fast" is for health and healing. "Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself with the portion of the king's delicacies, nor with the wine which he drank" (Dan. 1:8). Therefore, Daniel requested, "Let them give us pulse [vegetables] to eat, and water to drink" (Dan. 1:12). At the end of the days, King Nebuchadnezzar examined and found, "None like Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael, and Azariah" (Dan. 1:19). A Daniel fast is a partial fast for health and healing. We commit ourselves to God's healing/health and will fast and pray for it (Exod. 15:26, 23:25; 2 Kings 20:5; Job 5:18; Pss. 41:3, 4; 103:3; Jer. 8:22, 33:6; James 5:15). (See *Healing-Prayer*).

99 - Death-Facing-Prayer (Pss. 88:3)

There will be times when we face death. Remember however, God's servant is invincible until God is finished with him on this earth. Therefore we should pray for deliverance when facing death, all the while remembering it may be God's time to bring us home (Pss. 22:11, 14, 21; 23:4, 88:3; Acts 26:31; 2 Cor. 1:9, 10; Phil. 1:20). (See *Death-Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Dying-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer*).

100 - Death-Prayer (Rev. 9:6)

Some people are in such pain that they pray to die. The picture in Revelation 9 is of God's wrath poured out in punishment, but those who pray to die will not escape death. On the other hand, some are in such physical pain that they ask God to take them home (2 Sam. 1:9; Job 3:20, 22; 7:15-16; Jonah 4:8-9; Luke 23:30; Rev. 6:16, 9:6, 13-21). (See *Death-Facing Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Dying-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer*).

101 - Deceitful-Heart Prayer (James 4:3)

Sometimes we sincerely ask God for something in prayer, not realizing we are motivated by our deceitful hearts. James calls this, "You ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures" (Jer. 17:9; James 4:2, 3). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Guilt-Motivation Praying, Old-Nature Praying*).

102 - Dedication of Money-Prayer (Acts 2:44-45)

We should commit all our wealth and belongings to God and then ask Him to use our money for His glory (Luke 9:23; Acts 2:44-45, 4:34-35, 5:1-6; 1 Tim. 6:6-12). (See *Money-Prayer*).

103 - Dedication-Prayer (Mark 10:16)

This is asking God for His natural and supernatural prosperity or His success on a venture, or a project, or an event, or program (Josh. 1:7-9, 21:43-45; Pss. 37:4; Mark 10:16). (See *Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Servanthood-Prayer, Worker's-Prayer*).

104 - Defenseless Cry for Help-Prayer (Pss. 109:31)

This is a prayer for help by those who can't protect themselves. God has promised to help those who cry to Him in their hour of need (Pss. 91:2-12, 109:31). (See *Abandonment Prayer, Affliction-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

105 - Defensive-Warfare Prayer (1 John 4:4)

We can pray defensively against evil that is attacking us. Or we can ask God to put a "hedge" around us to defend us against the attacks of satan. "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (Job 1:10; Eph. 6:10-18; 1 John 4:4). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer, Warfare-Prayer, Warfare-Protection Prayer*).

106 - Definition of Prayer (Heb. 11:6)

Prayer is communication with God; it is a relationship between you and your God. (See *All-Kinds of Prayer, Basic-Praying, Believing Prayer, Definition of Prayer*).

107 - Delayed Answer-Prayer (Isa. 30:18)

Sometimes God waits for a period of time before answering our requests. "Therefore the LORD will wait, that He may be gracious to you" (Isa. 30:18). "Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; wait, I say, on the LORD!" (Pss. 27:14). (See *Directional Answer-Prayer, Reluctant Answers to Prayer, Wait-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

108 - Delayed-Justice Recognition Prayer (Pss. 94:23)

Physical consequences come when a law is broken. So evil people will be judged according to their sin. God delays spiritual judgment until the end of the world. That way, all sins will be faced, as well as all the consequences of all sin. (If a man commits rape or adultery and a child is born who becomes a vile sinner—or produces several more generations of sinners—that original sin, plus its consequences, must be judged by God.) However, Christ died to take away all sin of His children. But God delays judgment to give unsaved people opportunity to repent and be converted (Pss. 7:16, 55:23, 64:8, 94:13, 23; Prov. 2:22, 5:22; 1 John 1:7-10). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, Reluctant Answers to Prayer, Wait-Prayer*, and various *Victory* prayers).

109 - Deliverance-Prayer (Pss. 34:6)

Sometimes we need to ask God to give us victory over sin or unwanted practices in our life. "This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him,* and saved him out of all his troubles" (Pss. 34:6). (See *Triumphant-Prayer, Victorious Results in Prayer, Victory Over Temptation Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

110 - Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer (Pss. 18:6)

There are many kinds of deliverance: spiritual, emotional, social, financial, and physical. There are many degrees of deliverance: from habits, from addictions, from unknown dangers, from bad influences, or wrong friends, etc. There are many ways God delivers: by Scripture, by counsel, by sermons, by reading material, by prayers of others, by meditation, and by our own intercession. We should be thankful, no matter how we are delivered (Pss. 18:6, 106:47, 148:14; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:57; 2 Cor. 2:14, 8:16, 9:15; Eph. 5:20; 1 Thess. 3:9). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Victory-Prayer, Vindication-Praise Prayer*, and various *Victory* prayers).

111 - Desert-Praying (Mark 1:12)

Sometimes we seek "desert experiences" to get away from the clamor of the world so we can experience God's presence and closeness. Other times our "desert experience" is dry, lonely, and threatening. These "desert experiences" are like times when we are tempted by the world, the flesh, and the devil. God will help us in these experiences (Exod. 3:1; 1 Kings 19:4; Pss. 28:4, 106:14; Isa. 35:5-6, 43:19-20; Mark 6:31). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Persecution-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

112 - Desperate-Prayer (Matt. 14:30)

Sometimes we encounter situations in which the threat is so immediate and overwhelming that all we can do is cry out to God in desperation. When Peter was sinking under the waves in a storm, he cried, "Lord, save me!" (Matt. 14:30). We pray desperately when we face danger or an emergency. "This poor man cried out, and the LORD heard *him,* and saved him out of all his troubles" (Pss. 13:2-3, 34:6). (See *Calamity-Praying, Emergency-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer*).

113 - Devil Worship-Prayer (Rev. 13:4)

Satan is a counterfeit god who sets himself up as deity and wants to be worshiped (Matt. 4:9). During the Tribulation he will influence people to worship the antichrist (Dan. 11:36-37; 1 Cor. 10:20; 2 Cor. 4:4; 2 Thess. 2:4; Rev. 13:4). (See *Devil-Defensive Prayer, False-Prayer*).

114 - Devil-Defensive Prayer (1 Peter 5:8)

In this prayer we ask for protection against satan, or we ask for wisdom to thwart his attacks, or for strength to protect ourselves in battle. This is asking for a "hedge" of protection when we are not aware of sin's attacks, or when we are unaware of the devil's activities (Job 1:10; Luke 4:3 ff.; Eph. 4:27; James 4:7; 1 Peter 5:8). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Devil-Defensive Prayer, False-Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer, Victorious-Results in Prayer*).

115 - Difference-Making Prayer (Jude 22)

This is a prayer that God will protect our friends from heresy and evil so that they may grow in Christ and serve God wholeheartedly. When we pray effectively, we show compassion on them (1 Cor. 4:14-16; Gal. 4:19; 1 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4; Jude 22). (See *Disentanglement-Prayer, Intercessor's-Prayer, Intercessory-Prayer for Jews*).

116 - Difficulties-Prayer (Pss. 40:2)

This is a prayer to pray in times of trouble, problems, or discouragement. When we get into difficulties (not necessarily sin), God wants us to call on Him for deliverance from them (Job 5:7, 14:1; Pss. 40:2, 107:6, 138:7). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer, Protection-Prayer*).

117 - Diligent-Person's Prayer (Prov. 4:23)

Diligence is an attitude of both the righteous and wise man. Those who think right—the wise—will eventually do right. A diligent man will give attention to his business and will not squander his life. He is steady, dependable, and brings energy to the things he does. As a result of being diligent, he will become prosperous. This person can acquire the good attitude of diligence from good role models, and/or by constantly doing the right things that give good results. "Do you see a man *who* excels in his work? He will stand before kings" (Prov. 22:29). Ultimately the diligent person rises to the top and may be given a leadership role in his place of work. "The hand of the diligent will rule, but the lazy *man* will be put to forced labor" (Prov. 12:24). (Prov. 4:23, 10:4, 12:27, 13:4, 22:29, 27:23). (See *All Kinds of Prayer, Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Servanthood-Prayer, Worker's-Prayer*).

118 - Directional Answer-Prayer (1 Kings 17:9)

God answers our request by directing us what to do. God does not always give us answers, nor does He always do something for us; but He may show us what to do. "Arise, go to Zarephath, which *belongs* to Sidon, and dwell there. See, I have commanded a widow there to provide for you" (1 Kings 17:9). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Wait-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

119 - Disciple Fast and Prayer (Matt. 17:21)

The *Disciple Fast and Prayer* is "to loose the bands of wickedness" (Isa. 58:6). It can free us and others from sin. Jesus cast out a demon from a boy whom the disciples had failed to help. Jesus told them, "However, this kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). The implication is that Jesus' disciples could have performed this exorcism had they been willing to undergo the discipline of fasting. (*See Crucifixion-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Sin-Stomping Prayer, Supernatural-Praying,* and various *Victory* prayers).

120 - Disciplined-Prayer (Luke 11:1)

When we ask God to help us do the right thing in the right way, we become disciplined in prayer. We pray for God to help us establish a habitual pattern of positive actions. (See *Race-Preparation Prayer, Self-Control Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

121 - Disentanglement-Prayer (2 Peter 2:20)

This is intercession for those who are entangled in false teaching, and is a prayer to keep us from being so entangled (Num. 24:20; Judges 4-7; Matt. 12:43-45; Luke 11:24-26; Heb. 6:4 ff., 10:26, 27; 2 Peter 2:20). (See *Difference-Making Prayer, Doctrinal-Prayer, Establishing Doctrine by Prayer*).

122 - Distraction to Prayer (Exod. 17:11)

Spiritual warfare often begins as an internal distraction while we are praying. When we feel a distraction, or an evil temptation, we should claim the supernatural power of Christ as we wrestle against the problem. Spiritual warfare demands we focus all our mental energy on what we are praying. We can ask God to help us. We can read Scripture out loud. We can pray out loud. We can write out our prayers. Since life is a journey, we will be continually in warfare prayer, and will never quit struggling against distractions until we are in heaven. "And so it was, when Moses held up his hand, that Israel prevailed; and when he let down his hand, Amalek prevailed" (Exod. 17:11). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Disciplined-Prayer, Victorious Results in Prayer*).

123 - Diversionary-Answer to Prayer (Mark 10:38)

Sometimes God answers our prayer differently from the thing for which we ask. God points us away from the request for which we pray and gives us a diversionary answer. Sometimes it is true, "You do not know what you ask" (Mark 10:38). (See *Directional Answer-Prayer, Delayed Answer-Prayer, Wait-Prayer, Waiting-Anxiously in Prayer*).

124 - Divine-Presence Answer to Prayer (Gen. 32:30)

Whether or not our request is valid, or whether God will answer us, God sometimes reveals Himself to the one praying. Sometimes this is called the "atmospheric presence" of God; others call it the "manifest presence" of God because He manifests Himself to His children. This is when we feel His presence with us. As an illustration, sometimes we feel rain, even when it is not raining. "For I have seen God face to face, and my life is preserved" (Gen. 32:30). (See *Atmospheric-Worship*, *God-Pleasing Prayer, Presence of God Prayer*).

125 - Divine-Purity Praying (2 Peter 1:3)

This is asking for a supernatural ability to live a godly life. God's power is not available to fulfill our dreams of riches, luxury, or other selfish endeavors, God's power is for godliness (Pss. 12:1; 2 Tim. 3:12; Titus 2:12; Heb. 12:28; 2 Peter 1:3). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Confession-Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer*).

126 - Doctrinal-Prayer (1 Tim. 3:15-16)

Ask God to help you believe and understand the essential doctrines of Christianity and to keep you from drifting from the fundamentals of the faith (Matt. 16:18, 19; Acts 14:15; 2 Cor. 3:6; Gal. 2:9; 1 Thess. 1:4; 1 Tim. 3:15-16; Heb. 3:12). (See *Difference-Making Prayer, Disentanglement-Prayer, Faith-Praying, Spiritual-Stability Praying*).

127 - Doubting-Prayer (Gen. 22:7)

Doubting the nature or ability of God is a sin against His character. However, there is a natural human doubt that comes from circumstances, such as Isaac who asked, "Where *is* the lamb for a burnt offering?" (Gen. 22:7). At that moment God provided Himself—Jehovah-Jireh—a ram caught in the thicket for a sacrifice. (See *Confident-Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, Faith-Praying, Victory Over Doubt Prayer*).

128 - Dream-Motivated Prayer (Hab. 2:2-4)

A dream may be (1) our recessive memory while we sleep; or (2) a supernatural message God gives usually through sleep; or (3) a special task or project one wants to do for God and the kingdom, as in the word *vision*. *Dream-Motivated Prayer* deals with point 3, that is, praying for a dream or vision that God has put in your heart. This involves yielding to carry out the dream/vision, asking God to help you accomplish the dream/vision, and preparing yourself spiritually to do what God has told you to do (Gen. 37:5, 9; 1 Sam. 3:1; Prov. 29:18; Hab. 2:1-4; Matt. 9:36 ff.; Rom. 10:13 ff.). (See *Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying, Vision-Praying*).

129 - Dream-Rejection Prayer (Gen. 37:5, 9)

Some experience rejection or hatred because of the dream/vision they have of serving God. Yet, we must be true to the task God has given us, even when the world hates us. We must pray for strength to carry out our dream/vision even in face of animosity (Gen. 37:5, 37:9; Pss. 38:19, 69:4; John 15:18-19; 1 John 2:11, 3:10-11). (See *Dream-Motivated Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering Prayer*).

130 - Dying-Prayer (Acts 7:59)

Each believer must travel through "the valley of the shadow of death" to reach heaven. Stephen gave us an example of one who commended himself to God in prayer as he took that journey (Pss. 16:10, 23:4; Luke 16:22; Acts 7:59; 2 Cor. 5:8; Heb. 12:1-2; Rev. 7:9 ff., 14:13). (See *Death-Facing Prayer, Death-Prayer*).

131 - Effective-Prayer (Phil. 4:6-7)

When we meet the conditions of prayer, we get the answers we seek. (See *Basic-Praying, Believing-Prayer, Conditional-Praying, Conditional-Prayer Promises, Trusting-Prayer*).

132 - Elijah Fast and Prayer (1 King 19:4-16)

The Elijah fast is a spiritual discipline that helps break negative mental and emotional habits that control our lives. Praying while following the Elijah fast will build self-discipline so that the person can control his or her life. During the Elijah fast, the power of God should control the whole person, spirit, soul, and body (see 1 Thess. 5:23). "So he (Elijah) arose, and ate and drank; and he went in the strength of that food forty days and forty nights as far as Horeb, the mountain of God" (1 Kings 19:8). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Forgetting the Past-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer*).

133 - Emergency-Prayer (Pss. 91:3-4)

Sometimes we call on God in an emergency or when we are in desperate trouble (Deut. 22:4; 2 Chron. 14:11, 20:4; Pss. 3:6, 20:2, 27:9, 33:20, 119:173, 121:1-2; Isa. 50:7; Acts 16:9; Heb. 4:16, 13:6). (See *Desperate-Prayer, Death-Facing Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer*).

134 - Employment-Prayer (Col. 3:17, 23)

We can ask God to use our secular job or employment (1) to take care of our financial needs; (2) to enable us to do a good job; and (3) to benefit those for whom we work. This is praying for strength and discipline, which is opposite of a lazy attitude. This also involves a prayer for God to be glorified in our employment (2 Thess. 3:11-12; 1 Tim. 5:13; 1 Peter 4:15). (See *Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Worker's-Prayer*).

135 - End-Times Prayer (Rev. 22:20)

This prayer recognizes that God has a grand plan for mankind that includes His people the Jews, the return of the Messiah, judgment of unsaved mankind, and the abode of the wicked in hell and the abode of God's people in heaven. This prayer also recognizes God's personal plan for each of His children as they prepare for Christ's return (Gen. 49:1; Deut. 4:30, 31:29; Dan. 2:28-29, 10:14; Acts 2:17; 1 Tim. 4:1-2; 2 Tim. 3:1). (See *Anticipating His Return, Coming-Kingdom Prayer, End-Times Understanding-Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer*).

136 - End-Times Understanding Prayer (Rev. 17:9)

This is a prayer to understand the events that surround the end times and a commitment to study diligently and completely the verses that explain the end times (Deut. 12:4, 8, 10; Hosea 14:9; Matt. 13:11, 24:15; 2 Tim. 2:15; Rev. 17:9). (See *Anticipating His Return, Coming Kingdom-Prayer, End-Times Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer*).

137 - Endurance-Prayer (2 Thess. 3:5)

As we pray for the "the patience of Christ" (2 Thess. 3:5) for ourselves and others, we are asking for endurance to continue in prayer until an answer comes from God (2 Thess. 3:5; 1 Peter 4:1). (See *All-Time Praying, Continuing in Prayer, Discipline-Prayer, Self-Control Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

138 - Endure-Hardship Prayer (2 Tim. 2:3)

We can pray this prayer when we face suffering and difficulties (1 Cor. 13:7; 2 Cor. 1:6; 2 Tim. 2:3, 4:5; Heb. 6:19, 20; 10:32, 11:27, 12:1-3; James 1:12). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

139 - Enemy-Strategy Praying (John 8:44)

The arguments between Jesus and the Jews were really battles between the kingdom of light and the kingdom of darkness. Jesus knew the religious Jews were agents of satan, and He knew their strategy to defeat Him. Therefore we must study Scriptures to understand satan's strategy against us, then follow God's principles to live godly and serve God successfully (Gen. 3:15; Exod. 17:9-13; Isa. 14:12-15; Matt. 4:1 ff., 12:24; Luke 10:18; John 13:2; 1 Peter 5:2; Rev. 2:10). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Warfare-Strategy Prayer*).

140 – Ephesians' Church-Prayer (Rev. 2:4-6)

We should intercede for lukewarm Christians so they will remember the love they had for Christ when first saved and then pray for their repentance and their commitment to

return to their first love (Matt. 24:12-13; Phil. 1:9, 3:13-16; 1 Thess. 4:9-10; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 6:4-10; James 2:2-5; Rev. 2:4-6). (See *Love-Abounding Prayer, Love-Growing Prayer, Love-Praying*).

141 - Escape-Prayer (Rev. 6:16-17)

This is the cry of unsaved people during the Tribulation to be relieved of torture for their sins. The wrath of the Tribulation is aimed at the unsaved and the physical world, while believers will be with Jesus in heaven. This is not a prayer for them, and this is not a prayer by God's people. This is a prayer by the unsaved left on earth after the rapture. (Pss. 76:7, 130:3-4; Isa. 13:6; Jer. 30:7; Joel 2:31; Zeph. 1:14; 2 Thess. 2:3 ff.; Rev. 6:16-17). (See *Coming-Kingdom Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

142 - Escaping-Danger Prayer (Acts 12:5)

There are many options when Christians face danger: (1) they can be killed, as was James (Acts 12:1); (2) they can be punished, as were Paul and Silas (Acts 16:23); or (3) they can be supernaturally delivered (Acts 5:19, 12:7). Since only God controls the moment of our death, we should (1) commit our safety to God; (2) yield ourselves to God's will; and (3) be faithful till death (Pss. 91:1-13; Luke 9:23; John 15:18-25; Acts 9:15-16, 12:5; Phil. 1:29; James 1:3, 12; 1 Peter 4:12-19). (See *Deliverance-Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

143 - Establishing Doctrine by Prayer (Titus 1:5)

When facing false doctrine, we must pray for leaders to be firm, for correction for those who hold false doctrine, for teaching of correct doctrine, and that salvation will be correctly understood (Acts 14:23, 15:36; 2 Tim. 2:2; Titus 1:5). (See *Doctrinal-Prayer, Disentanglement-Prayer, Spiritual-Stability Prayer*).

144 - Esther Fast and Prayer (Est. 4:16)

The Esther fast and prayer is a spiritual discipline for protection from the evil one. When the Jews faced a holocaust, Esther said, "Fast for me…My maids and I will fast likewise. And so I will go to the king…[and] *that* she found favor in his sight" (Est. 4:16; 5:2). We believe God loves us and can protect us, and that only God controls the day of our death. We enlist His protection in spiritual warfare against all opposing forces or the evil one who would attack and harm us (see 1 Peter 5:8). "*Is* this not the fast that I have chosen… The glory of the LORD shall be your rear guard" (Isa. 58:6, 8). (See *Death-Facing Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer, Warfare-Protection Prayer*).

145 - Evangelistic-Praying (Acts 4:31)

When you show someone the plan of salvation, then you pray that the unsaved person will come to salvation (see Luke 6:28; Acts 4:20). (See *Redemption-Prayer, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

146 - Everyman's-Prayer (Acts 16:13)

People from all religions pray, but that does not mean God listens or answers them. They pray because (1) there is a vacuum in their heart that needs God; (2) they face dangers or circumstances that are too big to handle by themselves; (3) it is natural for the human to pray to his Creator; (4) they pray out of fear; and (5) they face the termination of their life and death, and they want some type of continuation after death. Almost every atheist who denies God will pray when circumstances are threatening and they can do nothing to help themselves (Gen. 4:1-13, 20:17; 1 Kings 18:26; John 14:6; Acts 4:12, 16:13; Eph. 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 2:5). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Hypocritical-Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Unpardonable-Sin Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

147 - Exalt-Jesus Prayer (Phil. 2:11, 12)

Because the Father has raised Jesus from the dead and exalted Him above all principalities and power, we should exalt Jesus in our prayers and actions. We must magnify Jesus now daily in prayer because we will do it in eternity when we join every redeemed human and the angels in exalting Him (Phil. 2:11, 12). (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Worship Prayer, Worship-Jesus Prayer*).

148 - Expedient-Prayer (Est. 4:16)

An expedient-prayer is when we ask God to do something about a crisis that we've caused. When we pray to do the right thing, even though we don't feel like praying; we must do the expedient thing and pray. (See *Problem-Solving Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

149 - Ezra's Prayer and Fast for Guidance (Ezra 8:23)

The Ezra fast is a spiritual discipline that accompanies prayer when we ask God to solve a problem that faces us. After the 70 years of Babylonian captivity were over, Ezra attempted to lead a group of priests back to the Promised Land with expensive treasures to rebuild the temple. Ezra was afraid of being attacked and robbed on his way back home, "So we fasted and entreated our God for this, and He answered our prayer" (Ezra 8:23). "The silver and the gold and the articles were weighed in the house of our God...with the number *and* weight of everything. All the weight was written down at that time" (8:33, 34). (See *Guidance-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

150 - Face-Down Worship Prayer (Rev. 11:16)

In complete surrender of our outer and inner person we worship God as we fall on our faces before Him. Worship is giving God the worth-ship that is due to Him (Exod. 3:6; 1 Kings 19:13, Job 42:5-6; Rev. 4:4, 10; 5:8, 14; 7:11, 11:16, 19:4). (See *Crown-Casting Prayer, Posture in Prayer, Worship-Praise, Worship-Prayer*).

151 - Faith-Based Praying (Gal. 3:10)

Faith-based praying is coming to the Father because our faith makes us His family members. We don't come based on our keeping the law, because we can never perfectly keep the law; but "the just shall live by faith" (Gal. 3:11). We live and pray by faith (Gal. 3:11; Hab. 2:4; Rom. 1:17; Heb. 10:38). (See *Believing-Prayer, Convergence Faith-Praying, Faith-Praying*).

152 - Faith-Blessing Prayer (Heb. 11:6)

This is trusting God to give blessings to someone for whom you pray. We experience the inner confidence of knowing God will answer (see Matt. 17:20; Heb. 11:6, 20). (See *Faith-Praying* and various *Blessing* prayers).

153 - Faith-Eyes Praying (Matt. 21:21)

Because of God's love and power, He allows us to see through a tiny crack of reality, so that we see with God's eyes. Life is more than money, position, and getting ahead. Faith-eyes see God transforming us, helping us, supporting us, and using us. Faith-eyes see in the mirror where we are "transformed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18), and faith-eyes see us in heaven casting our crowns at His feet in ultimate worship (Rom. 8:28, 29; 12:2, 13:14; Gal. 6:15; Eph. 4:22; Col. 3:10; 2 Peter 1:5-9). (See *Faith-Based Prayer, Faith-Blessing Prayer, Faith-Praying*).

154 - Faithfulness-Praying (1 Thess. 5:24)

We remain effective when we continue in prayer because the Lord works in us to motivate us to pray or continue praying. Jesus, our High Priest (Heb. 7:24-25), presents our prayers to the Father, and the Holy Spirit, our Intercessor (Rom. 8:26, 27) prays through us and presents our petitions to the Father for us (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 8:26, 27; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 7:24, 25; Jude 20). (See *Alert-Prayer, All-Time Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

155 - Faithful-Request Prayer (Heb. 3:2)

This is a prayer to be faithful to God in spite of our old nature that pulls us away from God and outward temptations to make us stumble. We should be faithful because of biblical

examples and because of God's call to us (1 Thess. 3:24), and the indwelling strength of Christ. Therefore we ask God to help us remain faithful (Matt. 25:21; John 15:10, 17:4; 1 Cor. 4:2; 1 Tim. 1:12; Heb. 3:2). (*All Types of Faith Prayer, Faith-Praying, Persistent Prayer*).

156 - Faith-Praying (Heb. 11:6)

Faith-Praying is interceding with the assurance that we will receive the things for which we ask. *Faith Praying* is intercession based on God Himself, causing us to believe we will receive our request because we meet the requirements mentioned in the Bible. Often this confidence emerges as a result of faith. "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him,* for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6; James 5:17). (See *Faith-Based Praying, Faith-Validated Prayer, Possibility-Praying*).

157 - Faith-Relationship Praying (Gal. 3:7)

We can come boldly to the Father because of our new family relationship with Him through Jesus Christ. Just as we were saved by faith, now we pray by faith knowing He will hear and answer us (Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 3:7; Eph. 3:6; Titus 3:7; Heb. 1:14, 6:17; James 2:5; 1 Peter 1:4). (See *Assurance-Praying, Confident-Prayer, Faith-Praying, Surety-Praying*).

158 - Faith-Validated Prayer (James 2:18)

We can ask God to open up doors of service and use us as we serve Him, because the quality of our service validates the quality of our faith. As we actively serve God, we pray for God to make our faith grow stronger (Matt. 7:17-20; Rom. 8:1; 2 Cor. 5:17; Eph. 2:8-10; Titus 2:7; James 2:18). (See *Continuing Prayer, Confident-Praying, Faith-Praying, Persistent-Praying, Surety-Praying*).

159 - False-Prayer (Matt. 7:21-23)

This is not a reference to born-again believers who have their prayers blocked for various reasons. False prayers are offered by nonbelievers who may be a member of a cult or a non-Christian religion. The Father will receive all who come through Christ (John 6:37) and reject those who reject Christ (1 Kings 18; John 6:37, 14:4; Acts 4:12). (See *Everyman's-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Pretend-Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Unsaved-Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

160 - Family-Heritage Prayer (Matt. 1:1-17)

We are the product of our parents, receiving from them their strengths and weaknesses, their assets and liabilities. We have several choices: (1) fight their influence; (2) learn and be like them (for evil or good); (3) reject their limitations and problems; (4) determine to do

better; or (5) stand on their shoulders and reach much higher (Gen. 4:1-5, 12:2-3, 25:19-23; Exod. 2:1-3; Pss. 127:1-5; Phil. 3:4-6; 2 Tim. 1:5, 3:14-15). (See *Aged-Prayer, Blessing Children-Prayer, Children of Promise-Prayer, Father's Cry-Prayer, Spouse-Inspired Prayer*).

161 - Fasting-Prayer (Matt. 6:16-19)

Fasting alone will not get answers from God. We must fast and pray. Jesus said, "This kind does not go out except by prayer and fasting" (Matt. 17:21). There is more than one way to fast: (1) normal fast of water or juice but no solid foods; (2) the Absolute fast, no liquids or food; (3) the partial or Daniel fast, usually vegetables only; and (4) the supernatural fast, no water or food for 40 days, for example Moses (Exod. 34:28). However if a person doesn't drink for 7 days, they will normally die. If you think you're being led to do this fast, "Test the spirits" (1 John 4:1); you're probably wrong (Lev. 16:29; Isa. 58:6-8; Joel 2:12-14; Matt. 17:21; Acts 13:2, 3). (See *Esther Fast and Prayer, Daniel Fast and Prayer, Disciple Fast and Prayer, Elijah Fast and Prayer, Ezra Fast and Prayer, John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer, Saint Paul Fast and Prayer, Samuel Fast and Prayer, Widow Fast and Prayer;* also see the book *Fasting for Spiritual Breakthrough,* by Elmer Towns (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1996).

162 - Father-Cry Prayer (Gal. 4:5)

This is an expression of a new child of God when made a member of God's family. Now His children can call Him Father and he can intercede as a child to a loving Father. Because God is their Father, believers are entitled to all the blessings of being His child (Gal. 4:5, 3:26; John 1:12; Rom. 3:23, 8:14-17, 9:4; Eph. 1:5). (See *Fellowship with God Praying, Intimacy-Prayer*).

163 - Fear of God-Praying (Heb. 5:7)

We know God is all-powerful to accomplish His will and that He will judge those who rebel or sin against Him. Therefore we pray with fear, "Your will be done in our lives," knowing God will hear and accomplish that prayer (Prov. 3:5-6; Matt. 26:39, 42; John 12:27-28; Heb. 5:7). (See *Desperate Praying, Fear Praying, Frightful Praying, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

164 - Fear-Motivated Prayer (Pss. 56:3)

We can ask for God's protection and for His presence to be with us when we are scared or fearful. (See *Fear of God-Praying, Fear-Praying, Frightful-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

165 - Fear-Praying (Rev. 14:7)

We come to God because of our negative feelings of (1) fear, because God could condemn us to hell; (2) reverential fear, because God is our King and the Ruler of all things; and

(3) awe, because we are overwhelmed by the greatness of His creative power and universe (Gen. 22:12; Pss. 36:1, 89:7; Eccl. 12:13-14; Rev. 14:7). (See *Anxious Praying, Desperate Praying, Fear Praying, Frightful Praying*).

166 - Fellowship-Praying (1 John 1:3)

This is talking with God as you walk in the light (1 John 1:7) and fellowshiping with God because all your sins are forgiven (1 John 1:8-10). This is the highest form of relationship prayer (Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 1:9; Eph. 3:9; Phil. 1:5, 3:10; 1 John 1:3, 6-7). (See *Communion Prayer, Intimacy-Prayer, Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Oneness Prayer*).

167 - Filling of the Spirit-Prayer (Eph. 5:18)

When we yield everything to God and ask to be filled with the Holy Spirit, He comes into our lives and controls our lives. The more we yield to the Holy Spirit, the more He controls. The filling of the Spirit is not getting more of God, but allowing God to get more of us (Eph. 5:18). (See *Holy Spirit Praying, Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Spiritual-Strength Prayer*).

168 - First Prayer Each Day (Luke 11:1-2)

Years ago I began praying the Lord's Prayer when I first awakened and before I got out of bed. That's because the Lord's Prayer contains in seed truths all we need to pray. So I pray this prayer first thing every day. "Now it came to pass, as He was praying in a certain place, when He ceased, *that* one of His disciples said to Him, 'Lord, teach us to pray...'" (Luke 11:1). So He said to them, "When you pray, say: 'Our Father in heaven, Hallowed be Your name. Your kingdom come. Your will be done on earth as *it is* in heaven...'" (Luke 11:1-2). (See *Daily-Prayer, Lord's-Prayer, Morning Prayer*).

169 - Fleece-Prayer (Judg. 6:36-40)

Fleece-Prayer is putting conditions on our requests to God so that He answers by telling us what to do or where to go, e.g., "Lord, if You give me a car, I'll know You want me to go...." The servant of Abraham put a condition on finding the right girl for Isaac to marry (Gen. 24:12-14). Gideon prayed for a fleece of wool to be wet with dew overnight, and the floor dry. God answered. The next night Gideon prayed the opposite and God answered (Judg. 6:36-40). However today, many say a Christian should not use a symbolic fleece when praying because (1) we should find God's will in Scripture, not in circumstances; (2) using a fleece is going by sight, not faith (2 Cor. 5:7); and (3) many Christians say a fleece is like good luck or bad luck. A Christian should make a decision based on the Bible, not circumstances. (See *Circumstantial Prayer, Conditional-Prayer Promise, Problem-Solving Prayer, Will of God-Prayer*).

170 - Food-Provision Praise (Pss. 65:9-11)

God has created us with bodies that need food/fuel for energy to grow and work. Without the provision of sun, rain, and soil, our bodies wouldn't grow. So we must thank God for His provision of food for our health and strength. We must praise God for His plan for our physical life on earth (Gen. 1, 2:9; Pss. 65:9-11, 136:25; Prov. 6:8; Matt. 6:11; 1 Tim. 6:8). (See *Meal Thanksgiving, Blessing-Prayer, Provision of Food Praise, Strength and Nourishment-Prayer*).

171 - Fool-Defensive Prayer (Prov. 1:7)

The person called a fool is a cross between two types of contemporary people. First, the fool is dumb, which is like a person that is ignorant and does not know what to do, or how to do things, or why things are done right. Most dumb people can learn and become smart, but a fool probably won't learn. Second, the fool is selfish, wanting attention and physical comfort. He is selfish to the point of being obnoxious, but he is not willing to take the proper steps to properly get what he desperately wants in life. He is blind to his selfish addiction, and what keeps him from his life's goal. A fool may be a good person whom everyone likes, when in actuality people only tolerate him, or use him. They are fools because they fool themselves. We should pray to keep from being a fool, or being harmed by fools (Prov. 1:7, 10:14, 18; 12:16, 23; 13:19, 14:1, 8; 15:1-2, 17:16, 20:3, 26:4). (See *Worker's-Prayer*).

172 - Forgetting the Past-Prayer (Phil. 3:10-14)

In this prayer we ask God to erase from our memory any negative or sinful thought that would harm our present walk with Christ, not looking at any past accomplishments or successes as a substitute for our present walk with Christ. (See *Elijah Fast and Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer, Future-Blessing Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

173 - Forgiveness-Prayer (2 Cor. 2:10)

Forgiveness is the foundation of Christianity. We should forgive others because Christ has forgiven us. If not, we can fall into a "root" of bitterness (Heb. 12:15) that ruins our character. We must not get revenge (e.g., "an eye for an eye") but forgive them, even as Christ forgave those who crucified Him. Otherwise, we destroy our own character with a spirit of revenge or we harbor a grudge. We don't forgive them for their sake, we do it for our sake (Matt. 6:15, 18:21-22; Mark 11:25; Rom. 12:8, 17-21; 2 Cor. 2:7-10; Col. 3:13). (See *Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Propitiation-Intercession Prayer*).

174 - Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer (Luke 11:4)

When we forgive our offender for his offence, it means God transforms our heart. We no longer harbor vengeance, retaliation, or bitterness. Obviously this doesn't relate to our

salvation because "the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin" (1 John 1:7). But the basic rule of Christian growth is: give to get. We must scatter to gain, and we must die to live. So we must forgive to gain intimacy with God as a forgiven one. When we forgive, we no longer hide hatred in our heart, so we can now know God and draw near to Him (Gen. 50:17; Exod. 10:17; Josh 24:19; 1 Sam. 25:28; 2 Chron. 6:21; Matt. 6:12; Mark 11:25-26; 2 Cor. 2:10). (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Crucifixion-Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer, Transformation-Prayer*).

175 - Forsaken-Prayer (Pss. 42:9)

When we've sinned or gotten out of the will of God, we feel forsaken or separated from God. God doesn't forsake us, He forsakes our sin and turns His back on our iniquities. The *Prayer of the Forsaken* includes repentance, confessing sin, asking for forgiveness and earnestly seeking God. We search for God in prayer when we think He is not hearing our petitions. (See *Abandonment Prayer, Affliction-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer*).

176 - Frailty-Confession Prayer (Pss. 90:12)

This is a prayer that recognizes that our life is tenuous and there is a delicate balance between living and dying (Deut. 32:29; Pss. 39:4; Eccl. 9:10; Eph. 5:16, 17). (See *Honest-Prayer, True-Heart Praying*).

177 - Freedom-Enjoyment Prayer (John 10:10)

Jesus has permitted us to enter salvation's door to have life more abundantly, but it doesn't come automatically. First, we must yield ourselves to God in prayer. Second, freedom comes from Christ as we learn about Him in Scripture (John 8:32). Third, we must be filled with the Holy Spirit (John 7:37-38) (Pss. 16:11, 23:6, 30:5, 126:5, 6; Isa. 12:3; John 15:11; 1 Peter 4:13). (See various *Victory* prayers).

178 - Frightful-Prayer (Mark 14:36)

If Jesus prayed to His heavenly Father when facing danger, why should we do otherwise? We must go to the Lord when we are scared. He can heal, protect, guide, and save us. He can give us safety and provision and He can make us laugh (Gen. 17:17). "As a father pities *his* children, *so* the LORD pities those who fear Him" (Pss. 103:13). (Num. 11:12; Deut. 8:5; Pss. 103:13; Prov. 3:12; Isa. 63:15, 16; Matt. 6:9; Heb. 12:5, 11). (See *Abandonment Prayer, Affliction-Prayer, Fear Praying, Forsaken-Prayer*).

179 - Fruitful-Prayer (Matt. 13:8)

Jesus told the parable of the sower who planted seed on good soil that produced fruit. When we pray to be fruitful, notice the following conditions: (1) it takes human effort of planting; (2) we must work smart in the right place with the right tools; (3) we must use

the right seeds; (4) we must have the right motivation; and (5) we must be filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 8:15; John 15:8; Rom. 7:18; Gal. 5:22-23; Phil. 1:11). (See *Fruit-Producing Prayer, Reward-Prayer*).

180 - Fruit-Producing Prayer (Gal. 5:22-23)

This is asking God to produce more Christian character in our lives, and more fruit in our Christian service (Phil. 1:11). (See *Fruitful-Prayer, Reward-Prayer, Supernatural-Results Prayer*).

181 - Future-Blessing Prayer (Heb. 11:21)

Just as Jacob blessed his children, knowing God could use them after he died, so we must by faith bless our children, trusting God to give His blessings after we are gone (Gen. 48:5, 22; 47:31, 50:24-25; Josh. 24:32; Heb. 11:21). (See *Blessing a Person Prayer, Blessing Prayer, Delayed Answer-Prayer, Family-Heritage Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return*).

182 - Geographical-Praying (Matt. 6:6)

There are some places where we seem to pray best, perhaps because we are in the habit of going there, or we are comfortable there, or it is the most convenient for our schedule. Perhaps the greatest reason is because we've met God at this place, or is where we've received great answers to prayer in the past. Jesus describes going to a "prayer closet" or "inner room" (modern translation). This place is usually private, quiet, and where we'll not be distracted (Pss. 87:1-3; Matt. 6:6; Luke 22:39). (See *Comfortable Place to Pray, Geographical-Renewal Praying, Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Prayer-Journey Prayer, Prayer-Walking*).

183 - Geographical-Renewal Praying (Pss. 121:1, 2)

Some locations have been imprinted on our hearts because of the spiritual lessons we experienced there. These may be places where we were (1) saved; (2) called to ministry; (3) got engaged; or (4) made a significant decision for Christ (Pss. 2:6, 68:15, 16; 78:68, 87:1; Jer. 3:23). (See *Comfortable Place to Pray, Geographical-Praying, Prayer-Journey, Prayer-Walking*).

184 - Gifts with Prayer (2 Cor. 9:7)

An unexpected gift makes the receiver happy and binds together the giver and receiver. Thus we pray for those receiving our gifts to look favorably on us. When giving presents, we should ask God to teach us how to bless people and be kind to them. (See various *Blessing* prayers).

185 - Giving Ourselves to God by Prayer (Rom. 12:1)

Recognizing that God has given us everything, we give ourselves back to Him. And with that dedication, we give the ownership of everything we have to God, realizing He allows

us to use what belongings we have for His glory. (See *Burden-Prayer, Commitment-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

186 - Goal-Striving Prayer (Phil. 3:10-14)

As we attempt to live daily for Jesus Christ, we should strive daily to know Him better, and to fulfill His plan in our life in a more perfect way (Phil. 3:10-14). (See *Fruitful-Prayer, Race-Preparation Prayer, Running Reward-Prayer, Running a Good Race Prayer*).

187 - God's Prosperity-Prayer (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23)

God's prosperity on us follows our commitment to do right, and to seek His presence with us. Then God will prosper the task we do and the people for whom we work (Gen. 39:2, 3, 21, 23; Pss. 1:3, 47:7, 11; 91:15; Rom. 8:31). (See *Fruit-Producing Prayer, Fruitful-Prayer, Reward-Prayer*).

188 - God-Glorifying Prayer (Pss. 96:8)

When we give glory to God, we do not make Him greater, or more powerful, or more glorious. God cannot change; so when we glorify God, we make Him greater in our perception. Perhaps this is what Paul meant when he explained, "But we all...are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory" (2 Cor. 3:18). And if we truly recognize God, we give Him the control of our life. That is what God wants and He is glorified in our sacrifice (Exod. 34:5, 9; Pss. 96:8, 108:3, 5; 111:9, 148:13-14; Rev. 15:4). (See various *Worship* prayers, also see various *Praise* prayers).

189 - God-Haters' Prayer (Pss. 2:2, 3)

The unsaved refuse to live for God and obey Him. They express their refusal in many negative ways, and ultimately will not believe in God nor follow His ways. They want to control their own lives for their own purposes (Pss. 2:2, 3; Matt. 2:16; Luke 13:31; Acts 12:1). (See *Atheist-Prayer, Everyman's-Prayer, False-Prayer, Unpardonable-Sin Prayer, Unsaved-Prayer*).

190 - God-Hunger Prayer (Matt. 5:6)

When we have spiritual hunger, we don't have to pray in a fancy way; all we have to do is call out for God to fill us when we are empty. Therefore having a genuine hunger for God is the beginning of prayer. Our genuine *desire* to know God is an actual prayer, and our words begin to fulfill our hunger for God. Genuine prayer is *God-Hunger Prayer* (Pss. 107:5, 9; 146:7; Prov. 6:30; Isa. 58:7; Luke 1:53; Phil. 4:12). (See *Hunger-Prayer, Intimacy-Prayer, Searching for God in Prayer, Thirsty Prayer, Well-Digging Prayer,*).

191 - God-Pleasing Prayer (Heb. 11:5)

We should attempt to please God in all we think, say, and do. The desire of our heart should be to obey God, and do the things that satisfy Him or delight Him (Rom. 8:8; 1 Cor. 1:27; 1 Thess. 2:4; Heb. 11:5, 13:16; 1 John 3:22). (See *Jesus First-Prayer, God-Glorifying Prayer* and various *Worship* prayers).

192 - God-Recognition Prayer (Eph. 3:20-21)

In praising God we recognize Him as the source of all honor and power. Our praise doesn't add to God's honor and power, for in His omnipotence God has all honor and power. But our praise makes us more Christ-like (Rom. 16:25, 27; Eph. 3:21; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 6:16; Jude 25; Rev. 1:6, 4:11, 7:12). (See *Jesus-First Prayer, God-Glorifying Prayer* and see various *Worship* prayers).

193 - Goodness of God Proclaimed-Prayer (Pss. 92:15)

The servants of God should proclaim in prayer that He is good (in nature) and that He is good to His people (in actions) (Exod. 34:6-7; Deut. 30:5; Pss. 92:15; Mark 10:18). (See *Blessing the Lord in Worship, God-Glorifying Prayer,* and various *Worship* prayers).

194 - Good-Things Praying (Heb. 13:21)

This prayer means getting our hearts ready to receive the good things God promises. But this prayer also asks for good things, and then thanks God for them when they come (2 Cor. 9:8; Eph. 2:10; Phil. 1:11; 2 Thess. 2:17; 1 Tim. 5:10; Heb. 13:21; James 1:17). (See *All Kinds of Faith Praying, Asking-Prayer, Believing-Prayer, Natural-Bless Prayer*).

195 - Good-Works Praying (John 6:28, 29)

Good-Works Praying is asking God to help us be effective in Christian service. It is asking God to accomplish "good works" through us because we cannot do good works in ourselves to please God (Gen. 15:7; John 3:36; Rom. 3:28, 10:9, 10, 17; Heb. 11:6; James 2:17, 20; 1 John 3:23). (See *Basic-Praying, Effective-Prayer, Faithful-Request Prayer, Natural-Bless Prayer*).

196 - Government Leaders-Intercession (1 Tim. 2:1 ff.)

We should pray for our government leaders so we can lead a peaceful life, enjoy freedom to worship and share our faith with the unsaved (Pss. 20:1, 72:1; Rom. 13:1; 1 Peter 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:1, 2). (See *Peaceful-Living Prayer*).

197 - Gratitude for Martyred Saints-Prayer (Rev. 14:13)

Martyrs are those who faithfully follow the Lord right up to their death. Then they rest from their labor, and the influence of their lives continues (Matt. 25:21; 1 Cor. 15:58; 1 Thess. 4:16-18; 2 Thess. 1:6-7; Heb. 12:1; Rev. 14:13). (See *Death-Facing Prayer Thanksgiving-Prayer*).

198 - Gratitude-Prayer (Phil. 4:6)

Praying "with thanksgiving" means showing appreciation for the positive contribution to our lives by family, friends, and business associates. Also, it is offering praise to God for all the positive things He has done for us. (See *Deliverance-Thanksgiving Prayer,* and various *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* prayers).

199 - Great Commission-Prayer (Luke 24:49)

In this prayer we ask God to use missionaries and evangelistic methods to help win people in all nations to Christ through the preaching of the gospel. We must pray, targeting un-reached tribes worldwide, so that the gospel can be carried to the ends of the earth. (See *Evangelistic-Praying*, *Mountain-Moving Prayer, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

200 - Greater-Prayer (2 Cor. 9:6)

Great prayers lead to great dreams or vision for what God can do, and great prayers lead to greater faith and trust in God to accomplish greater results. If we pray with great faith, we will probably make greater plans, recruit a greater work force to serve God, and make a greater investment of our time, talent, and treasures for God's glory (Pss. 126:5-6; Prov. 11:24, 22:9; Eccl. 11:1, 6; Isa. 55:1; Luke 6:36-38; Gal. 6:7-9; Heb. 6:10). (See *Asking-Prayer, Dream-Motivated Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying, Triumphant-Prayer, Unlimited Prayer in Christ*).

201 - Greater-Works Prayer (John 14:12)

Winning souls to Christ is a much greater work than the physical miracles Jesus did for people. Prayer can help us do these greater works by (1) praying for a burden to be a soul winner; (2) praying for specific people to get saved; and (3) praying for the filling of the Holy Spirit to be used by God (Prov. 11:30; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 28:19; John 4:7; Acts 8:30). (See *Asking-Prayer, Fruitful-Prayer, Greater-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying, Triumphant-Prayer*).

202 – Grief Prayer (Eph. 4:30)

We should rid ourselves of sin and evil thoughts so we don't grieve the Holy Spirit who wants us to live holy lives (Gen. 6:6; 1 Chron. 4:10; Eph. 4:30). (See *Confronting Evil*

Praying, Deliverance-Prayer, Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Holy-Protection Prayer, Holy-Spirit Prayer, Self-Denying Prayer, Separation Prayer, Sin-Stopping Prayer).

203 - Growth in Christ-Prayer (Col. 2:8)

We grow in Christ when we vow to live as commanded in Scripture, and we ask God to give us power to do it. (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Growth Prayer*).

204 - Growth-Prayer (Eph. 4:12-16)

This prayer is asking God to help us grow in character and spiritual abilities so we can serve Him acceptably (Prov. 11:30; Eph. 4:12-16; 1 Tim. 3:1; Titus 3:8). (See *Discipline-Prayer, Growth in Christ-Prayer, Spiritual Growth-Prayer*).

205 - Guard Your Heart-Prayer (Phil. 4:6-7)

We should ask God (1) to help guard our hearts from losing the peace of God that is promised to us as believers; and (2) to keep us from sin. (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Old-Nature Praying, Protection-Prayer, Spiritual Protection Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer*).

206 - Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer (2 Tim. 1:14)

We must use all our strength and wisdom to (1) defeat those who attack God's Word; (2) pray that God can use us to defend the truth; and (3) remove all barriers that hold back the influence of God's Word (2 Tim. 1:14, 3:14; Phil. 1:27; 1 Thess. 5:21; Titus 1:9; Heb. 3:6; Jude 3; Rev. 2:25, 3:3, 11). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Spiritual Protection-Prayer*).

207 - Guidance-Prayer (Rom. 12: 1, 2)

Most believers who pray for guidance, ask God to do something miraculous. But as we pray for guidance, we should apply these principles God has given us to find His guidance in our life for normal decisions: (1) follow the general principles found in Scripture (we don't need to pray whether we should refrain from the negatives found in the Ten Commands, or do the positive commands found in the New Testament); (2) find guidance by talking with Christian counselors (Prov. 11:14); (3) apply the spiritual gifts God has given us to find His purpose for our life; (4) yield to God to find His will; (5) prayer may guide us into His will; (6) apply common sense, for God seldom goes against common sense; (7) find God's guidance by properly interpreting circumstances. Beyond all these principles, God may guide you by "internal leading" (Rom. 8:14). (See *Dedication-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer, Spirit-Helped Prayer, Will of God Prayer*).

208 - Guilt-Motivation Prayer (Col. 3:12-13)

God has forgiven all sin of His children by the blood of Jesus Christ (1 John 1:7), but many Christians still feel guilty over their sins. They continually confess their sins (1 John 1:9), they constantly seek to be cleansed from sin and to be restored to fellowship with God. However, they must not be controlled by the guilt of their sins, they must walk as "forgiven sinners" (Gen. 50:15-17; Matt. 6:12, 14-15; 18:35; Eph. 4:32; Col. 3:12-13). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Deceitful-Heart Prayer, Old-Nature Praying,* and various *Victory* prayers).

209 - Guilty-Blocking Prayer (1 John 3:21)

Sometimes we let our *experiential guilt* block our confidence to pray. So we must remember that we stand perfect before God in justification, and that our non-experiential *legal guilt* has been abolished by Jesus Christ. Then we can plead the blood of Christ and pray confidently (Job 22:26; Pss. 7:3-4, 101:2; 1 Cor. 4:4; 2 Cor. 1:12; 1 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 4:16; 10:22; 1 John 3:21). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Transformation-Prayer*, and various *Victory* prayers).

210 - Habit-Prayer (Acts 3:1)

The word "habit" comes from the same type of clothes worn by a Roman Catholic nun each day. Therefore a habit is something done automatically, without thought or choice. A good habit means we automatically pray in a certain way, at a certain time on a regular basis. Because prayer is good, some prayer habits are good when they cause us to do what is right. But a prayer habit can be bad when we do it with no thought, no emotions, and no meaning (1 Kings 18:26; Dan. 6:10; Matt. 6:7; Acts 3:1; James 4:3). (See *Burden-Prayer, Definition of Prayer, First Prayer Each Day*).

211 - Hallelujah-Praise Prayer (Rev. 19:1)

This is the response of our hearts when we begin worshiping God. This is a way of calling others to join with us in our joy of giving worship, thanksgiving, praise, and honor to God (Pss. 106:1, 111:1, 115:18, 146:1, 148:1, 149:1, 150:1; Rev. 19:1, 3). (See various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

212 - Happiness Inspired by Prayer (Matt. 5:3-8)

Happiness or fun by the world's standard is an elusive dream that is seldom realized. But true happiness is the fruit of biblical character and is found on the road to duty. Traditionally Matthew 5:3-13 is called "The Beatitudes," that is, the blessings a person receives who is totally dedicated to God. Many translate the word "blessed" as "happy," that is, "Happy *are* the meek, for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). (Gen. 1:22, 12:2, 3; 49:28;

Num. 6:23-27; Pss. 1:1-3, 32:2, 103:1; Matt. 14:14; Mark 10:16; Acts 20:35). (See *Happy Prayer, Rejoicing in Prayer* and various *Bless* prayers).

213 - Happy-Prayer (John 20:20)

We are emotional beings, so we should show the total range of our emotions to God when we pray, that is, from laughter to tears. If we don't show the depth of our emotions, then we're not honest in prayer. Let's not be so "outwardly religious" that we can't be ourselves when talking to God (Gen. 17:17; Pss. 126:2; Isa. 25:8, 9; Matt. 28:8; Luke 24:41; John 20:20; 1 John 1:3). (See *Happiness-Inspired Prayer, Rejoicing in Prayer, Weeping Prayer*).

214 - Healing-Prayer (James 5:15)

God has many different ways to heal us of our sicknesses. Sometimes God heals directly by His power because of prayer. Other times He heals through the use of medicine, surgery, exercise, drugs, or other forms of therapy. We can pray for God to heal directly or for God to use these means for healing. However, not everyone we pray for will be healed. Sometimes God has other purposes for sickness, but in all things we should glorify God. Healing begins when we meet the following conditions: (1) call for church elders to pray; (2) anoint with oil; (3) confess sins to get right with God; and (4) exercise believing faith (Matt. 17:20-21; Mark 11:22-26; 1 Cor. 12:28-30; James 5:15; 1 John 5:14-18). (See *Asking-Prayer, The Daniel Fast, Sick Person's Prayer, Supernatural-Prayer*).

215 - Heaven's-Prayer (1 Thess. 4:13, 14)

Because God will not forget any of His children in the rapture, we should thank God for all those who will go to be with Christ (John 11:24-25; 1 Cor. 15:12-19, 29; 1 Thess. 4:13, 14; Heb. 10:24-25). (See various *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* prayers).

216 - Heavy-Prayer (Matt. 11:28:30)

A heavy load is a word that stands for the various heavy trials, strains, or problems of life. A heavy load can be social, emotional, financial, spiritual, or physical. What is physically "heavy" to an older person may be considered "light" to a 20-year-old youth. In reverse, the young may be overwhelmed with a problem, but it is not heavy to the old because they have learned with experience to handle that problem. Jesus is saying that no matter what our heavy burden is, He will help us through it. (See *Burden-Prayer, Help-Prayer, Protection-Prayer*).

217 - Hedge-Protection Prayer (Job 1:10)

When we face temptations and trials, we should pray for God's protective "hedge" to keep us from falling into sin or physical danger. God answers our request for protection by putting a "hedge" around us to protect us. "Have You not made a hedge around him?" (Job

1:10). "Take heed that you do not despise one of these little ones, for I say to you that in heaven their angels always see the face of My Father who is in heaven" (Job 1:10, 3:22; Matt. 18:10, that is, guardian angel; 1 Cor. 10:13; Eph. 6:11, 12; Heb. 12:1, 2; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:6, 7; 1 John 4:4). (See *Deliverance Prayer, Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Protection Prayer, Triumphant Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

218 - Help the Oppressed by Prayer (Pss. 10:8-9)

The servants of God will see evil in the world, and will pray against it. They will see the needy oppressed, and they will help them and pray for them. Those without compassion for the oppressed don't share the heart of God (Exod. 3:9; Lev. 25:14; Pss. 10:8-9, 17:9; Prov. 22:22). (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Others-Prayer, Servanthood-Praying, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

219 - Help-Prayer (Pss. 108:12, 13)

When we face big or little problems, we can pray, and God will help us because (1) He has instructed us to call on Him; (2) He has a history of helping His people; (3) His nature of constant love and mercy shows He wants to help; and (4) He has designed a world in which He helps His people (Pss. 10:14, 12:1, 54:4, 108:12-13; Heb. 4:16, 13:6). (See *Burden-Prayer, Heavy-Prayer*).

220 - Heresy-Condemning Prayer (2 Peter 2:6)

This is a prayer for God to remove spiritual blindness and cause us to see true doctrine through the eyes of the Holy Spirit. This is also a prayer to keep us from false teaching (Deut. 13:1-3; Col. 2:8, 18; 2 Thess. 2:2, 3, 12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1-9; Titus 1:11; 2 Peter 2:6; 1 John 2:18; Jude 18; Rev. 2:9). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Disentanglement-Prayer*).

221 - Hidden Answers-Prayer (Rom. 11:33-36)

God is El Olam, the Everlasting God. Olam means secret or hidden, so God who knows all things keeps some things hidden from us for our good. Olam also means the unknown mystery of successive ages, that is, God is everlasting. Some answers are hidden from us and our prayers (Gen. 21:33; 2 Kings 4:27; Pss. 10:1, 90:2; Matt. 13:11; Eph. 1:9-11; 3:2-6). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Insight Prayer, Wait-Prayer*).

222 - Hindrances to Prayer (See Blocked-Prayer, and Various "No" Answers to Prayer).

223 - Holiness-Prayer (1 Peter 1:16)

Since holiness is commanded of all believers, we should pray: (1) for a desire to be separate from sin; (2) for wisdom to recognize and separate ourselves from sin; (3) for strength to overcome temptation and sin; and (4) for our life to be well pleasing to God (Lev. 11:44; Matt.

5:20; 1 Peter 1:16). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Crucifixion-Prayer, Self-Denying-Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer, Purity-Praying, Separation-Prayer*).

224 - Holy Spirit-Praying (Jude 20)

When we are filled with the Holy Spirit to pray effectively, we enter the Holy Spirit as He enters us, then we present our requests to the Father. When we yield to the Holy Spirit in prayer, we pray with more confidence, more joy, and more assurance. When we pray in the Spirit, we pour out our feelings to God through the words that the Holy Spirit gives us. When we pray in the Spirit, our minds don't drift into fuzzy ideas or become cluttered with a moist fog so that we can't think straight. When the Holy Spirit fills us, He will use the Scriptures we already know to give us more insight into the mind of God. When we pray in the Spirit, our human spirit and the divine Holy Spirit work together as one. Praying in the Spirit means having a relationship with God by remembering that the Holy Spirit dwells within us when we completely yield ourselves to God. "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit" (Jude 1:20) (Zech. 4:6, 12:10; John 7:37-39; Rom. 8:14-16, 26-27; 1 Cor. 14:15; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 6:18; 1 Thess. 4:8; Jude 20). (See *Filling of the Spirit Prayer, Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Spiritual Strength Prayer*).

225 - Honest-Prayer (Pss. 17:4-5)

Honest praying is coming to God sincerely and without anything hidden from Him. It doesn't mean we are sinless, but we can be blameless before God. We can pray honestly from an honest heart (Pss. 17:4-5; Acts 6:3; Rom. 12:17, 13:13; 2 Cor. 8:21; Phil. 4:8; 1 Thess. 4:12; Heb. 13:18; 1 Peter 2:12). (See *Frailty-Confession Praying, Integrity-Praying, True Heart Praying*).

226 - Hope-Inspired Prayer (Titus 1:2)

Hope is one of the motivating forces for all we are and do. Hope motivates us to daily gratitude and service. Hope takes away discouragement and defeat. Hope is our basis for daily victory and the basis for looking beyond the grave to life with Christ after death (John 5:39; Rom. 5:2-4; Col. 1:27; 1 Thess. 5:8; Titus 1:2, 2:13, 3:7; 1 Peter 1:3, 4; Jude 21). (See *Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Confident-Praying, Wait-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

227 - Hope-Rejoicing Prayer (Heb. 6:19)

Hope gives us assurance that we will go to heaven when we die. Why? Because God cannot lie (6:18) and He promised us eternal life. Also, we have Christ living in our hearts, and since Christ is already in heaven, He guarantees that we will be there with Him when

we die (Eph. 4:4; Phil. 1:20; Col. 1:23, 27; 1 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 6:19, 12:1-2). (See *Assurance-Prayer, Confident-Praying, Rejoicing for Others-Prayer*).

228 - Humility-Prayer (James 4:10)

The ego dies hard because it wants attention. The self also avoids crucifixion because it wants to be in first place. But God's way up is to go down. God's way to win is to surrender. God's way of humility is to go to the end of the line, that is, Jesus first, others second, self last. When we yield ourselves and our selfish ambitions to God, then we can say with Paul, "Not I, but Christ" (Gal. 2:20). We then ask God to reveal the hidden selfish desires in our prayers. The prayer to be humble is by crucifying self, and letting Christ sit on the throne of our heart to direct us in all we do (Pss. 35:13; Prov. 15:33; Matt. 11:11; Luke 14:11, 18:14; Eph. 4:1-3; Phil. 2:3; James 4:10; 1 Peter 5:6). (See *Christ-Indwelling Prayer, Self-Denying Prayer, Self-Discipline-Prayer*).

229 - Hunger-Prayer (Pss. 34:8)

As we pray, we should eagerly seek to enjoy God's presence, feeding on the things of God. "Oh, taste and see that the LORD *is* good" (Pss. 34:8). (See *God-Hunger Prayer, Thirst-Prayer, Searching for God Prayer, Well-Digging Prayer, Yearning-Prayer*).

230 - Hymn-Prayer (Col. 3:16)

We can use the words of a song or hymn to express our prayer to God, or to actually sing our prayer to God. The Psalms are our example because Israel literally sang the psalms to God (Col. 3:16). (See *Singing Prayer* and various *Thanksgiving* and *Worship* prayers).

231 - Hypocritical-Prayer (Matt. 6:5)

Hypocrite is from the Latin *hypocrisis*, which was used to describe a person who gave a false appearance. When we pray for selfish things to make ourselves happy, or in order to glamorize ourselves, we engage in *hypocritical prayer*. The problem is self! We are motivated by our pride or self-satisfaction. In *hypocritical prayer* we want people to think that we are spiritual. We "ask amiss" (James 4:2, 3). We tend to hide our pride behind a cloak of religiosity and seek the wrong reward for praying. Jesus did not say that praying *in public* is wrong (Matt. 6:5). He was saying that praying *to be seen by the public* is wrong. (See *Everyman's-Prayer, False-Prayer, Pretend-Prayer* and various *"No" Answer to Prayer* prayers).

232 - Identificational Repentance-Prayer (Neh. 1:6)

This deals with the un-repented transgressions of others in the past. We identify with a past sin of other people and repent of that sin, and ask God to hold back the punishment that it deserves. It is not praying for the forgiveness of a past sin only; it is asking God to take away the consequences of that sin. *Identificational Repentance* is motivated

by the consequences of sin by others that influence our lives. We champion the rights of those who have been sinned against and ask for the spiritual release of the innocent. "I (Nehemiah) pray before You now...and confess the sins of the children of Israel that we have sinned against You. Both my fathers and I have sinned" (Neh. 1:6, *ELT*). (See Gen. 18:23-33; Exod. 32:30-33, 17; Neh. 1:6; Dan. 9:3-19). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Others-Prayer, Redemption-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer*).

233 - Impartial-Prayer (Gen. 25:22-34)

Impartial-praying means praying that you love all people equally, with partiality to none, but it also includes praying that you deal equally with everyone. (See *All-Time Prayer, Others-Prayer, Outreach Prayer*).

234 - Impatient-Judgmental Prayer (Rev. 6:10)

This is the request of Christian martyrs to judge those violent people who took their lives. It is a prayer made during the Tribulation (Gen. 4:10; Pss. 9:12, 13:1, 35:17, 74:9-10; 94:3-4; Dan. 8:13, 12:6). (See *Waiting Anxiously in Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer*).

235 - Imprecatory-Prayers (Pss. 109:8 ff.)

David and other Old Testament leaders asked God to punish evil men with the punishment they gave to the godly. This is a prayer for God to do to sinners what He has promised as the wages of sin. This is not a mean-spirited prayer of God's people for revenge; it is a prayer based on God's promise to judge sin (Pss. 2, 3, 4, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 17, 21, 44, 52, 54, 55, 58, 69, 74, 75, 79, 83, 109, 110, 129, 140). (See *Judgmental-Prayer, Justice-Prayer*).

236 - Inadequate Words-Prayer (1 Cor. 13:12)

Our words seem so adequate to us, because "we know in part" (1 Cor. 13:9), and we "spoke as a child" (1 Cor. 13:11). When we look at spiritual truth, "we see in a mirror, dimly" (1 Cor. 13:12) but it will be different when we pass through death into God's presence: "Then that which is in part will be done away" (1 Cor. 13:10). Our words of prayer are weak because our understanding is limited. Our prayers may seem like they represent grunts and broken sentences, but a God of mercy and love knows the desires of our heart when we don't even know how to use limited words (Exod. 33:11; Job 11:7, 8; Pss. 40:5; Matt. 5:8; Rom. 11:34; 2 Cor. 3:18 ff.; Eph. 3:8, 18-19; 1 Peter 1:10-12). (See *Burden-Prayer, Definition of Prayer, Written-Prayer*).

237 - Inadequate-Prayer (James 5:17-18)

Sometimes praying one time may not be enough to get an answer from God. It may be that we do not have enough faith to get an answer, so we need to pray repeatedly to build our faith to get an answer from God. "Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he

prayed earnestly that it would not rain; and it did not rain on the land for three years and six months. And he prayed again, and the heaven gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit" (James 5:17, 18). (See *Unanswered-Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer, Unbiblical-Prayer,* and various *Faith* prayers).

238 - Inappropriate Motives-Prayer (James 4:2-3)

Sometimes our requests may be right in context, but our motives are wrong. God in His sovereignty can overlook our wrongly motivated prayers to give us what He wants (Gen. 30:15, 22; James 4:2-3). (See *Bible-Prayer, Growth-Prayer, Spiritual-Growth Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer*).

239 - Indwelling-Strength Prayer (Eph. 3:16-17)

As we recognize Christ who dwells within us, He allows His strength and abilities to flow through us into our life so it can overcome trials and temptation. We yield to Christ to receive His strength in Christian service (Rom. 6:4-6; Gal. 2:20, 5:24, 6:14; Eph. 3:16; Col. 2:11-14). (See *Christ-Indwelling Prayer, Growth-Prayer, Inner-Strength Prayer, Spiritual Discipline-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

240 - Injustice-Prayer (Isa. 1:17)

Our primary weapon against mass injustice in the world is *prayer*. Our prayers can purposefully intercede against evil, change the course of this world, and right the wrongs therein. When we truly believe that prayer makes a difference and we pray against the injustices of the world, we become the voice of the voiceless and the power of the powerless as we connect with the God of heaven as we intercede for those who need help. We do not pray against the evil people, but focus our prayers against the evil that causes the injustices in our world. (See *Identificational Repentance-Prayer, Justice-Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

241 - Inner-Assurance Praying (1 John 5:10)

Assurance we have from God comes from the fact that we are His children because we invited Jesus Christ into our hearts for salvation. This assurance is reinforced by Scripture (Pss. 25:14; Prov. 3:32; Rom. 8:14-17; Gal. 4:6; Col. 3:3; 1 John 5:10; Rev. 3:10). (See *Assurance-Prayer, Confident-Praying,* and various *Faith* prayers).

242 - Inner-Desires Prayer (Eph. 4:22 ff.)

We must be careful when we don't know what to do. We must not listen to our sinful nature because the sinful nature wants to do evil, which is the opposite of what the Holy Spirit wants (James 4:2-3). The Spirit gives us holy desires that are the opposite of what the sinful nature desires (Gal. 5:17). These two forces are constantly fighting each other.

We must be grounded in Scripture because there we find the will of God for our lives. (See *Hunger-Prayer, Thirst Prayer, Searching-Prayer, Yearning-Prayer*).

243 - Inner-Strength Request Prayer (2 Tim. 2:1)

Prayer to be strong against our internal weaknesses and against external trials, temptations, and attacks on my faith (1 Cor. 16:13; 2 Cor. 12:9-10; Eph. 6:10; Phil. 4:13; 2 Tim. 2:1; James 1:6; 2 Peter 3:18). (See *Self-Discipline-Prayer, Sin-Stopping Prayer, Spiritual-Growth Prayer, Spiritual-Strength Prayer*).

244 - Insight-Prayer (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

When we ask God to remove our spiritual blindness (2 Cor. 4:3, 4) and teach us truth from His Word, He answers, giving us insight we haven't had in the past (Pss. 119:105). (See *Blind-Prayer, Spiritual-Insight Prayer*).

245 - Insincere-Prayer (Matt. 12:38-39)

When a person's heart has rejected God for any reason, then that person is guilty of hypocritical prayers, or deceitful prayers. Their motives are not pure, so God may not answer their prayers (Matt. 13:38-43; Mark 8:32; John 8:44; Acts 13:10; 1 John 3:8, 10, 12). (See *Deceitful-Heart Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Old-Nature Praying, Pretend-Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

246 - Integrity-Praying (Pss. 101:2)

When we realize God knows the intent of our heart and everything we do, we will be careful to live an honest life. When we realize God exposes lies and untruths, and He judges dishonesty, we will quickly conform our lips and life to truth. (See *Honesty-Praying, Surety-Praying, Yielding-Prayer*).

247 - Intention-Praying (Rom. 15:24, 25)

This is asking God to guide our intentions to their completion, while at the same time realizing some of our human intentions never materialize. When that happens, we must yield ourselves to God and accept the conditions where we find ourselves (Prov. 19:21; Acts 18:21; Rom. 1:10, 15:24; 1 Cor. 4:19, 16:7; Heb. 6:3). (See *Blind Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

248 - Intercessor's-Prayer (Rom. 8:34)

Our prayer of intercession is based on Christ's intercession for us. We intercede successfully because in death Jesus took our sins to God for forgiveness and cleansing. Now we come to Jesus who is at the right hand of the Father and makes our prayers through Him. We have no access to the Father except through Jesus, the Intercessor (Job 9:33; Rom.

8:34; 1 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 7:24-26, 9:15, 12:24; 1 John 2:1). (See *Advocate-Intercession,* and various *Jesus* prayers).

249 - Intercessory Prayer for Jews (Rom. 10:1)

This is praying for the salvation of individual Jews, and for the political and spiritual salvation of the nation of Israel. Paul expressed this prayer, "Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel is that they may be saved" (Rom. 10:1). This prayer also includes "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem" (Pss. 122:6). Those who pray this prayer are encouraged by the promise, "so all Israel will be saved" (Rom. 11:26). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Mountain-Moving-Prayer, Possibility-Praying*).

250 - Intercessory Prayer for Nations (Matt. 28:19)

We must ask God to send missionaries and/or revival to the various nations of the world so that the gospel is preached, churches are planted, and multitudes are won to Christ. Technically the word "nation" is *ethn*ē which represents the various ethnic groups of people in the world. (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Great Commission-Prayer, Soul-Winner's Prayer*).

251 - Interchange with God (Gen. 18:23-33)

This is when you and God talk back and forth about a request. This may involve your realization that satan is fighting against you, and your flesh is weak. You are talking to God about an issue as was illustrated by God and Abraham's interchange (Gen. 18:23-33). (See *Communion-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying, Intimacy-Prayer*).

252 - Intermittent-Prayer (1 Thess. 5:17)

Praying unceasingly (1 Thess. 5:17) means we pray always (Luke 18:1), pray constantly (Rom. 12:12), pray at all times (Eph. 6:18), continue steadfast in prayer (Col. 4:2), and in everything by prayer (Phil. 4:6). This is praying with the intensity that matches an immediate need, or praying when a need arises. This means (1) unceasingly; (2) continually; (3) giving quick breaths of prayer; or (4) practicing the presence of God (Gen. 32:9 ff.; Job 27:6; Pss. 55:16-17, 65:2, 102:17; Jer. 29:12; Matt. 26:40, 41; Luke 18:1, 21:36; Rom. 12:12; Eph. 6:18; Col. 4:2; 1 Thess. 5:12; 1 Peter 4:7). (See *All-Time Prayer, Continual Prayer, Continue in Prayer, Persistent Praying, Prevailing-Prayer*).

253 - Interventional-Prayer (Matt. 17:20)

This verse refers to times when we want God to remove a serious barrier to His work or provide a miraculous supply of resources (Matt. 21:21; Mark 11:22-24). (See *Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Prayer, Supernatural Results-Prayer*).

254 - Intimacy-Prayer (Luke 11:2)

Praying means enjoying intimate fellowship with God. Jesus instituted a childlike intimacy with God when He taught us to call God "Our Father." Prayer is like a little child talking to his or her father. When we are in an intimate relationship with the Father, we can simply pray with our feelings. This is more a matter of being in God's presence than it is about striving for answers to our intercession. When children obey their parents' wishes, they value their relationship with Him. Intimacy with God is based on obedience and faith: "He is a rewarder of them that diligently seek Him" (Heb. 11:6). (See *Communion-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying, Jesus-Agreement Prayer, Silent Prayer*).

255 - Introspective-Prayer (Pss. 139:23-24)

Instead of reaching upward to God, some turn inward. They complain, gripe, or mostly blame themselves. As a result, they end up feeling even more hopeless, discouraged, and depressed than before. Introspective prayer is usually rooted in fear, doubts, or alienation from God. Sometimes a knowable sin blocks our relationship with God. Sometimes it's not a sin but a wrong decision and we are suffering its consequences. Sometimes it's because we have become inattentive to God. We can gain self-knowledge through introspection that becomes the foundation for our spiritual journey. However, if introspective prayer is the *only* way we pray most of the time, we'll soon end up in trouble. The prayer of introspection should bring us to the place of cleansing and restored fellowship with God. Forgiveness gives us a new beginning and allows us to start over again. (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Forsaken-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer, Suffering-Prayer*).

256 - Jesus First-Prayer (Phil. 1:21)

When we put Jesus first in our lives and yield all to Him in prayer, He reinforces our commitment with His "special" blessing. Our blessing may be intimacy with Him (Gen. 26:24, 25; Matt. 6:33; Luke 9:23; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21). (See various *Jesus* prayers).

257 - Jesus' Example-Prayer (John 17:1)

Because Jesus constantly prayed to the Father, we should give ourselves to prayer and intercession to follow His example. (See various Jesus *prayers*).

258 - Jesus' Name-Praying (John 14:13)

We are told to pray in Jesus' name (John 14:13), but His name is more than a magical mantra to open heaven's door. To pray in Jesus' name is to approach the Father (1) in the perfection of Jesus; (2) because we are cleansed by the blood of Jesus; (3) because Jesus is our High Priest who intercedes for us; and (4) because the Father accepts us as He accepted Jesus

(Matt. 1:23, 16:16; John 6:37, 8:12, 10:9, 10; 11:25, 14:6, 15:1; Phil. 2:10, 11; Rev. 19:13, 16). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Praying, Asking Prayer, Believing-Prayer, Intercessor's-Prayer*).

259 - Jesus' Response-Prayer (Rev. 1:10)

In the first chapter of Revelation we see the greatness of Jesus in His many names, titles, metaphors, and descriptions. We can do no less than John when the almighty nature of Jesus is revealed to us—we must bow at His feet and worship Him (Dan. 8:18, 10:8-9; Matt. 17:2-6; John 13:23, 21:20; Rev. 1:10). (See *Jesus-Worship, Worship-Praise, Worship-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

260 - Jesus' Suffering Appreciation-Prayer (Heb. 2:9-10, 18)

Jesus suffered the punishment of sin so that we will not suffer in hell for eternity. We should respond in gratitude to God for His plan to save all those who believe in Jesus (Luke 22:15; Acts 3:18, 26:23; Heb. 2:9-10, 18). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

261 - Jesus'-Example Prayer (1 Peter 2:21)

We should apply to our life the principle of living by the motto, *What Would Jesus Do*, especially when we face difficulties or situations where we don't know what to do. Jesus is our example and we can pray to live the way Jesus lived (John 13:15; 1 Cor. 11:1; Eph. 5:2; Phil. 2:5; 1 Peter 2:21; 1 John 2:5, 3:16; Rev. 12:11). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Spiritual-Victory Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

262 - Jesus Agreement-Prayer (Heb. 7:24-25)

We can agree with Jesus for a prayer request, knowing that He is interceding for us in heaven. We thus become a partner with Jesus in His intercessory ministry in heaven. We tell Jesus of our need, and He presents our needs to the Father and He also becomes mighty in deliverance! Because of Jesus' humanity, He understands our needs and prays with us (See Heb. 7:24, 25). (See *Intercessor's Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

263 - Jesus-Prayer (Luke 18:13)

The *Jesus-Prayer* probably had its origin when Jesus commended the tax collector's prayer, "O God, have mercy on me, I am a sinner." It has been prayed extensively in the Eastern Orthodox church since the sixth century. It is, "Lord Jesus Christ, Son of God, have mercy on me" (Pss. 25:7, 41:4, 51:1-5; Jer. 31:18-19; Dan. 9:5-19; 2 Cor. 7:11; Heb. 4:16; 1 Tim. 1:15). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

264 - Jesus-Worship Prayer (Heb. 1:6)

This prayer exalts Jesus because He is the sovereign Son of God, and because of all He has done for my salvation. We join the angels in worshiping the Lord (Pss. 2:7-12, 110:1-4;

Matt. 2:11, 8:2, 14:33, 15:25, 18:26, 28:9, 17; Phil. 2:9-11; Heb. 1:6). (See *Worship-Jesus Prayer, Worship-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

265 - John the Baptizer Fast and Prayer (Isa. 58:8)

This fast is a spiritual discipline when we pray and fast to expand and increase the effectiveness of our testimony for Jesus Christ. This is a fast when "your righteousness shall go before you" (Isa. 58:8). We should be free of alcohol, cigarettes, drugs, and any influence that destroys our testimony because we want Christ to be magnified in our body (see Phil. 1:20, 21). We should be sexually pure for our life partner, because we want our body to be the temple of the Holy Spirit (see 1 Cor. 6:19). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Testimony-Prayer*).

266 - Joy-Prayer (Acts 13:52)

As we pray, we can be filled with spiritual happiness (Acts 13:5). (See *Happiness-Inspired Prayer, Happy Prayer*).

267 - Judgment Prayer (Rev. 17:5)

The Bible teaches that Jesus will ultimately destroy antichrist's kingdom when he tries to rule the world in the Tribulation. Therefore, we can pray confidently knowing Jesus will ultimately destroy antichrist and rule the world (Gen. 11:1-9; 2 Chron. 36:10-21; 2 Thess. 2:7; 2 Tim. 3:1-5; Rev. 14:8, 17:5, 18:2-10). (See *Warfare-Protection Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

268 - Judgmental-Praying (Acts 5:4, 9)

This is praying for God to judge those who hinder the work of God, or those whose sin harms His work. There are only a few illustrations of judgmental praying by an individual in Scripture against an enemy. However, there are a few more cases where God initiates judgment against those who harm His work. But in most cases there is not an accompanying judgmental prayer. Most prayers against an enemy of God are prayers to bless him and the command to do good to them (Luke 6:27-38). Be careful when you pray judgment on an enemy that you are not reacting to your irritation or negative feelings (1 Kings 22:24 ff.; Lam. 3:30; Matt. 5:39; Luke 6:27-38; Acts 5:4, 9; 1 Peter 4:12-19). (See *Imprecatory-Prayers, Justice-Prayer*).

269 - Justice-Prayer (Pss. 7:17)

This prayer asks God to judge our enemies because they intentionally do evil and they know it. It is a prayer against evil (Gen. 18:25; Pss. 7:17, 24:15, 140:12-13; Eccl. 3:17; Isa. 2:4; John 5:30; Rom. 2:16; Rev. 19:11). (See *Imprecatory-Prayers, Judgmental-Prayer*).

270 - Justification-Based Prayer (Rom. 8:28-31)

We are perfect in Christ Jesus and have been given His righteousness when we were justified by faith. Therefore we can pray with confidence and bold faith because nothing stands between the Father and us (Job 9:2, 25:4; Acts 13:38-39; Rom. 3:27, 4:2; Gal. 2:16, 3:6; Phil. 3:9). (*See Child-Like Praying, Confident-Praying, Trusting-Prayer*).

271 - Knowing Christ-Prayer (Phil. 3:10)

The passion of Paul's prayer was to know Christ more intimately, "That I may know Him" (Phil. 3:10). We too should pray to know Him more intimately (Phil. 1:21, 3:8, 10; 4:13). (See *Christ-Indwelling Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

272 - Knowing-God Prayer (2 Peter 1:3)

We should desire to know God more intimately so that we may become more God-like in our daily life and reflect Him to those around us. Knowing God begins with a one-time event of our conversion, and becomes a life-time process of becoming godly. Therefore we should pray continually to know God more intimately (Pss. 9:10; Jer. 31:34; Matt. 11:27; John 17:3; 2 Cor. 4:6; Gal. 4:9; Eph. 1:17; Phil. 3:10; 2 Peter 2:20; 1 John 5:20). (See *Christ-Indwelling Prayer, Christ-Formed in Us Prayer, Indwelling-Strength Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

273 - Large-Praying (Acts 4:23-31)

When the church faces a larger request than ever before, they must enlarge the focus and purpose of their praying. They must recognize the greatness of God and His ability to do large things for them (Pss. 147; Isa. 51:12-13; Acts 4:23-31, 14:15-17, 17:24-31). (See *Interventional Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying*).

274 - Last-Days Prayer (2 Tim. 3:1)

This is a special prayer to keep us pure from sin and doctrinal compromise in the last days. It is a prayer for wisdom, boldness, and protection when we can't protect ourselves (Dan. 7:8, 20-25; 8:11-14, 11:36, 12:1, 7; 2 Thess. 2:3, 12; 1 Tim. 4:1-3; 2 Tim. 3:1; Rev. 8:1 ff.). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance Prayer, Disentanglement-Prayer, Doctrinal-Prayer, Protection Prayer, Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer*).

275 - Laziness-Corrective Prayer (Prov. 13:4)

A lazy person will do or say anything to get out of work. Laziness is not a case of being tired, or physically unable; the lazy person usually lacks ambition, has no focus in life, nor does he have the self-discipline necessary to meet the challenges of the day. Why is laziness rejected? It's not just because they live off others; the lazy person usually harms

everyone around him. That's because a lazy person refuses to help himself or his neighbor (Matt. 19:19). God has commanded that all men work to provide for their family, others, and themselves (Prov. 24:33-34) (Prov. 10:26, 13:4, 25; 15:19, 16:26, 24:30-34, 26:13, 28:15). (See *Discipline Prayer, Servanthood-Prayer, Worker's-Prayer*).

276 - Leave the Cemetery-Prayer (Gen. 23:1-2)

We can't spend the rest of our life at a cemetery mourning for a dead loved one. Life goes on, as must we. We must leave the cemetery and go face the life God has for us. (See *Discipline Prayer, Mourning the Dead-Prayer*).

277 - Legalistic-Warning Prayer (Phil. 3:1-3)

Because we can never become righteous by keeping the law, we should realize Christ has sanctified us; for we will only become righteous when we have the righteousness of Jesus Christ (Phil. 3:1-3). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Justification-Based Prayer*).

278 - Life's Plan-Prayer (Rom. 12:1)

We receive strength when we know God's plan for our life and we commit ourselves to doing God's personal will for our lives. We pray for a full life of usefulness each year until we die. Then we pray that our children may live up to or beyond our achievements after we've gone (Gen. 25:1-11, 28:12-15; Rom. 12:1). (See *Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Life-Defining Prayer*).

279 - Life-Defining Prayer (Rom. 12:1, 2)

We find our life's purpose when we submit to God's perfect will for our life and pray for its fulfillment. First, we submit to God's plan, and second, we pray to know it more perfectly. Third, we ask for strength to do it, and fourth we commit our self to learning and growing so we can do God's perfect will. Finally, we pray for strength, faith, and ability to do God's perfect will in our life (Rom. 12:1, 2). (See *Life's Plan Blessing, Yielding-Prayer*).

280 - Life-Derailing Prayer (James 4:17)

We derail our life when we ask God for something that would divert us from doing His perfect will for our life. We don't have to sin deeply to derail our life, nor do we have to rebel against God's will. To do the lesser when the greater is possible constitutes the greatest tragedy in life. We derail our life by doing something "good" that is not the center of God's will for our life. (See *Crucifixion Prayer, Repentance-Prayer, Sin-Stopping Intercession, Sin-Realization Prayer*).

281 - Life-Receiving Prayer (John 10:10)

Jesus promised, "I have come that they may have life" (John 10:10). There are two kinds of life, that is, *bios,* physical life, and *zoë*, spiritual life (John 3:1-7). All must die and if we do not have the spiritual life of God, we will experience the second death, *thanatos,* which is separation from God, and punishment forever in the lake of fire. We receive eternal life when we receive Christ, for Christ is life (John 14:6; Rev. 20:10-15) (Pss. 1:1-3, 16:11; John 1:12, 3:16-18, 10:10, 14:20; Rom. 8:21, 22; Col. 3:3; 1 John 5:11-13). (See *Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Christ-Indwelling Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

282 - Light Request for the Unsaved-Prayer (2 Cor. 4:3-4)

The unsaved are blinded by their sin and satan so they can't understand the spiritual nature of God's Word or God's plan of salvation. Just as God must do a miracle for a physically blind man to see, so God must do a miracle for a spiritually blind person to understand the spiritual world. As we pray for unsaved people to be saved, we must also pray for them to see their sin and the Savior (1 Kings 22:22; Isa. 6:10; John 8:12, 12:40; 1 Cor. 3:14; 2 Cor. 3:11-18, 4:3-4; Eph. 1:18, 3:17-19). (See *Correcting Others-Prayer, Problem-Solving Prayer*).

283 - Light-Praying (1 John 1:7)

We must pray to walk as Jesus would have us live. When we walk in the light, we don't stumble, stray, backslide, or stop walking. We follow Jesus who is the Light (John 8:12). (Gen. 1:3; Exod. 13:21, 35:14; Pss. 4:6, 27:1, 119:105, 130; Isa. 45:7; John 1:4, 3:19-20, 8:12, 12:35; Acts 26:13; Eph. 5:8; 1 Thess. 5:5; 1 John 1:7). (See *Insight-Prayer, Light Request, Spiritual-Insight Prayer*).

284 - Limitation-Praying (Jude 3)

We must apply all the knowledge and principles of prayer that are written in Scripture. God hasn't said all there is to say about prayer, but He has written in Scripture all we need to know for salvation and sanctification. The limitation of prayer is not with God or His Word, but with us and our application of Scripture to our intercession (Acts 20:27; 1 Cor. 15:1-5; 2 Tim. 3:15-16; 2 Peter 1:20-21; Jude 3). (See *Delayed-Answer to Prayer, Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Unknown-Answer to Prayer*).

285 - Listening to Jesus-Prayer (Heb. 1:2)

When we read the Scriptures to learn about Jesus, we must also listen to what He says to us. Just as Jesus' disciples listened and learned from the physical Jesus as they followed Him on earth, so we carefully listen and search the Scriptures to know Jesus better and

then do what He would have us do (Matt. 3:17, 26:63; John 3:16, 15:15; Rom. 1:4; Heb. 1:2, 2:3, 5:8, 7:3). (See *Silent-Prayer, Silent-Worship Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

286 - Listen-Prayer (Matt. 18:19)

In our praying we can hear and identify with the verbal request of another person and agree with him or her for that answer (Matt. 18:19). (See *Listening to Jesus, Meditation-Prayer, Silent-Prayer*).

287 - Looking-Back Prayer (Luke 9:62)

We reject God's perfect will for our life by "looking back" at the old things or places that are contrary to God's will. We look back because we want to go back. But usually we look back because our desires are still back there out of God's will. (See *Repentance-Prayer, Restoration-Prayer, Sin-Realization Prayer*).

288 - Lord's-Prayer (Matt. 6:9-13)

This model prayer was given to us by Jesus in Matthew 6:9-13 and Luke 11:2-4. There are seven petitions in the Lord's Prayer (see *Praying the Lord's Prayer* by Elmer Towns [Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 1997]). When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we don't leave anything out—we pray everything we need to say to God. It's the most complete and comprehensive petition prayer that was ever given to us. Just as all the oak tree is in an acorn, so all of Christianity—what you need to know and what you need to ask—is in the Lord's Prayer. (See *Daily-Prayer, First Prayer Each Day, Morning-Prayer*).

289 - Lordship Salvation-Prayer (Acts 9:6)

There are two views of conversion. First, some teach "easy believism" which means calling on Jesus to save because Jesus simply said, "Come" (Matt. 11:28-30). Others say a person must do more than just come to have his sins forgiven; he must make Jesus the Lord of his life (Matt. 6:33, 7:21-23; Luke 9:27; John 3:1-8; Acts 4:12, 9:6, 16:31; Rom. 10:9-10). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Repentance-Prayer, Sin-Realization Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

290 - Loud-Rejoicing Prayer (Pss. 100:1)

We should express our emotions to God vehemently and loudly, so that our outward sound expresses our inward feelings. It is praying with a shout, yell, cheer, or roar so that our inward rejoicing equals our inward praise to God (Josh. 6:5; 1 Sam. 4:5; Ezra 3:11; Pss. 5:11, 35:27, 47:1, 5; 65:13, 100:1). (See *Singing Prayer, Worship-Roar Prayer*).

291 - Love One Another-Prayer (1 John 4:11)

Asking God to teach us to love Him and others because He first loved us by sending Jesus to die for us. Because God is love and He indwells us, we must pray to manifest His love

through us to others (John 13:34, 15:12-13; 2 Cor. 8:8-9; Eph. 4:31-32, 5:1-2; Col. 3:13; 1 John 4:11). (*Love-Abounding Prayer, Love-Growing Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

292 - Love-Abounding Prayer (Phil. 1:9)

This is asking God to grow our love for someone specifically, or for others in general so that our love flows out in words and deeds (Phil. 1:9). (See *Love-Growing Prayer, Love One Another-Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

293 - Love-Expression Prayer (John 21:15)

Because God has first loved us, and expressed His love to us, we can have confidence in our approach to Him that He will hear our prayer. Just as we say to someone, "I love you," when they show their deep feelings for us, so we must say the same to Jesus. Didn't Jesus ask Peter, "Do you love Me more than these?" (John 21:15) So we must reaffirm our love to Jesus before we ask for answers to prayer (Pss. 89:2; Lam. 3:22, 23; Matt. 10:35-40; John 8:40, 14:15, 15:4-14; 2 Cor. 5:14; Eph. 6:24; 1 Peter 1:8; 1 John 4:19, 5:1). (See *Love-Abounding Prayer, Love One Another-Prayer*).

294 - Love-Growing Prayer (Phil. 1:9)

We recognize God is the source of all love, so when we ask for our love to grow, we are asking for God's influence to grow in our hearts and in our relationship to others (Rom. 13:8; Gal. 5:6; 1 Thess. 3:12; 2 Peter 1:7; 1 John 3:11, 4:7, 17). (See *Love-Abounding Prayer, Love-Expression Prayer*).

295 - Love-Praying (Matt. 22:37-38)

Love is an attribute of God, that is, "God is love" (1 John 4:8). We see love in the act of giving, that is, giving ourselves for a friend (John 15:13), for sinners (Rom. 5:5-8), and, of course, Christ gave Himself for sin (John 10:11; Rom. 5:5-8; Eph. 5:2, 25; 1 John 3:16, 4:7-11). (See *Love-Abounding Prayer, Love One Another-Prayer*).

296 - Loving-People Prayer (James 2:8)

We should pray that God will increase our love for others. Then we can pray for any barrier or wrong attitude in our hearts that keeps us from loving others. We can ask God to give us a supernatural love for people—to love them as He loves them—and that fulfills our obligation to love others (Deut. 6:4-6; Matt. 22:37-40; John 13:34-35; Rom. 12:9-10; Gal. 5:6; Eph. 4:3, 5:2; Phil. 2:1; 2 Thess. 1:3; Heb. 13:1; 1 John 2:9-10, 3:10; 2 John 5, 6). (See *Love-Abounding Prayer, Love-Expression Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

297 - Man in the Glory-Prayer (Heb. 7:24)

Jesus is our Intercessor who presents our prayers to the Father. Our prayers are presented perfectly because Jesus is the "man in the glory." Jesus identified with us physically, and He knows our limitations (John 12:24; Rom. 6:9; Heb. 7:24-26; Rev. 1:18). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Praying*).

298 - Many Ways to Pray (Heb. 2:1-4)

There are many ways to pray, as evidenced by this appendix of practical *Principles of Prayer*. The book, *How to Pray*, by Elmer Towns (Ventura, CA: Regal Books, 2006), describes over 50 ways to pray (Exod. 15:11; Pss. 16:1, 69:17, 118:25, 119:5, 133; Lam. 5:21; Hab. 3:2; Luke 18:13, 23:24; 1 Tim. 2:1). (See *All Kinds of Faith-Prayer*).

299 - Marriage-Harmony Prayer (1 Peter 3:8)

One of the foundations for God answering the prayers of husbands and wives is for them to dwell together in harmony. "Husbands, likewise, dwell with *them* with understanding, giving honor to the wife...that your prayers may not be hindered" (1 Peter 3:7). (See *Family-Heritage Prayer, Spouse-Inspired Prayer*).

300 - Meal Thanksgiving or Blessing-Prayer (John 6:11)

When we give thanks before meals we recognize God the Creator has given us the food we enjoy that sustains our life and has given us that strength through our food to serve Him (1 Sam. 9:13; Matt. 14:19; Acts 27:35; Rom. 14:6; 1 Cor. 10:30-31; Col. 3:17; 1 Tim. 4:3). (See *Food-Provision Praise, Provision of Food Praise*).

301 - Medical Answer-Prayer (James 5:15)

In a physical sickness God heals by the use of means (medicine, surgery, therapy, etc.) including prayer (James 5:13-16). (See *Daniel Fast, Healing Prayer, Sick-Person's Prayer*).

302 - Meditation-Prayer (Josh. 1:9)

To meditate means to focus your thinking, to reflect on, or ponder over, to plan or project in the mind. As we meditate on God, we grow stronger and are motivated to act on what we've been thinking and praying. Christian meditation is the ability to hear God speaking to us and understanding what He is saying; that leads to obedient action. Perhaps a better definition of meditation prayer is "thinking God's thoughts with Him." This is thinking about God in His presence. It is thinking about the greatness of God and breaking into worship as we contemplate God's power and mercy. In *Meditation Prayer* we don't usually ask for things. However, we might ask for wisdom and understanding to learn more about

God so we might worship Him better. (See *Fellowship Prayer, Listening to Jesus-Prayer, Listening-Prayer, Silent-Prayer, Silent-Worship Prayer*).

303 - Memory-Praying (Pss. 77:11)

Memory-Praying is asking God to help you remember good things in the past so that we can serve Him more effectively in the present and future. We ask God to remind us of our failures and sins so we can repent and change our lives for a better future (Pss. 25:6-7, 42:4, 63:6, 77:11, 105:5, 106:4; Hab. 3:2). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Repentance-Prayer*).

304 - Mercy-Prayer (Pss. 6:2)

This is a cry for mercy when we are in desperate straits and we want forgiveness and deliverance. This is a prayer for mercy when we know we've sinned or done wrong. This prayer is based on God's mercy (Exod. 34:7; Deut. 5:10; Ezra 3:11; Neh. 1:5; Pss. 4:1, 6:2, 21:7; Isa. 45:10; Titus 3:5). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer*).

305 - Mercy-Appreciation Prayer (Hab. 3:2)

Thanksgiving is a general prayer offered in appreciation to God for the many things He gives us that are necessary or beneficial to our life. However, when we thank God for His mercies, we remember that God could punish us for our sins, or He could withhold good from us because of our selfishness or laziness. But in mercy God forgives our sins, and in mercy He uses us, and in mercy He protects us and gives us things we don't deserve; then we offer a prayer of *Mercy-Appreciation.* (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer, Memory-Praying*).

306 - Mercy-Seat Praying (Heb. 9:5)

The mercy seat was the lid on a box called the Sacred Chest. God didn't sit on a golden throne, but upon the lid of a box where blood was applied for forgiveness of sin. God likes to be where blood is applied to forgive sin. When we come to God through the blood of Christ, we get our prayers answered (Lev. 16:14, 17:11; Rom. 3:25; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:5; 1 Peter 1:2; 1 John 1:7; Rev. 1:6, 5:9, 7:14). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer*).

307 - Minutia-Prayer (Phil. 4:6)

We must pray for little things as well as big problems in life. Every big problem is made up of an inestimable number of smaller problems, so we pray about little things to help solve big problems, before they become big. (See *Continual-Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer*).

308 - Mizpah Benediction-Prayer (Gen. 31:49)

This is a positive agreement between believers to pray for one another after they separate, asking God to "watch over" the other one. (See Gen. 31:49). (See *Benediction-Bless Prayer*).

309 - Model-Church Prayer (Acts 11:26)

We should all pray that our own local church would become a model church like the Antioch church. The Antioch church was successful because (1) it was an evangelistic church (Acts 11:19); (2) it preached the Word (11:19); (3) it focused on Jesus (11:20); (4) it was committed to Christ (11:23); (5) it was a growing church (11:24); (6) it was a teaching church (11:25); (7) it was a giving church (11:28); (8) it was a sacrificing church (13:2); (9) it was a missionary-sending church (13:3); and (10) it was a multiracial church (11:20, 13:1). But most of all the Antioch church was a spiritual church that "prayed" (13:3), "fasted" (13:2-3), and worshiped, that is, "ministered to the Lord" (13:2). (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 2:1-4, 42-47; 11:26). (See *Organized-Corporate Prayer* and various *Church* prayers).

310 - Money-Prayer (Acts 2:44)

While most people pray for more money for their Christian project or themselves, the *Money-Prayer* forces us to look at our money and belongings from God's perspective. Money or belongings should not possess us. We must yield them to God and ask Him to give us wisdom to use our money for His purposes and glory (Deut. 15:7; Pss. 112:9; Prov. 11:24, 25; Luke 6:35; Acts 2:44, 45; 4:34-37; Rom. 12:8, 13; 1 Cor. 16:2; 2 Cor. 8:1, 2, 9, 12; Phil. 4:12, 19; 1 Tim. 6:6-18; Heb. 13:16). (See *Dedication of Money Prayer, Provision of Food-Praise*).

311 - Morning-Prayer (John 21:4)

Often the darkness of nighttime will take away our joy. But morning offers new hope and new opportunities to serve God. Sunrise suggests a new chance at life. So we should begin every new morning with a prayer to God. We should expect to meet Christ every morning (Job 38:7; Pss. 130:6; Isa. 27:12; Lam. 3:23; Mark 16:12; Luke 1:78, 24:15; John 20:14). (See *Daily-Prayer, First Prayer Each Day, Lord's-Prayer, New-Day Praise*).

312 - Mountain-Moving Prayer (Mark 11:23, 24)

We can use our faith supernaturally to move God's work forward, when we pray to remove barriers, opposition or inertia. "For assuredly, I say to you, whoever says to this mountain, 'Be removed and be cast into the sea,' and does not doubt in his heart, but believes that those things he says will be done, he will have whatever he says. Therefore I say to you,

whatever things you ask when you pray, believe that you receive *them*, and you will have *them*" (Mark 11:23, 24). (See *Interventional-Praying, Supernatural Praying, Unlimited Prayer in Christ*).

313 - Mourning the Dead-Prayer (Gen. 23:1-3)

There is a proper time to mourn when a special person dies, but we must get up as did Abraham (Gen. 23:1-3), leave the cemetery symbolically, and go on with the life God has for us. There is "a time to weep...a time to laugh" (Eccl. 3:4). (See *Discipline-Prayer, Leave the Cemetery-Prayer*).

314 - Multiplication of Disciples-Prayer (Acts 18:24-26)

Paul taught by example and principle that we are to pour our lives into another believer, who in turn would do the same thing to the third and fourth generations. We should be producing disciples who are reproducers. Our students should pour their lives into four generations of believers. When they reproduce themselves in a fourth generation the cycle is verifiable, that is, it will continue (Matt. 28:19-20; Acts 18:24-26; Rom. 16:26; 2 Tim. 2:2). (See *Disciple Fast and Prayer, Evangelistic-Prayer, Growth-Prayer, Growth in Christ-Prayer, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

315 - Mystery of Prayer (1 Cor. 13:12)

We pray with many different emotions and expectations. Only God fully understands the mystery of our relationship with Him. "For now we see in a mirror, dimly, but then face to face. Now I know in part, but then I shall know just as I also am known" (1 Cor. 13:12). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Limitation-Prayer, Unknown-Answer to Prayer*).

316 - Name of Jesus-Prayer (John 14:13)

Using Jesus' name in prayer is not a magical key to unlocking heaven's door. When we pray in Jesus' name, we reveal our relationship with Jesus Christ. Praying in Jesus' name not only identifies us with Jesus' death on the cross, but it also identifies us with the new life of His resurrection. Also when we pray in Jesus' name, we go to the Father through Jesus' intercession for us. That way we can get as close to God the Father as Jesus can. Also we can pray in Jesus' name because of our *friendship factor* with Christ; He calls us friends (John 15:14). Finally, we get answers because Jesus indwells us (Gal. 2:20). (See *Asking-Prayer, Intercessor's-Prayer* and the various *Jesus* prayers).

317 - Natural-Bless Prayer (Matt. 5:45)

You can add value to the normal life of a recipient, without necessarily appealing for supernatural intervention (see Gen. 39:5; Job 1:10; Matt. 5:45). (See various *Bless* prayers).

318 - New Birth Praise-Prayer (Titus 3:5)

We praise God for our new birth by the work of the Holy Spirit. Salvation is a door with two sides. One side is our works, repentance, seeking God, and calling out His name. The other side is God's work that begins with regeneration. God gives us a new nature with new desires. We must show thanks to God for the gift of the new birth and praise Him for the work of the Holy Spirit in our hearts (Ezek. 36:26-27; Jer. 3:5; 1 Cor. 6:11; Eph. 5:26; 1 Peter 3:2; Titus 3:5). (See *Praise of Forgiveness, Salvation-Appreciation Prayer, Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer, Transforming-Prayer*).

319 - New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer (2 Thess. 1:3)

We can give praise to God for our being used by Him to win someone to Christ and giving thanks for those saved through our ministry (Rom. 1:8; 2 Thess. 1:3, 2:13). (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

320 - New Covenant-Praying (Heb. 8:8)

Under the New Covenant we come directly to God without going through a Levitical priest as in the Old Testament. Now we come to God based on a personal and intimate relationship with the Father. We come because we know God inwardly and spiritually, not as Old Testament saints who went to God through the tabernacle/temple (Ezek. 36:26-27; 2 Cor. 3:6-18; Heb. 8:8; 1 John 1:7). (See *Torn-Veil Prayer*).

321 - New Testament Prayer Possibilities (John 16:24)

When Jesus used the phrase "Until now you have asked nothing in My name" (John 16:24), He meant that Old Testament prayers did not come through Jesus. But in the New Testament the believer is now a spiritual child of his heavenly Father, so prayer is personal and guaranteed when made through Jesus. He told His disciples, "And in that day you will ask Me nothing. Most assuredly, I say to you, whatever you ask the Father in My name He will give you" (Matt. 7:7, 21:22; John 15:7, 15; Eph. 2:18, 3:14, 20; Heb. 4:14, 16; 7:24-26, 10:19, 20; 1 John 2:1, 5:14-16). (See *Asking-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Praying, Name of Jesus-Praying, New Covenant-Praying, Torn-Veil Praying*).

322 - New-Day Praise (Pss. 98:1)

We should have a new song to sing to God every day. While we are grateful for yesterday and the things we learned yesterday, today is a better day to praise God. Also, we look forward to tomorrow and what God will do for us then. Today is the greatest day of our lives because we can praise Him and serve Him now (Pss. 18:18, 35:28, 98:1; Heb. 3:7, 13; James 4:13). (See *Daily-Prayer, First Prayer Each Day, Morning-Prayer*).

323 - "No" Answers to Prayer (Isa. 59:1, 2)

(See *Blocked-Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer, Unanswered-Prayer, Unbiblical-Prayer*). Not all prayers will be answered "yes"; sometimes God says "no" for various reasons (see the following *"No" Answers to Prayer*).

"No...for right now"

Sometimes God tells us to wait for an answer, and we don't ever get an assurance that God will answer in the future. So we must continue living and serving God by faith, not knowing if the answer will ever come.

"No...I can't undo history"

We can't undo the past by divine intervention. God won't make an unfortunate marriage never to have happened, or a baby never to be born. We must learn to accept history and the circumstances of life that have happened to us in the past. But we can change the future.

"No, I have a better plan for your life"

Sometimes we pray too small or too low, when God wants to give us something better. Elijah was so discouraged he prayed to die, "LORD, take my life" (1 Kings 19:4). But God had a better plan, "How about going to heaven with a 'chariot of fire'?" (See 2 Kings 2:11).

"No, I've got a better idea"

Sometimes we tell God how to answer our prayers, but God tells us "No" because He will answer another way.

"No, that would hurt others" (James 4:3)

Sometimes we ask selfishly and if God answered, it would hurt someone else. An answer may hurt another financially, physically, or socially.

"No, that's not the way I do it"

Sometimes we not only pray for God's intervention, but we also tell Him how to answer, or when to answer, or where to answer. But God's ways are not our ways (Isa. 55:8).

"No, that's presumptuous"

Sometimes we ask God to do the impossible, or the improbable. We ask God to work in ways He doesn't work. Can we ask God to bless acts of stealing, lying, adultery, or murder? Have we asked God to bless our greed, or violent temper?

"No, you are basing your prayer on a lie"

Sometimes we know better than to ask God to do certain things that are against His nature. We cannot ask God to do something when we know better in our hearts that it's wrong.

"No, you are breaking the rules" (Pss. 66:18)

Sometimes we have sin in our lives, and we ask God to bless the sinful actions we do, or to bless us in spite of our sin.

"No, you can't base your prayers on that Bible promise"

Sometimes we quote a Bible promise out of context, or we apply a verse to the wrong circumstances. Can we pray to defy gravity because Peter walked on water? We must know the differences between a *description* of a situation in Scripture that is not meant for us, and a *prescription* in Scripture that applies to us.

324 - Non-Answer to Prayer (Pss. 18:41)

Sometimes God doesn't respond to our prayers in any way. It's when God doesn't say "yes," or "no," or "wait"; He just doesn't say anything. (See *Blocked-Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer, Unanswered-Prayer,* and various *"No" Answers* to *Prayer* prayers).

325 - Non-Anxiety Prayer (Phil. 4:6, 7)

We should not be anxious over things in our life, but we should bring all our worries, problems and concerns—everything—to God in prayer (Phil. 4:6-7). (See *Peaceful Living-Prayer, Waiting in Prayer*).

326 - Non-Violence Prayer (Luke 6:28)

The Lord has told us to "bless those who curse you, and pray for those who spitefully use you" (Luke 6:28). When an enemy makes our faith an issue, we should pray for our enemies. There are times we should defend ourselves as did David (1 Sam. 17:26-46). Jesus taught there are times we should retreat (Matt. 10:23), as did Isaac (Gen. 26:17-25). (See *Enemy-Strategy Praying, Evangelistic-Prayer, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

327 - Obedient-Prayer (Col. 2:6)

Christ said often, "Follow Me," so obedience is walking behind Him with our eyes on Jesus. It is a disciplined life, a victorious life, a serving life, filled with courage and love. We must obey God to get the thing for which we ask. It is also our reaction to the work of God in our heart that gives us a new desire to please and serve Him. Our obedience and self-discipline did not initiate with us, but with God who works in us to will and do (Deut. 5:32; Josh. 1:7; Acts 2:42; 1 Cor. 11:2; Gal. 6:9, 10; Phil. 1:11, 2:13; Col. 1:10; 1 Tim. 5:10; 2 Tim. 2:21; Titus 3:1; Heb. 13:21; 1 Peter 2:10; 1 John 2:3, 4; Rev. 22:14). (See *Discipline-Prayer, Race-Preparation Prayer, Self-Control Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

328 - Obligation-Prayer (1 Tim. 2:1 ff.)

We pray because we are expected to pray. We pray because we are people of prayer. Also, prayer is our first response to a crisis, problem, or situation. We pray because God works in us before God works through us. We pray to bring God into a problem, and through prayer we ask God to do something to solve the crisis. (See *Problem-Solving Prayer, Protection-Prayer*).

329 - Obstinate-Prayer (2 Cor. 11:4)

Expression of our determination to stand for the truth of the gospel as found in the Bible and to stand against heresy that denies the fundamentals of the faith. When we don't face heresy, we need the inward tenacity to stand for God. We need strength in the *Prayer of Obstinacy* (Gal. 2:11; 2 Cor. 5:16, 11:4, 21-28; Jude 3). (See *Disentanglement-Prayer, Guarding Our Legacy-Prayer, Heresy-Condemning Prayer*).

330 - Offense of the Cross-Prayer (Gal. 5:11)

We must accept the insults and hatred of the world toward the cross, because the world thinks the message of the cross is foolish. God says it is the power of God to salvation (1 Cor. 1:18). We should pray that the message of the cross will be influential through our testimony (1 Cor. 1:18, 23; Gal. 5:11; 1 Peter 2:8-9). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Persecution-Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer*).

331 - Old Nature-Praying (Eph. 4:22, 23)

Because we have an old nature, we must constantly surrender any inclination to obey the old nature, and constantly allow the new nature to control our lives (Eph. 4:22-23). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Deceitful-Heart Prayer*).

332 - One-Hour Prayer (Mark 14:37)

We are told to "pray and not lose heart" (Luke 18:1), and to "pray without ceasing" (1 Thess. 5:17). But the only length suggested for prayer is "one hour," so it seems all believers ought to pray that long—at least once in their life (Pss. 1:2, 5:3, 42:8, 55:17, 88:1; Jer. 12:5; Matt. 7:7). (See *All-Time Praying, Continual-Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer*).

333 - Oneness-Prayer (Phil. 2:2)

This is when we join together with others or with just one other person to pray in the oneness of spirit. (Also see *Communion-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying* and various *Agree* prayers).

334 - Opposition-Intercession (1 Thess. 2:18)

When we face opposition in our personal life or in our ministry, we must intercede to God (1) for victory; (2) for strength to endure opposition; (3) for God's will relating to opposition; (4) for the spread of the gospel in the face of opposition (Pss. 106:47, 148:14; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:57). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Persecution-Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

335 - Optional Answer-Prayer (Mark 10:38)

Sometimes when we pray for an answer to a problem God gives us more than one choice as an answer to our problem. (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Diversionary-Answer to Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer*).

336 - Organized-Corporate Prayer (Luke 19:46)

The place where believers gather (church building) should (1) be a location for prayer; (2) where they agree together (Matt. 18:19); (3) where they renounce selfish desires (Acts 4:31, 32); (4) where they continue in prayer; (5) where they organize themselves for prayer; and (6) where they experience God's presence (Isa. 56:7; Mal. 1:11; Matt. 21:13; Mark 11:17; John 4:21-23; 1 Tim. 2:1-5). (See *Agreement-Prayer, Model Church-Prayer*).

337 - Others-Prayer (Jude 22)

We are exhorted by Jude to attempt to win some other people to salvation, "And on some have compassion, making a distinction" (Jude 22). We begin by interceding for their salvation. When the general and founder of the Salvation Army was too old physically to attend the group's annual convention, he sent them a telegram with one word, "Others." That was the attitude that made the Salvation Army influential worldwide (Matt. 5:43 ff., 22:39; Luke 10:29 ff.). (See *Evangelistic-Prayer, Love One Another-Prayer, Soul Winner's-Prayer, Redemption-Prayer*).

338 - Outreach-Prayer (Acts 4:29-31)

We should pray for the salvation of an unsaved person, asking God for his conversion. This also includes praying for evangelistic outreach programs to the unsaved/unchurched, whether through the church, media, foreign missions, etc. (See *Evangelistic-Prayer, Great Commission-Prayer, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

339 - Overcoming-God's Inertia Prayer (Exod. 32:30-32)

Can prayer override God's omnipotent and omniscient plan for the world and those He loves? Since God is almighty and has a predetermined plan for the universe, how can the prayers of finite people override the plans of the Almighty superintendent of the universe? The only thing that could change God is God, but God cannot change. If God cannot be changed, then why pray? Because God is omnipotent and omniscient, He is smart enough to think up a comprehensive plan for the world to allow humans to exercise their freedom (to pray) and yet be subject to God's control in the final analysis. (See *Interventional-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Prayer,* and various *Faith* and *Victory* prayers).

340 - Overcoming-Prayer (1 John 4:4)

We can overcome the world as we claim the power and victory of Jesus Christ who indwells us to enable us to overcome our problems, trials, and temptations. All believers must remember, "He who is in you is greater than he who is in the world" (1 John 4:4). (John 10:28-30, 17:23; Rom. 8:10; 1 Cor. 6:13; 2 Cor. 6:16; Eph. 3:7; 1 John 4:4). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Interventional-Prayer, Supernatural-Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

341 - Pain-Praying (Pss. 38:6, 20, 21)

God's people suffer pain for many reasons: (1) because they rebel against God and sin; (2) because of dumb decisions; (3) because of mistakes and failures; (4) because of germs, disease, or infection; (5) because of an accident; (6) because a person intentionally hurts us; (7) because of misunderstandings; (8) because of satan; (9) because of the consequences of evil to which we've given ourselves; and (10) because God allows circumstances to bring pain into our lives to bring us back to Him (Job 6:4; Pss. 6:1, 38:6, 20-21; 88:7, 15-16; Jer. 10:24, 30:11; Heb. 3:2, 12:5, 11). (See *Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer, Unknown Danger-Prayer*).

342 - Partial Answer-Prayer (Exod. 33:2-3)

Sometimes God answers our requests only partially and does not give us all the things we request. (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Divisionary Answer-Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, Unknown Answer to Prayer*).

343 - Partner-Prayer (Acts 3:1)

There are many illustrations of people praying together in Scriptures, for example, Peter and John (Acts 3:1), Paul and Silas (Acts 16:25), etc. Jesus promised prayers would be answered when two agree (Matt. 18:19). Recent prayer partners are Dwight L. Moody and R. A. Torrey, Billy Graham and J. Edwin Orr, Brother Worley and Jerry Falwell (Exod. 17:8-13; Est. 4:16; Eccl. 4:9-12; Matt. 18:19). (See *Two-Prayer, Support-Prayer*).

344 - Pastor-Prayer (2 Cor. 1:11)

We have an obligation to intercede for our church pastor's life and ministry. Since everything rises and falls on leadership, our spiritual level as well as that of our church depends on the spiritual ministry of our pastor as he ministers to us as well as to others (1 Sam. 7:8; Rom. 15:30: 2 Cor. 1:11; Eph. 6:18, 20; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; 2 Thess. 3:1, 3; 1 Tim. 2:2; Philem. 1:22; James 5:16). (See *Church Leadership-Prayer*).

345 - Patience-Prayer (James 5:7-8)

We must ask God to make us more patient and then trust Him to develop His plan in our life. The command to be patient should be accompanied by our prayer to make it happen in our life (Luke 8:15; Rom. 15:4; 2 Cor. 6:4-5; Gal. 5:5, 6:9; Heb. 12:1-2; James 5:7-8). (See *Humility-Prayer, Non-Anxiety Prayer, Peaceful Living-Prayer, Wait-Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

346 - Patient-Teaching Prayer (2 Tim. 4:2)

Requests for God to work in hearts of listeners when the Word is taught. Like seeds that don't give fruit immediately, we need patient-faith to continue our teaching ministry when we don't immediately see results (Matt. 13:30; 1 Cor. 4:5; 2 Tim. 4:2, 14-15). (See *Others-Prayer, Patience Needed Prayer*).

347 - Peaceful-Living Prayer (Heb. 12:14)

We should be thankful for peace with God and then pray for His peace to flood our souls. We should pray to live peacefully with the people we deal with daily, and pray for peace in our country and the world (Pss. 29:11; Isa. 32:17, 48:22, 55:12; John 14:27, 16:33, 20:19; Rom. 1:7; Eph. 2:14, 17; Phil. 4:7; Heb. 12:14). (See *Great Commission-Prayer, Government Leaders-Intercession, Non-Anxiety Prayer, Waiting in Prayer*).

348 - Perception-Expectation Prayer (1 Sam. 14:8)

Life is made up of perceptions that lead to expectations, and these two forces influence our faith when we pray. Saul expected to fail and did nothing (1 Sam. 14:2). His son, Jonathan, had bold faith and perceived he could defeat the enemy, so he went into battle expecting to defeat the enemy, so he won. We should pray to perceive correctly the culture in which we live, and pray to expect God's blessing in the things we do. (See *Asking-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Prayer* and various *Faith* prayers).

349 - Persecution-Prayer (2 Tim. 3:12)

This is a request for God to prepare us for a time of difficulty and persecution that is more serious than we presently have. Then we pray that God will keep us strong and true when persecution comes. We should pray (1) for our persecution; (2) for our testimony; (3) for grace to endure; and (4) for God to use our suffering for His glory (Pss. 37:12; Matt. 5:10; Luke 14:26-27, 22:15, 24:24; John 15:18-25; Acts 3:12, 14:22; 2 Tim. 3:11-12; 1 Peter 2:20-22, 3:14, 4:12-18; Rev. 1:9, 7:14). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Offense of the Cross-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

350 - Persistent-Prayer (Matt. 7:7-8)

Jesus told us to "ask" (Matt. 7:7), because persistence is a reflection of our continued relationship with God. Technically, we can never break our relationship with God, just as earthly children will always be the children of their earthly parents who gave them birth. But we can break our fellowship with our heavenly Father by disobedience, inattention, or focusing our life away from Him. But if we continue in prayer, we continue in fellowship with the Father. This is a reflection of what Jesus said, "If you abide in Me...you will ask what you desire" (John 15:7). (See *Asking-Prayer, Continued-Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Praying, Prevailing-Prayer*).

351 - Personal-Request Prayer (Rom. 15:36)

When we ask for others to pray for our personal needs or requests, we should pray for them in return (Matt. 18:19). There is power when we pray for others and with others (Matt. 18:19; Acts 1:14, 2:1-2, 4:24, 12:5; Rom. 15:30; Eph. 6:18; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; 1 Thess. 5:17, 25; Heb. 13:18-19). (See *Agreement-Prayer, Consensus-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying, Oneness-Prayer, Two-Prayer, Support-Prayer*).

352 - Perverted-Prayer (2 Cor. 6:17-18)

Our prayers are perverted when we wrongly base our prayers on error, wrong information, or a lie. We cannot expect God to answer perverted prayers. We will not get an answer when we pray for the opposite of God's written will. Eve used perverted logic when she tried to defend herself from satan by saying, "God has said, 'You shall not... touch it'" (Gen. 3:3). God had only said, "You shall not...eat it," Eve added her opinion about touching the tree (Matt. 4:1-11; Rom. 1:24; 2 Cor. 6:17; Col. 32:21). (See *Blocked-Prayer, False-Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Pretend-Prayer*).

353 - Physical Before Spiritual-Prayer (1 Cor. 15:46)

This deals with priority of attention. The physical has priority in life because the spiritual needs a physical home in which to express prayer, godliness, faith, and spiritual walk with God. However, the spiritual is not first. Therefore, we should give attention to our physical needs, and to work to provide for our physical needs (Gen. 36:31; 1 Chron. 1:43; 1 Cor. 15:46). (See *Jesus First-Prayer*).

354 - Pleasant-Smelling Prayer (Rev. 8:4)

Incense offered in the tabernacle or temple was symbolic of prayers that went up to God and were pleasing to Him. This focuses on pleasing God with our prayers, rather than focusing on the things we do or say in prayer (Exod. 30:1; Pss. 141:2; Luke 1:10; Rom. 13:14; Gal. 6:8; Heb. 4:15-16; James 3:18; Rev. 8:4). (See various *Worship* prayers).

355 - Pleasing God-Prayer (1 John 3:22)

We should put prayer before other activities in our life, so that we actually give up something that is necessary or desirable so that God has first place in our lives. God is pleased when we sacrifice to Him. When we live according to God's commands, and exercise diligent faith when we pray, we please Him (Matt. 7:24-25; John 8:29, 15:10; 1 Thess. 4:1; 2 Tim. 4:2; Heb. 11:6; 1 John 3:22). (See *Pleasant-Smelling-Prayer,* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

356 - Possibility-Praying (Mark 9:23)

Many want to claim this promise, "All things are possible for the person who believes." However, note the limitations of faith or belief. It's not how long you pray, how sincerely you pray, or how many times you pray. Belief or faith is a relationship to Jesus Christ. We must be in close relationship to Christ and then we must realize that Jesus gives us answers. God is the Giver, we are only the receiver (Gen. 18:14; Num. 11:23; Deut. 7:21; 1 Sam. 14:6; 2 Kings 7:1; Jer. 32:17; Zech. 8:6; Luke 1:37; Eph. 3:20; Phil. 4:13). (See *Asking-Prayer, Interventional-Prayer,* and various *Faith* prayers).

357 - Posture in Prayer (2 Sam. 7:18)

God does not hear our prayers because we are kneeling, folding our hands, or looking toward heaven. God hears our prayers because of the sincerity of our heart. However, our outward posture should reflect our inner response to God. God is more interested in the posture of our *heart* than He is in the posture of our *body*. Therefore, no single prayer posture is the "correct" one. We can sit, stand, kneel, or prostrate ourselves bowing with our face to the ground, or fold our hands. "Then King David went in and sat before the Lord" (2 Sam. 7:18). (See *Face-Down Worship,* and various *Worship* prayers).

358 - Powerful-Ministry Prayer (Acts 2:4)

This is what the believer seeks when preparing to serve the Lord. Power comes when believers (1) spend extended time in prayer; (2) pray together; (3) yield to the leading of the Spirit; and (4) are filled with the Holy Spirit (Luke 1:53; John 7:37-39, 14:16-18; Acts 2:4; Rom. 15:13; Eph. 5:18). (See *Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Holy Spirit-Praying, Spiritual Strength-Prayer*).

359 - Power-Praying (Rom. 1:16)

When we pray to receive salvation, it's more than believing the content of the gospel. It's receiving Jesus Christ, the Son of God into our life. He is alive and becomes the power that transforms our life (Rom. 1:16, 6:5-6; 1 Cor. 1:18, 24; 2:4, 15:1-3; Gal. 1:7-9; 1 Tim. 1:11). (See *Holy Spirit-Praying, Spiritual Strength-Prayer, Transforming-Prayer*).

360 - Power-Seeking Prayer (Matt 9:8)

We all want power of something, e.g., power of position, power of knowledge, power of money, etc. But God gives us power, "who had given such power to men" (Matt. 9:8), so much so that, "they were all amazed" (Mark 1:27). But this is not a spiritual gift of power, or healing, or miracles. No, that would limit power to only a few. Cannot all heal through prayer (see James 5:15), or do mighty works (John 14:12)? But power comes from the Holy Spirit (Acts 1:8), and not from ourselves. To get this power, we must enter the closet of prayer to seek to know God, to acquire the fruit of the Spirit, to understand spiritual things, and then we have power with God. That power is available to all, but few acquire it (Matt. 12:23, 15:31; Mark 2:12, 7:37; Luke 5:26, 7:16; John 14:12; Acts 1:8, 2:41). (See *Power-Praying, Spirit-Helped Prayer, Spiritual Strength-Prayer*).

361 - Praise for Forgiveness (Pss. 103:3)

Praise is the response of a grateful people because God has forgiven their sins and has given them an abundance of life (Exod. 32:32; 1 Kings 8:30 ff.; 2 Chron. 6:21 ff.; Pss. 25:18, 86:5, 103:3; Matt. 6:12; Mark 2:7, 11:25-26; 1 John 1:9). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Thanksgiving for Redemption*).

362 - Praise for God's Care (Eph. 3:20-21)

We should praise God for all He is, and all He has done for us, and even for all that we don't know (Eph. 3:20-21). (See *Face-Down Worship,* and various *Worship* prayers).

363 - Praise for God's Provision (Pss. 23:1)

God supplies our needs directly and through secondary means. We must praise God for giving us strength to work for food, and opportunities to work for finances that provide for our needs. God places us in situations where we may be full or empty, but through it all God provides for us (Gen. 48:15; Pss. 23:1, 37:3, 103:4, 5; Matt. 6:25-34; 1 Tim. 6:6-10; James 1:17). (See various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

364 - Praise for God's Sovereignty (Gen. 45:5)

Recognizing all that God does for us and thanking Him with exaltation and worship. We must thank God for both the good and bad days that bring us to the present time (Gen. 45:5, 7; Rom. 8:28). (See various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

365 - Praise-Sacrifice to God (Heb. 13:15)

We should worship God, offering Him praise, worship, and exaltation. Just as the Old Testament believers brought an animal sacrifice to worship God, today we offer worship to God by yielding our bodies as a sacrifice to do His will in all things (Pss. 50:14, 69:30-31,

107:21-22, 118:19, 136:1; Rom. 12:1-2; Eph. 5:19-20; Col. 3:16; Heb. 13:15; Rev. 4:8, 5:9). (See *Face-Down Worship,* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

366 - Praise-Worship of God (Gal. 1:5)

We should worship God with praises for all He has done in and through us. When we praise God (1) we obey His command, (2) we expand our work for God, (3) we influence other Christians, and (4) we begin to "crucify" the desires of pride and ego that would destroy our walk with God (Pss. 41:13; Matt. 6:13; Rom. 11:36, 16:27; Eph. 1:12; Phil. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:17; 2 Tim. 4:18; Rev. 4:9-11). (See *Face-Down Worship,* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

367 - Praise-Worthy Prayer (Luke 10:21)

Praise comes from an old word for *prize* or *price.* When we praise God, we give Him the prize or price for who He is, or what He has done. Praise is favorable judgment, commendation, glorification, approval, thanksgiving, or worship (Pss. 9:1, 30:12, 40:3, 106:1; Rom. 1:8; Eph. 5:20; Rev. 5:11-12). (See *Face-Down Worship,* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

368 - Prayer-Excursion Prayer (Pss. 137:1-4)

When one person or a group of people journey to a certain geographical location (usually a distance from their home), they can pray for a specific need at that location. (See *Geographical-Prayer, Prayer-Journey Prayer, Prayer-Walking*).

369 - Prayer-Journey Prayer (Pss. 126:5-6)

When people walk from one destination to another, they can pray for the specific needs of those along their routes. (See *Geographical-Prayer, Prayer-Walking, Prayer-Excursion Prayer*).

370 - Prayer-List Prayer (1 Tim. 2:1 ff.)

Using a list of requests to guide our praying helps discipline our times of prayer so that nothing is left out and everything is included in our intercession. (See *Disciplined-Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

371 - Prayers Received by Christ (Heb. 7:8)

We will pray more effectively when we realize the prayers we offer on earth are received by Christ in heaven. He takes them and presents them to the Father (Heb. 7:8, 9:25). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

372 - Prayer-Walking (Gen. 13:17)

This is when individuals or groups of people come together to walk around a place or people and to pray for a specific need at that location, that is, "praying on site with insight" (see Joshua 1:2-5). (See *Geographical-Praying, Prayer-Excursion Prayer, Prayer-Journey Prayer*).

373 - Praying about Prayer (Matt. 6:5-13)

Because prayer is absolutely vital to our spiritual life, we must pray because: (1) it deepens our relationship with God; (2) it gives us inner peace and victory over negative emotions; (3) it protects us from evil; (4) it gets answers; (5) it gives insight into Scripture; and (6) it helps us influence others positively (Jer. 33:3; Matt. 7:7-8; Mark 11:22-24; John 14:13-14, 15:7, 15; James 4:2-4). (See *Asking-Prayer, Believing-Prayer, Definition of Prayer, Trusting-Prayer*).

374 - Praying Against the Lies of Your Enemy (Pss. 31:18)

We have difficulty dealing with those who lie about us, and we have to deal with the results in people who believe the "liars." We must (1) pray for strength to deal with the situation; (2) pray for a truthful way to handle the situation; (3) pray for the salvation of the "liars;" and (4) pray God's grace on them (Luke 6:27-31) so God can deal with them (Rom. 12:17-21). (See also Pss. 12:3, 31:18, 59:12, 63:11, 140:9-11; Isa. 54:17; John 8:44, 14:6). (See *Affliction-Prayer, Persecution-Prayer* and various *Truth* prayers).

375 - Pre-Answer to Prayer (Isa. 65:24)

Sometimes God works out circumstances before we pray, and then He can also answer after we pray. "Before they call, I will answer" (Isa. 65:24). (See *Waiting in Prayer, Waiting Anxiously in Prayer*).

376 - Pregnancy-Prayer (Gen. 25:22)

We should pray for our children before conception, and then ask God for healthy children and that they will come to know the Lord in salvation and grow in their faith (Gen. 25:22). (See *Asking-Prayer, Blessing Children-Prayer, Supernatural-Praying*).

377 - Presence of God-Prayer (Pss. 16:11)

We enjoy the presence of God because it strengthens us, heals us, and equips us to go back into an evil world. Sometimes God's presence comes automatically when we pray, at other times we must ask for His presence. There are times when His presence becomes more real to us than other times and we seem to pray more effectively. We find peace and joy

in God's presence (Pss. 16:11, 27:5, 36:8, 37:4-5, 84:10; Acts 7:56; Gal. 2:20; Phil. 1:21, 3:10-14). (See *Atmospheric-Worship, God-Pleasing Prayer* and various *Worship* prayers).

378 - Pretend-Prayer (Matt. 6:5)

A man went into the street to pray "that they may be seen of men" (Matt. 6:5). "Two men went up into the temple to pray...." (Luke 18:10). The first did not pray correctly, he only pretended he was communicating with God because he said, "God, I thank You that I am not like other men" (Luke 18:11). True prayer is communication with God; pretend prayer is impressing those who heard us pray, or deceiving ourselves into thinking we are praying, when we're not (Isa. 1:15; Matt. 6:5, 21:28-32; 1 Cor. 11:5; 1 John 5:16). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Questionable-Praying, Wrong Motives in Prayer*).

379 - Prevailing-Prayer (Jer. 12:1)

God wants us to prevail in prayer. Many times our flesh is weak and we need to stay focused on the things for which we are praying. There are times when God will test our sincerity, or our determination by challenging us, "Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you" (Matt. 7:7). (See *Continued-Prayer, Intermittent-Prayer, Persistent-Prayer*).

380 - Priority-Faith Praying (Matt. 6:33)

We all have priorities, that is, what we do first when we arise in the morning, and what we do first at our job. Don't be surprised that God has priorities of things He wants done. We are more likely to get our prayers answered when our prayers match God's priorities. We should recognize the following priorities when we organize our time of prayer: (1) worship of God; (2) dedication of ourselves to holiness; (3) salvation of the lost; (4) the growth and health of believers; and (5) the growth and health of our local church. While this list is not complete, perhaps it reminds us that prayers for church buildings, or a salary increase, or other physical things are not as important as spiritual things (Prov. 3:9; Matt. 6:33; John 6:27 ff.; Acts 20:20). (See *Desperate-Prayer, Urgent-Prayer*).

381 - Priority-Praying (Acts 6:4)

Waiting tables in humanitarian projects is always good, but investing our time in prayer and Scripture is much more imperative. All work for God is good but prayer is imperative. We must (1) put prayer at the top of our priority; (2) pray about our work for God before we attempt to work for God; and (3) commit our time and energy to the priority of prayer (Exod. 17:4-13; Deut. 4:29; 2 Chron. 15:15; Pss. 34:4; Matt. 7:7; Acts 6:4; Col. 3:1). (See *First Prayer Each Day, Jesus First-Prayer, Morning-Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

382 - Problem-Solving Prayer (Acts 27:33)

Believers should pray about all the problems they face in their lives. Sometimes God answers supernaturally; other times God wants us to use our common sense to solve the dilemmas we face. There are five steps to problem solving. First, define the problem clearly so we know what is the dilemma. As we pray about a problem, it usually becomes clear what we must do, or in prayer God directs us to a solution. Second, gather as much data about the problem as possible. Third, arrive at a possible solution to our problem. Sometimes this is one among many solutions. Ask God to give wisdom to follow the best solution. Fourth, apply the solution; then test it to see if it's the answer. Again, we should pray over the solution after we've tried to solve it. Fifth, learn principles on how to solve that problem, and similar ones in the future (Exod. 15:25, 17:4; Num. 11:11, 14:10, 16:19; 1 Sam. 30:6; Pss. 50:15, 91:15, 99:6; Jer. 15:1). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer,* and the various *Victory* prayers).

383 - Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer (Gal. 3:14)

This is requesting and receiving all the benefits promised to us by the Holy Spirit: (1) eternal life; (2) indwelling; (3) illuminating; (4) guidance; (5) sealing; (6) earnest of future blessings; and (7) His intercession for us (Joel 2:28; Zech. 12:4, 6; Luke 11:13; John 7:39; Acts 1:4-5, 2:1-4; Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 12:13; 2 Cor. 1:22; Eph. 1:13-14; 1 Peter 1:22). (See *Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Holy Spirit-Praying, Spirit-Helped Prayer*).

384 - Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying (Rom. 12:3-8)

This is asking God to reveal to us our specific abilities, how to use them, when to use them, and where they will be effective. It's also praying for God to use our giftedness for His service and glory (Matt. 25:14, 15; Rom. 12:6, 8; 15:25; 1 Cor. 4:7, 12:4, 11; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10). (See *Spirit-Helped Prayer, Spiritual-Gift Praying* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

385 - Propitiation Intercession-Prayer (1 John 2:2)

This is the prayer of Jesus to cleanse us from all sins, because His blood is sufficient to forgive the whole world; yet, His blood is efficient for those who repent and believe (John 1:29; Rom. 3:25-26; 2 Cor. 5:18; 1 Peter 1:18-20, 3:18; 1 John 2:2). (See *Forgiveness Prayer, Forgiveness-Transformation Prayer*).

386 - Prosper Bless-Prayer (Deut. 28:1-4)

This is when the blessor speaks or prays God's promise of physical and material blessing into the recipient's life (see Gen. 28:3; Deut. 28:1-4). (See various *Blessing* prayers).

387 - Protection-Prayer (Isa. 43:2, 3)

This is when you pray for God Himself to become a hedge around the recipient's life to protect him or her from the evil one. We should pray for God's protection, and yield ourselves to Him. But we should not tell God how to protect us. (1) God protects by guardian angels (Matt. 18:10; Heb. 12:2); (2) by sovereign acts; (3) by arranging circumstances; (4) by divine intervention; (5) by timing; and (6) by means we don't know about. However, God allowed Stephen (Acts 7:60) and James (Acts 12:1) to be martyred while He delivered Paul after stoning (Acts 14:20) (Gen. 12:3; Job 1:10; Pss. 84:11, 128:5-6; Rom. 12:20; Heb. 13:6). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer*).

388 - Provision of Food Praise (Pss. 65:9-11)

God has created us with bodies that need food and fuel for energy to grow and work. Without the provision of sun, rain, and soil, our food wouldn't grow. So we must thank God for His provision of food for our health and strength. We must praise God for His plan for our physical life on earth (Gen. 1, 2:9; Pss. 65:9-11, 136:25; Prov. 6:8; Matt. 6:11; 1 Tim. 6:18, 19). (See *Food-Provision Praise, Meal-Thanksgiving or Blessing Prayer, Strength and Nourishment Prayer*).

389 - Purity-Praying (2 Peter 3:1)

Because our old nature constantly pulls us away from God, we must constantly pray and strive to be pure from sin. We must fill our minds with Scripture and the purity of Jesus Christ. Purity praying is repenting of evil thoughts and asking God to fill our minds with His purity (Dan. 12:10; Gal. 5:17-21; Eph. 5:3-5; Titus 2:14; James 4:8; 1 Peter 1:22; 2 Peter 3:1; 1 John 3:3). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Crucifixion-Prayer, Holiness-Prayer, Separation-Prayer*).

390 - Questionable-Praying (Acts 1:24)

It is commendable that the early church prayed about the first decision it faced, that is, who should take Judas' place. Whether their decision was right or wrong is not the issue. It was their passion for prayer and their example of prayer that speaks to us. Many feel they should have waited for Paul, an apostle born out of due season (1 Cor. 15:8). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Wrong Motives in Prayer*).

391 - Race-Preparation Prayer (Heb. 12:1)

The Christian life is a race; it is both a dash and a marathon. We must get rid of sin that hinders us, and discipline ourselves to run without baggage that would slow us down. We must remember others who have run well and look constantly to Jesus who is our goal and

prize (Luke 9:26; 1 Cor. 9:24, 27; Gal. 5:7; Phil. 2:16, 3:10-14; Heb. 12:1). (See *Disciplined-Prayer, Goal-Striving Prayer, Running a Good Race-Prayer*).

392 - Recognizing God's Creative Power-Prayer (Pss. 97:5)

One of the many reasons we must worship God is His power in creating the universe, sustaining the universe, and His power to judge in the last days (Pss. 30:4, 60:6, 97:5; Hab. 1:12-13; Heb. 12:10). (See *Creation-Inspired Worship*).

393 - Recognizing God's Presence in Prayer (Gen. 16:13)

God is with us all the time, but often we do not realize it. However, when we need deliverance from our problems, temptations and trials, we must recognize God's presence in our prayers and ask Him to help us (Pss. 91:3-11, 139:7-13). (See *Atmospheric-Worship, God's Presence Blessing, God-Recognition Prayer, Presence of God-Prayer*).

394 - Redemption-Worship (Rev. 5:12)

Believers will worship God in heaven because of their redemption. Just as we now worship Christ for our redemption, so we will worship Him in heaven for redemption (John 3:35-36, 17:2; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Tim. 1:17; Rev. 5:12). (See *Crown-Casting Worship,* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers*).*

395 - Redemptive Prayer for the Lost (Rom. 10:1)

We pay the price in redemptive intercession so that lost people are saved. In redemptive praying we identify ourselves with the ones for whom we are praying. It is physically draining and emotionally exhausting because the sin of those for whom we pray may break our hearts. (See *Evangelistic-Prayer, Soul Winner's-Prayer, Unsaved-Prayer*).

396 - Rejoicing for Others-Prayer (Phil. 1:4)

This is pouring out to God your happiness for the spiritual growth of other people so that we rejoice with them in their victories and spiritual growth (Phil. 3:17-18, 4:1). (See *Loving-People Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

397 - Rejoicing in Prayer (Pss. 5:11)

The emotional expression of joy and happiness to God because of what He has done for us in the past and for what He will do at the triumphant return of Jesus to earth (Deut. 32:43; 1 Sam. 2:1; Pss. 5:11, 9:14, 48:11, 63:7, 98:4; Prov. 29:2; Isa. 66:10, 14; Zech. 9:9; John 16:22; Phil. 1:18, 2:17, 3:1, 4:4; 1 Thess. 5:16; 1 Peter 1:8; Rev. 19:7). (See *Anticipating His Return, Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer, Watchful-Prayer*).

398 - Reluctant Answers to Prayer (Gen. 6:6)

There are times when God doesn't immediately answer when we pray. Yet God may reluctantly or hesitantly answer our prayer. Because of Israel's sin, God told Moses, "I will not go up in your midst...for you *are* a stiff-necked people" (Exod. 33:3). But Moses kept praying, "If Your Presence does not go *with us,* do not bring us up from here" (Exod. 33:15). Then God acquiesced to Moses' request, "My Presence will go *with you,* and I will give you rest" (Exod. 33:14). When the Bible says, "the LORD was sorry" (Gen. 6:6), it does not mean that God changes His mind, "For I *am* the LORD, I do not change" (Mal. 3:6). This means His nature cannot change. But when people change, God acts differently toward them. A person may be blessed by God for obedience, but when the person sins, God must act differently to respond to their sin. (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, Overcoming God's Inertia-Prayer*).

399 - Repentance-Prayer (Matt. 3:2, 8)

Repentance means to turn around. *Repentance-Prayer* realizes we have broken God's commands and we are sorry for what we have done. We confess our sin and ask to be restored to God's fellowship (1 John 1:9). Then we ask God to cleanse us and in repentance promise not to return to that sin (Pss. 66:18; John 9:31). True repentance is reflected in: (1) acknowledgment of personal responsibility for sin (Pss. 31:4); (2) godly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:9); (3) forsaking sin (Isa. 55:7); (4) asking God for forgiveness; and (5) bearing fruit that reflects repentance (Matt. 3:8, *ELT*) (Pss. 51:4-6; Isa. 1:18, 55:7; Ezra 8:31; Acts 2:38; 1 John 1:8-10). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Restorative Prayer, Sin-Realization Prayer, Sin-Stopping Prayer*).

400 - Reserved-Prayer (John 11:33)

This is coming to God with a reserved attitude because we are not sure what we should ask. "But even now I know that whatever You ask of God, God will give You" (John 11:22). (See *Trusting-Prayer,* and various *Wait* prayers).

401 - Resistance-Prayer (John 9:31)

This comes from a resistant heart where we want to do our own will, and not the will of God. Sometimes resistance prayer tries to substitute something in place of God's perfect will for our life. Sometimes resistance prayer just hinders God's will and gives every excuse possible why we shouldn't do God's perfect will. (See *Blocked-Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer, Yielding to God in Prayer* and various *"No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

402 - Responsibility-Praying (Pss. 5:7)

When God calls, we must answer in prayer with responsiveness and readiness. God knows our name and He can meet our need. We are close enough to God to recognize His voice, and to respond positively to Him. (See *Continue in Prayer, Intermittent Prayer, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer*).

403 - Restoration of Fallen Believers-Prayer (Gal. 6:1)

This is a request by a spiritual believer for a backslidden sinner to be convicted of his or her sin, then to turn back to God. This prayer also requests wisdom, ability, and humility to deal with them (Rom. 14:1, 15:1; Gal. 6:1; Heb. 12:13; James 5:19). (See *Love One Another-Prayer, Others-Prayer, Restorative-Prayer*).

404 - Restorative-Prayer (Isa. 55:7)

After we've sinned, we don't feel like praying, and we probably are not spiritually able to pray. But we have an obligation to return to God. We must use *Restorative-Prayer* because it's the right thing to do. First, we must deal with our sin (see *Confession-Prayer*) (1 John 1:9); second, we must repent (Matt. 3:8). (See *Forgiveness-Prayer, Propitiation-Intercession Prayer, Repentance Prayer*).

405 - Resurrection-Inspired Praying (1 Cor. 15:50)

The resurrection of Christ is the foundation for all praying, because: (1) we pray through Christ our advocate who intercedes for us at the right hand of the Father; (2) we are motivated to pray because of the indwelling Christ; and (3) we have a new relationship with the Father because we are made alive in Christ (Pss. 16:10; John 5:28-29, 11:25; 1 Cor. 15:50; Eph. 2:5-7; Col. 1:28; Heb. 7:24-25). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer, Man in the Glory-Prayer*).

406 - Reverent Praying (Pss. 111:10)

We must give total reverence and awe to God because there is none greater than He. He is all powerful (omnipotent), equally present in all places at all times (omnipresent), and all knowing of everything past, present, future, and all things potential that didn't happen (omniscient). (See *Face-Down Worship* and various *Worship* and *Praise* prayers).

407 - Revival of Our Nation-Prayer (2 Chron. 7:14)

We must pray against injustices in the world, asking God for spiritual revival by convicting society of its sin. Then we should pray for human leaders to call people back to God and/or stand against a particular sin of injustice. We pray for a public recognition of the nation's sin and a public repentance. We are praying for God to hold back the tide of

iniquity that is destroying civilization. (See *Government Leaders-Intercession, Great Commission-Prayer, Revival Prayer*).

408 - Revival-Prayer (Pss. 85:6)

Revival happens when God pours His presence on His people. When a person faints, he must be revived. When God re-enters our life we get spiritual insight, renewed passion for prayer, vigor for Christian service, and there is a result called *atmospheric revival,* that is, we can experience God's presence, just as one feels moisture when it is not raining, but it is about to rain. Revival is not normative for daily living; it is therapeutic to restore us to the Spirit-filled life. Revival involves confession and repentance of sin, seeking God's forgiveness and cleansing and restoration of fellowship with Him (Pss. 84:6, 138:7; Isaiah 57:15; Joel 2:28; Acts 2:17; Heb. 3:2). (See *Government Leaders-Intercession, Great Commission-Prayer, Revival of Our Nation-Prayer*).

409 - Reward-Prayer (1 Cor. 3:14)

We receive compensation for our prayers or any other type of gratuity for the work we do for God. We pray for God to work through us, and when He does, we may or may not be given compensation. However, our greatest rewards and the spiritual benefits we get from serving God are joy, peace, fruit, and the confidence we get from being used by Him. Besides that, we also know God will reward us in heaven (2 Chron. 31:20; Matt. 25:21; Luke 16:10; 1 Cor. 3:12-15, 4:5; 2 Cor. 5:9; 1 Tim. 5:21). (See *Fruit-Producing Prayer, Fruitful-Prayer*).

410 - Righteous-People Prayer (1 Peter 3:12)

We can claim the promise that "the eyes of the LORD *are* on the righteous, and His ears *are open* to their prayers" (1 Peter 3:12). The description "righteous" means: (1) they are declared righteous in justification, so they are God's children; and (2) they do the right things in their life (Pss. 11:4, 65:2; John 9:31; James 5:16). (See *Justification-Based Prayer, Propitiation-Intercession Prayer*).

411 - Running a Good Race-Prayer (Gal. 5:7)

This is asking God for strength and determination to finish the race we face in life (Gal. 5:7; 1 Cor. 9:24-27; Phil. 3:14; 1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 4:8; Rev. 2:10). (See *Goal-Striving Prayer, Race-Preparation Prayer*).

412 - Sacrificial-Prayer (Heb. 13:15)

This is offering to God a sacrifice—not animals—but the sacrifice of praise to God with our liPss. When we speak to God, giving Him first place with our lips, we offer a "God

pleasing prayer." (See *Commitment-Prayer, Giving Ourselves to God-Prayer, God-Glorifying Prayer, God-Pleasing Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

413 - Safe-Keeping Prayer (Pss. 4:8)

We can have confidence God will keep us safe until we have done the task God called us to do. The servants of God are invincible until the task is finished. Therefore call on God for protection because no one knows the hour when God will call us home (Deut. 12:10, 33:27; Pss. 4:8, 54:4, 91:1, 141:9; Eccl. 9:12; Isa. 43:1; Matt. 10:31; Luke 2:10). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Spiritual-Protective Prayer*).

414 - Saint Paul Fast and Prayer (Isa. 58:8)

This is a spiritual discipline when we fast and pray for wisdom in decision-making. In fasting, we gain a clearer perspective and insight as we make crucial decisions. In prayer, we delight ourselves in the Lord so that our desire becomes what He wants in this decision (see Pss. 37:4). We must seek first the kingdom of God and His righteousness in our life so we can follow His principles in analyzing and making a decision (see Matt. 6:33). We must seek the Lord for the best decision to remain in the center of His will (see Rom. 12:1, 2). (See *Insight-Prayer, Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Wisdom-Directed Prayer*).

415 - Salvation-Appreciation Prayer (Rev. 7:10)

This is the grateful response of every believer to God because He has saved them (Pss. 3:8, 37:39, 68:19-20, 115:1; Isa. 43:11; Jonah 2:9; Zech. 9:9; Luke 3:6; John 4:22; Eph. 2:8-9). (See *New Birth Praise-Prayer, Praise for Forgiveness, and Thanksgiving for Redemption*).

416 - Salvation-Prayer (Luke 18:13)

This is a prayer to receive Jesus Christ for personal salvation (see Mark 10:14-16; Luke 6:28). Admit you have sinned (Rom. 3:23) and believe that Jesus Christ died for you (John 1:12), confess that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life (Rom. 10:9) and pray: Dear Lord Jesus, I know that I am a sinner. I believe that You died for my sins and arose from the grave. Come into my heart and save me. I receive You as my personal Savior. Amen. (See *New Birth Praise-Prayer, Praise for Forgiveness, Thanksgiving for Redemption*).

417 - Samuel Fast and Prayer (1 Sam. 7:6)

Fasting is a spiritual discipline in which we pray for revival and soul winning so that unbelievers get saved, and that God's people enslaved by sin might be delivered. Samuel "gathered (Israel) together at Mizpah, drew water, and poured *it* out before the LORD. And they fasted that day, and said there, 'We have sinned against the LORD' (1 Sam. 7:6). The

prayer of revival is, "If My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land" (2 Chron. 7:14). (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Soul Winner's Prayer, Repentance Prayer, Revival Prayer*).

418 - Sanctification-Prayer (1 Thess. 4:3, 7)

This is a prayer of asking God to make us holy and keep us from sin. It is a prayer for self-discipline to keep separate from sin (Matt. 15:19; Acts 15:20, 29; 1 Cor. 3:16, 5:11; 2 Cor. 6:14-17; Gal. 5:9; Eph. 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5; 1 Peter 1:16). (See *Clean-Conscience Praying, Holiness-Prayer, Purity-Praying, Sanctification-Praying*).

419 - Sanctified-Praying (Heb. 10:14)

The word "sanctify" means "to separate" and has a threefold application: (1) thanking God for the new position in Christ we received in *past sanctification* when we accepted Christ as Savior; (2) asking God to continue working in our lives in *present sanctification* to keep us from the power of sin; (3) thanking God for *future sanctification* when we will be separated from the presence of sin (Acts 20:32, 26:13; Rom. 15:16; 1 Cor. 1:2; Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:14, 2:11; Jude 1). (See *Holiness-Prayer, Purity-Praying, Sanctification-Prayer, Separation-Prayer*).

420 - Sanctuary-Prayer (Rev. 21:22)

God was present in the Old Testament in the tabernacle/temple. A sanctuary is a place where God dwells. Now all believers are indwelt by Christ, so that makes their bodies His sanctuary. Therefore, when we pray from our hearts, we are praying from our sanctuary (1 Kings 8:10-11, 27; Isa. 66:1; John 1:14, 4:23; Col. 1:27, 2:9, 3:1-3; Rev. 21:22). (See *Christ's Indwelling-Prayer, Christ Formed in Us-Prayer, Torn-Veil Prayer* and various *Jesus* prayers).

421 - Sarcastic-Worship (John 19:2-3)

Throughout Christian history there have been public "Christian" acts of worship by people who don't know Christ. Whether it's public prayer or some other "Christian" recognition, it doesn't bring honor to Christ, any more than did the crown of thorns on the head of Christ. "Why would the world take something so special like the crown we give to Christ, and mock it?" (Pss. 22:6; Isa. 53:3; Matt. 27:27-31; Mark 15:17-20; Luke 23:11). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Pretend-Prayer*).

422 - Satanic-Prayer (Rev. 13:13)

In the future tribulation, satan's representative (the antichrist) will copy the work of God and bring fire from heaven in the sight of people, just as the Holy Spirit did on the day of

Pentecost (Joel 2:28-32; Acts 2:1-4; Rev. 13:13). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Sarcastic-Worship*).

423 - Say-It-Faith Prayer (Mark 11:23)

When the intercessors have confident faith in God that their prayers are both heard and will be answered, they can (1) announce the prayer goal publicly; (2) ask specifically for the request; and (3) know that with confidence they will receive their request because they pray in faith. Some illustrations of *Say-It-Faith* are: Hannah praying for a son (1 Sam. 1:7-19); Elijah praying for rain (1 Kings 18:42); Elisha praying for his servant to see angels surrounding them (2 Kings 6:16-17) (Matt. 21:21; Rom. 4:18 ff.; Heb. 11:6, 17; James 5:17, 18; 1 John 5:14-15). (See *Asking-Prayer, Interventional-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Prayer,* and various *Faith* prayers).

424 - Scoffer-Avoidance Prayer (Prov. 21:24)

Because the scoffer thinks he is always right, he can't see right principles nor live by them. He constantly tears down anything that disagrees with his orientation to life; he is not a positive builder in life. He doesn't build up himself, he doesn't build up his family, nor does he build up his friends. The scoffer who thinks he knows it all actually can't listen to those who want to help him, nor will he listen to Christian leaders who try to correct him or give him God's principles by which he should live. "Scoffers set a city aflame, but wise *men* turn away wrath" (Prov. 29:8). The scoffer is headed toward punishment or destruction. "Pride *goes* before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall" (Prov. 16:18). One of the problems with pride is that it creates a false security in the scoffer when in fact they suffer the consequences of their own ignorance. The scoffer has no confidence in God's ability to guide him by right principles. Self-will and rebellion go hand in hand. "A haughty look, a proud heart, *and* the plowing of the wicked *are* sin" (Prov. 21:4). We must ask God to protect us from scoffers and pray that the critical nature of a scoffer does not influence us (Prov. 14:6, 15:12, 19:25, 29; 21:24, 22:10, 24:9). (See *Accusation-Prayer, Affliction-Prayer, Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer*).

425 - Scripture-Prayer (Col. 4:16)

In our prayers it is helpful to voice the words of Scripture. Our words are probably closer to the heart of God when we use Scripture in our prayers, than when we use our own words, thoughts, and requests. (See *Bible-Prayer, Word-Praying*).

426 - Searching for God in Prayer (Heb. 11:6)

We should search diligently to know God more intimately and have His presence manifested in our lives. The key to getting our prayers answered is searching by faith and

finding God (Pss. 105:4, 106:21; Isa. 55:6; Jer. 29:13; John 3:18-19, 4:23; Heb. 11:6). (See *God-Hunger Prayer, Hunger-Prayer, Thirsty-Prayer*).

427 - Self-Control Prayer (2 Tim. 4:5)

Prayer includes asking God to help us control ourselves so that we can live according to the standards of the Word of God. Jesus wants us to be disciplined. That's why He invited men to be His disciples (Luke 9:1, 23-26; Rom. 8:13; Col. 3:5; 2 Tim. 4:5). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Discipline-Prayer, Race-Preparation Prayer*).

428 - Self-Denying Prayer (Mark 8:34)

The world teaches self-fulfillment, and self-actualization, and even self-pity. The fanatic goes to the opposite extreme, self-denial, self-groveling, self-hatred, or self-destruction. The true Christian doesn't become absorbed with self, either to praise it or to destroy it. Even Jesus said we must "love your neighbor as yourself" (Matt. 22:39). In this place Jesus didn't mean making self our chief love. No! We are to have a strong self-perception, not a weak self. We are to have a healthy self, not a sick self or a neurotic self. But the secret of the Christian life is to yield our self to God. When Jesus said, "deny himself" (Mark 8:34) or "say no to himself," He was telling us to give ourselves unreservedly to God. "No longer I...but Christ" (Gal. 2:20) (Matt. 10:38-39, 16:22-25; John 12:25-26; Rom. 8:13; Gal. 5:25, 6:14; Col. 3:5; 1 Tim. 1:15; 2 Tim. 3:2). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Disciplined-Prayer, Self-Control Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

429 - Self-Discipline Prayer (Titus 2:5, 6, 12)

We should ask God to give us self-control so that we might serve Him more effectively and so that He might be glorified through us. Since inward control is the beginning of outward discipline, we must pray for God's help in the discipline process (Job 36:10; Matt. 10:24, 25; Luke 9:23, 14:26; Titus 2:5, 6, 12). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Disciplined-Prayer, Race-Preparation Prayer*).

430 - Separation-Prayer (2 Cor. 6:17)

A Christian should live in the world, and probably work among unsaved people with their ungodly lifestyle, but Christians shouldn't live by the world's sinful standards. There's a twofold concern: first, to influence the unsaved with righteousness so they can be won to Christ; second, to keep ourselves pure so sinners don't contaminate us with evil. We are "in the world, but not of the world" (John 17:15-16) (Num. 16:21, 26, 45; Ezra 6:21, 10:11; Prov. 9:6; Isa. 52:11; Acts 2:40; 2 Cor. 6:14-18). (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Crucifixion-Prayer, Holiness-Prayer, Purity-Praying, Self-Denying Prayer*).

431 - Servanthood-Prayer (Mark 9:35)

If we want power with God, we must serve our fellow traveler on this earth. Servanthood flows out of our intimacy with the Father. We must inwardly submit to God, knowing the pride and sinfulness of our human heart. If we are clean and humble, are we ready to serve? Servanthood is a gift we receive from God, and we give it to others. Jesus is the servant who ministers in us first, and then through us to others (Matt. 20:26; Mark 9:35, 10:43-45; 2 Cor. 8:9; Phil. 2:5-8; Heb. 5:8, 9, 12:2). (See *Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Service-Prayer, Worker's-Prayer*).

432 - Service-Prayer (Heb. 5:4)

God's call involves: (1) a burden to serve Him (I must); (2) a desire to serve Him (I want); and (3) fruit in past service (Mark 1:20, 3:23, 6:7, 8:1, 9:35; John 15:16; 1 Thess. 5:23; Heb. 5:4). (See *Servanthood-Prayer, Worker's-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

433 - Sexual-Defense Praying (Prov. 7:18)

The New Testament suggests there are three things that tempt a person to sin, "For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world" (1 John 2:16). So, a whorish woman uses all three to tempt a man. First, she knows a man wants to satisfy his physical sexual appetite, so she offers him sex. Second, a whorish woman uses the lust of the eyes to tempt a man, so she casts her beauty and flashing eyes as a lure to tempt a man into a sexual tryst. Third, a whorish woman appeals to the pride of life, a man's ego, enticing a man by flattering him to be "Number One." A man's ego is independently rebellious to any control, so the trollop tempts him to stray from the path of God (Prov. 2:16, 17), come to her bed (Prov. 7:16), and to enjoy the experience of "prohibitive dreams" (Prov. 7:18). But what the man doesn't know is that when he thinks he is "Number One," the whorish woman has really won, and he is in her bondage. (See *Clean-Conscience Prayer, Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Purity-Prayer, Separation-Prayer*).

434 - Sibling-Intercession Prayer (Gen. 27:11)

We should pray for God's will to be accomplished spiritually and physically in the lives of our physical brother(s) and sister(s). This means yielding them to God in prayer and asking God to bless them. (See *Blessing Children-Prayer, Family Heritage-Prayer*).

435 - Sick Person's-Prayer (Pss. 41:3, 4)

This is a prayer for good health and healing. We can ask God to take away the cause of our sickness and give us healing and make us well (Exod. 15:26; Pss. 6:2, 41:3-4; Mal. 4:2;

Matt. 4:23, 10:1; Mark 3:15; Heb. 12:13; James 5:15). (See *Asking-Prayer, Daniel's Fast and Prayer, Healing-Prayer*).

436 - Silent-Prayer (Pss. 39:1-3)

The power of silence comes not from the absence of words but from the presence of God in our lives. Silent or "wordless" praying is a learned art and a skilled discipline. But silence is difficult because often it may seem as if nothing is happening. When we come silently to God, He shines the light of His presence into our souls and we realize that we can't offer any excuses for our failures or rationalize away any of our sin. Silence forces us to see our sins more clearly. Silence helps us change our actions and correct our bad decisions. (See *Fellowship-Praying, Silent-Worship Prayer, Solitude and Prayer*).

437 - Silent-Worship Prayer (Rev. 8:1)

Sometimes we wait in the presence of God, quietly and still. Some may think nothing is happening when nothing is said between two people, but even in silence, communication can take place. We learn from God in silence, and He receives communication from us (Pss. 35:22, 83:1; Eccl. 3:7; Isa. 41:1; Hab. 2:20; Rev. 8:1). (See *Intimacy-Prayer, Silent-Prayer, Written-Prayer*).

438 - Sin Unto Death-Prayer (1 John 5:16)

This is an intercession we are prohibited from praying. "If anyone sees his brother sinning a sin *which does* not *lead* to death, he will ask, and He will give him life for those who commit sin not *leading* to death" (1 John 5:16). A sin unto death is a premature physical death of a sinning brother who has crossed God's line of mercy. We should not pray for him (Num. 15:30-31; 1 Sam. 2:25; Matt. 12:31-32; 1 Cor. 10:27-30; 2 Tim. 4:14; Heb. 6:4-6, 10:26-31; 2 Peter 2:20-22; 1 John 5:16). (See *Hypocritical-Prayer, Pretend-Prayer, Unbelief-Prayer, Unpardonable-Prayer*).

439 - Singing-Prayer (Pss. 95:2)

We should voice our worship and request in music to God. This expresses the love of our hearts because music expresses our deep feelings. Most of the book of Psalms was sung by God's people in the Old Testament; therefore prayers were divinely given to be sung. I spend more time praying on Sunday morning than any other day of the week. It's then I open my hymnal and sing my prayers to God. They are easy to find; the hymns that end in "Amen" are usually prayers (Pss. 7:7, 33:3, 40:3, 96:1; Isa. 5:1, 42:10, 12:5; Zeph. 3:17; 1 Cor. 14:15; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Rev. 14:3, 15:1). (See *Hymn-Prayer, Worship-Roar Prayer*).

440 - Sin-Realization Prayer (Eph. 4:22)

We must come to realize that we have a sin nature, and there is a constant threat of temptation to sin. Because sin can permeate every part of our life, we must do all we can to counter the influence of sin while we pray for God's forgiveness of our sin. Then we must pray for God's power to counteract sin's great influence in our life. (See *Deceitful-Heart Prayer, Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Old-Nature Praying, Repentance Prayer*).

441 - Sin-Stopping Intercession (1 John 5:16)

Sometimes we need to intercede for a sinning Christian so he may be convicted of his sin, see the error of his way, and repent to serve God with a life that is victorious over sin (Gen. 18:23-33, 19:27-29, 20:7, 17; Exod. 32:10-14, 31-32; Num. 12:13; Job 42:7-9; Pss. 106:23; Ezek. 22:30; James 5:15-16; 1 John 5:16). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Life-Derailing Prayer, Repentance-Prayer*).

442 - Sober-Praying Prayer (Prov. 23:31)

We should commit ourselves to abstain from drinking alcohol and we should pray to keep that commitment. What does the book of Proverbs mean when it describes the drunk? Is this someone who takes a social drink, or is it someone who gets dead drunk, or is it an alcoholic, that is, someone addictive to alcohol? There are three stages of drunkenness: first, having the facilities impaired by alcohol; second, the habitual excessive use of alcohol; and third, acute or chronic drunkenness, that is, being addicted. Since the Christian should have self-discipline, the drunk is never described as a spiritual person because a drunk is controlled by the bottle. Also the drunk is not a wise person for the wise person thinks rightly, and the drunk does not think rightly. Finally, the drunk cannot be righteous, because the righteous person lives by biblical principles, and the drunk does not. Rather, the drunk lives to please the flesh (Gen. 9:21; Prov. 5:11, 20:1, 23:29-35; Isa. 5:11; Amos 6:6; Eph. 5:18). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Disciplined-Prayer, Self-Control Prayer, Self-Discipline Prayer*).

443 - Solitude and Prayer (Luke 5:16)

Jesus often sought solitude to gain strength by fellowshiping with His heavenly Father. It's good to block out the sounds of this earth so we can hear God's voice speaking to us. Solitude is a discipline to develop, but it's more than just being quiet. When we control our outward voice, we must also control our inward thoughts so that we focus on God Himself. "Be still to know Your God" (Pss. 46:10, *ELT*). We seek a closer intimacy with God in solitude and stillness. It involves meditation on Scripture, prayer, and worshiping God (Exod. 15:11; Pss. 83:18, 100:3; Prov. 25:11; Eccl. 3:7, 5:2; Hab. 2:20; Zech. 2:13;

Matt. 4:11, 14:23, 17:1-9, 26:36-46; Mark 6:31; Luke 5:16; Phil 3:10 ff.; 1 John 2:3, 5). (See *Silent-Prayer, Silent-Worship Prayer*).

444 - Soul Winner's-Prayer (Prov. 11:30)

The *King James Bible* says, "He who wins souls is wise" (Prov. 11:30), which points us to one-on-one evangelism in the New Testament, e.g., Jesus and Nicodemus (John 3:1-8), Jesus and the woman at the well (John 4:7-30), and Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:26-40). The soul winner should (1) pray for opportunities to present the gospel; (2) pray for the correct approach and words to say; (3) pray for conviction in the heart of the lost person; and (4) pray for a successful response by the lost person (Mark 1:16 ff., 2:14; Luke 5:1 ff.; John 1:43, 12:26). (See *Evangelistic-Praying, Great Commission Prayer, New Convert-Thanksgiving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying*).

445 - Speaking a Blessing-Prayer (Num. 6:27)

This refers to a blessor saying out loud the blessing over a recipient, knowing by faith that God will do what is said. (See various *Faith, Blessing* and *Bless* prayers).

446 - Spirit-Helped Prayer (Rom. 8:26-27)

Sometimes we need the enablement of the Holy Spirit to help us pray. We may be weak, doubtful, or impatient. The Holy Spirit will help us if we ask. He can keep us in focus, or bring to mind our prayer request, or motivate us when we want to give up. Also the Holy Spirit can take our wrongly phrased prayers and present them properly to God. (See *Anointed-Praying, Filling of the Spirit-Prayer, Holy Spirit-Praying, Promise of the Holy Spirit-Prayer, Spirit-Insight Prayer*).

447 - Spiritual-Blessing Prayer (Eph. 1:3)

Our blessing can lead us to praise God (see Eph. 1:3). (See *Spiritual Strength-Prayer* and various *Bless* prayers).

448 - Spiritual-Gift Praying (1 Peter 4:10)

This is asking God to help you discover and develop your spiritual gift, and then praying for God to use your spiritual gift in the life of others, specifically that they may develop spiritual gifts in their own unique way. It's also praying for God to use our giftedness for His service and glory (Matt. 25:14, 15; Rom. 1:11, 12:6, 8; 15:25; 1 Cor. 4:7, 7:7, 12:1 ff., 12:4, 11; 13:2; Eph. 4:11; 2 Tim 1:6; 1 Peter 4:10). (See *Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Spirit-Helped Prayer*).

449 - Spiritual-Growth Prayer (2 Peter 3:18)

We should ask God to cause us to grow spiritually as we apply the principles and discipline of spiritual growth (Pss. 1:1-3; Jer. 15:16; Mal. 4:2; Mark 4:27; Eph. 4:15; Col. 2:8-9; 1 Tim. 4:6; 2 Tim. 3:14-17; 1 Peter 2:2; 2 Peter 3:18). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Disciplined- Prayer* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

450 - Spiritual-Insight Prayer (Pss. 119:18)

Because we are spiritually blinded from sin (2 Cor. 4:3, 4), we must ask God to remove our blindness, and cause us to see spiritual things and/or truth (John 16:13). This doesn't mean God gives us knowledge we don't have; He only illuminates the truth we know or study. We must study, dig, memorize, and meditate to learn more about God from His Word (2 Tim. 2:15). (Josh. 1:8; Pss. 119:11, 18; 2 Thess. 2:11; John 12:39-40, 14:26, 16:13). (See *Blind-Prayer,* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

451 - Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer (Prov. 1:2, 3)

We can ask God to help us learn (memorize, acquire, or return) facts and information that would make us spiritually wise. The book of Proverbs teaches us to give ourselves to acquiring facts or information that we may be wise (which is the proper application of facts) (Pss. 119:88, 100; Prov. 1:5, 9:9, 12:1; 1 Cor. 10:15). (See *Insight-Prayer, Spiritual-Insight Prayer,* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

452 - Spiritual-Protective Prayer (Pss. 23:1)

God protects those who obey Him and follow His leading. The secret is relationship with God and "prayer is relationship" (Pss. 23:1, 79:13; Isa. 40:11; Jer. 23:3-4; Micah 5:2-4; John 10:11, 14, 27-28; Heb. 13:20; 1 Peter 2:25). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Unknown-Danger Prayer*).

453 - Spiritual-Stability Prayer (Eph. 5:6)

Asking God to establish us and other believers in sound doctrine, so we will not be spiritually shaken or emotionally upset by false teaching (Matt. 24:6; John 14:1, 27; Acts 20:28 ff.; Eph. 5:6; 2 Thess. 2:2). (See *Disentanglement-Prayer, Doctrinal-Prayer, Establishing Doctrine by Prayer*, and various *Spiritual* prayers).

454 - Spiritual-Strength Prayer (Rom. 1:16)

Is asking God to give us strength so we will be able to do the right thing in life. When we know what is the right thing to do, we can ask God to give us strength to do it (Pss. 110:2, 5; Rom. 1:16; 2 Cor. 4:17; Eph. 1:18, 19; 2:10, 3:7, 20; Phil. 4:14). (See *Strength and Nourishment-Prayer* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

455 - Spiritual-Truth Prayer (Titus 2:1)

This is a request for help in the process of teaching the Bible that will make people spiritually healthy. It is also a prayer for God to use the content of Scripture in the lives of others (1 Tim. 1:10; 2 Tim 1:7, 13; Titus 2:1, 8). (See *Spiritual-Insight Prayer,* and various *Spiritual* prayers).

456 - Spiritual-Understanding Prayer (Eph. 3:18)

(See *Blind-Prayer, Insight-Prayer, Spiritual-Insight Prayer*)

457 - Spiritual-Victory Prayer (2 Cor. 2:14)

This is a request to overcome sin in our life and asking God to give us power for a triumphant life for God (Pss. 106:47; Rom. 8:37; 1 Cor. 15:57; Phil. 4:13; Col. 3:15, 16). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Transforming-Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer*, and various *Victory* prayers).

458 - Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer (Col. 1:9)

This is asking God to help us use the knowledge we have so we will become wise in all we do. (See *Spiritual-Insight Prayer*, *Spiritual-Knowledge Prayer, Spiritual-Truth Prayer*).

459 - Spouse-Inspired Prayer (1 Pet. 3:9)

Sometimes our spouse understands God's plan better than we do, and we should join them in prayer. It's not a matter of who is right or wrong; doing God's plan is always right. (See *Family-Heritage Prayer*).

460 - Stability-Prayer (Eph. 4:13, 14)

This is asking God to keep us close to Christ and to the truth of Scripture so we will not be swayed nor pulled away from Christ by any temptations, false doctrine, or sin (Eph. 4:13-14). (See *Spiritual Victory-Prayer, Strength and Nourishment Prayer*).

461 - Stir Up Your Spiritual Gift-Prayer (2 Tim. 1:6)

We must stir up our spiritual gift for Christian service because every fire tends to burn itself out if not refueled continually. We stir up our spiritual gifts with Scripture and prayer (1 Tim. 6:12; 2 Tim. 1:6; 2 Peter 1:4-8; Jude 5). (See *Promise of Spiritual Giftedness-Praying, Spiritual-Gift Praying*).

462 - Storm-Prayer (Acts 27:25)

Storms will come into the life of every believer, and they will come from a variety of sources: financial, physical, business, family, and spiritual attacks from the enemy. We

must learn to pray: (1) in preparation before storms come; (2) what to do in storms; (3) how to testify in storms and after them; and (4) for strength to get through storms (Deut. 8:5; Job 5:7, 14:1, 23:10; Pss. 94:12, 119, 143; Prov. 3:11-12; Isa. 41:10; Matt. 24:9; Acts 27:25; Rom. 5:3-4; 2 Cor. 4:17; James 1:12). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Desert-Praying, Difficulties-Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Spiritual-Protective Prayer, Purifying-Prayer, Unknown-Danger Prayer*).

463 - Strength-Prayer (Gen. 17:1)

This is asking the Almighty to nourish us with Himself, because God's name *Almighty* means strength and nourishment (Gen. 17:1, 35:11, 49:25; Num. 24:4; Job 11:7; 2 Cor. 6:18; Rev. 1:8). (See *Food-Provision Praise, Provision of Food-Prayer, Table-Blessing Prayer*).

464 - Striving-Prayer (Rom. 15:30)

This is interceding with all our energy, usually because it's an extremely important request, or it's a life-or-death issue. This is praying with a burden or laboring in prayer. In *Mountain-Moving Prayer* we strive in prayer, but we know we get the request we seek. However, when we are not sure of the answer, we strive in prayer (Luke 13:24; Rom. 1:10, 15:30; 1 Thess. 3:10; 2 Tim. 2:5). (See *Interventional-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer, Reluctant Answer to Prayer*).

465 - Suffering-Prayer (1 Peter 4:12, 13)

We should pray when we suffer persecution or pain for the cause of Christ. We should pray (1) about our persecution; (2) for our testimony; (3) for grace to endure; and (4) for God to use our suffering for His glory (Luke 22:15, 24:24; Acts 3:12; Rom. 8:17; Phil. 1:29; 2 Tim. 2:12; Heb. 11:25; 1 Peter 2:20, 3:14, 4:12, 13). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Pain-Praying, Protection-Prayer, Unknown-Danger Prayer*).

466 - Supernatural-Praying (Acts 15:18)

Abraham believed in miracles, he believed God could bring dead people back to life (e.g., Isaac, Gen. 22) and God "calls those things which do not exist as though they did" (Rom. 4:17). We cannot do miracles, but God can; He can do anything He wants to do. Before you call for miracles outside of yourself, be sure God does a miracle in your life by transforming your inner person (Gen. 18:14; Luke 1:37; Acts 15:18; Rom. 4:17; Heb. 11:6). (See *Healing-Prayer, Interventional-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer* and various *Faith* prayers).

467 - Supernatural-Results Prayer (Acts 14:19-20)

Sometimes God delivers us by a miracle, such as raising Paul from the dead. At times others have been martyred (Acts 12:1). Some have had to suffer for long periods before

delivery, or they are never delivered. Some die under persecution. D. L. Moody said, "The man of God is invincible, until God is finished with him." Don't be too quick to ask for a miraculous healing; God may have other purposes for your suffering. Don't hesitate to ask for a miracle because of your doubt; God may plan to use your "prayer of faith" for deliverance. But if you ask for a miracle for the wrong reason, or the request is against Scripture, "test the spirits" (1 John 4:1). It may not be of God (2 Kings 6:13-17; Pss. 37:1-5, 91:1-13; Jer. 32:27, 33:3; John 14:12; Phil. 4:13). (See *Healing-Prayer, Interventional-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying*).

468 - Support-Prayer (Matt. 18:19)

Sometimes when you want an answer for which you pray but you lack sufficient faith, you can agree with your prayer partner because of his or her strong faith and thus you may get the answer you seek (See *Two-Prayer*).

469 - Surety-Praying (2 Peter 1:10)

Give attention to our Christian responsibilities so we can be sure of our salvation. We search our lives for doubts when we are not sure of salvation (or we doubt our salvation), and then pray to make sure we meet the qualification of salvation (Matt. 7:24, 25; Luke 6:44-45; Rom. 3:28; 2 Peter 1:10; 1 John 3:19; Rev. 22:14). (See *Confident-Praying, Honest-Prayer, Integrity-Praying Yielding-Prayer*).

470 - Surprise-Response Prayer (Rev. 1:10)

Sometimes God surprises us in prayer. He does something we don't expect. When that happens, some respond in silent gratitude, others shout happily, still others cry out in fear. We should fall at Jesus' feet and worship Him (Gen. 17:17, 18:12-14, 28:12-22; Exod. 3:1 ff., 34:5-8; Judges 6:11-23; 1 Sam. 3:1-11; Isa. 6:1-13; Jer. 1:4-10; Mark 1:16-20, 2:13-14; Acts 9:1-19; Rev. 1:10). (See *Anticipatory-Blessing Prayer, Worship-Prayer* and various *Thanksgiving* prayers).

471 - Surveillance-Prayer (Pss. 59:1-3)

We don't know when unsaved people watch us, nor do we know whether God is working in their hearts to bring them to salvation, or the evil one is motivating them to destroy us. We should pray for protection, for wisdom to do the right thing, for protection from the enemy, and for God to thwart their evil intents. (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Unknown-Danger Prayer*).

472 - Table-Blessing Prayer (Mark 6:41)

This is thanking God for the food at mealtime and asking Him to use the food to prosper the physical body. (See *Provision of Food-Prayer, Strength and Nourishment-Prayer*).

473 - Tarrying-Prayer (Luke 24:49)

God will usually answer when we wait in His presence for our answer. "Wait on the LORD; be of good courage, and He shall strengthen your heart; Wait, I say, on the LORD!" (Pss. 27:14). "I wait for You" (Pss. 25:21). The disciples were told by Jesus, "Tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high" (Luke 24:49). (See *Continued-Praying, Persistent-Prayer, Prevailing-Prayer, Waiting in Prayer*).

474 - Tears in Prayer (Luke 6:21)

Many in Scripture cried tears when praying: David (Pss. 6:6), Jeremiah (Jer. 9:1), Paul (Acts 20:19), Mary (Luke 7:36 ff.) and Jesus (Heb. 5:7). See Luke 6:21 for reasons for tears (Job 16:20; Pss. 42:3, 56:8; Isa. 16:9; Matt 5:4; Acts 20:31; 2 Cor. 2:4, 7:7 ff.). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer, Weeping-Prayer*).

475 - Temporary Answer to Prayer (Deut. 33:25)

Sometimes God doesn't permanently answer our request, but sends a short-term solution. God doesn't promise unlimited solutions to all our problems. But God does promise to help us each day in our problems. "As your days, *so shall* your strength *be*" (Deut. 33:25) (Exod. 16:16, 35; Matt. 6:11; John 6:31; 1 Tim. 6:8). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Directional Answer-Prayer, "No" Answer to Prayer*).

476 - Temptation-Victory Prayer (Luke 22:40)

Some great Bible heroes gave in to temptation, e.g., Noah got drunk, Abraham lied, Moses was egotistical, David committed adultery, Elijah got despondent, and Peter denied the Lord. The believer is expected to overcome temptation (1 Cor. 10:13) and is to pray to be victorious over temptation (Pss. 124:7; Jer. 29:11; Luke 16:26; John 10:28; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:10; James 5:11; 1 Peter 1:5; 2 Peter 2:9). (See various *Victory* prayers).

477 - Test the Spirits-Prayer (1 John 4:1)

We are exhorted to "test the spirits" when we are tempted to do something contrary to Scripture. This could be satan tempting us to do something that is wrong. Also, we should "test our own spirit" for sometimes our thinking may be wrong. This is a prayer against the false teaching that Jesus Christ didn't come in the flesh. It's also a prayer that false teachers will be exposed and rejected (Deut. 13:1-3; 1 Kings 18:19-21; Isa. 56:10-11; Matt. 7:14-15; Rom. 16:17; 2 Peter 2:1; 1 John 2:18-22; 2 John 7). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Insight-Prayer, Spiritual-Insight Prayer, Warfare-Praying*).

478 - Testimony-Prayer (Acts 22:3)

When Paul couldn't preach, he shared his testimony of how God saved him. Thus, Paul's life became a sermon. In the same way, our life should be a sermon, and we should tell others what God has done for us. A testimony includes (1) what we were before salvation; (2) what happened at our salvation experience; and (3) what difference Christ makes to us now. We should pray for opportunities to share our testimony and for God to use our testimony in the lives of others (2 Kings 5:1-4; Prov. 11:30; Dan. 12:3; Matt. 28:19-20; John 4:7; Acts 8:30, 22:3; 2 Tim. 2:2). (See *Evangelism Prayer, John the Baptizer Fast, Soul Winner's-Prayer*).

479 - Testing Response of Prayer (James 1:12)

God allows tests in our life to determine our love and obedience to Him. He also uses tests to make us repent and change our ways. Thus tests help peel away bad attitudes, habits, and sins. In the final analysis, tests should teach us something about God, ourselves, and how to live (Gen. 44:1-4; James 1:12; 1 Peter 1:7). (See *Pain-Praying, Suffering-Prayer*).

480 - Thanksgiving for Deliverance-Prayer (2 Cor. 2:14)

This is being grateful for deliverance from past sins and depraved living. (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Overcoming-Prayer*).

481 - Thanksgiving for God's Constant Love-Prayer (Pss. 106:1)

Our human response to God's love for us should be thanksgiving. In love He punishes us to correct us and bring us back to Himself. God's constant love is seen in His continual work in our lives to transform us into the image of His Son, Jesus Christ (Pss. 103:17, 106:1, 119:68; Matt. 19:17; Rom. 5:20-21). (See *Gratitude-Prayer, Praise-Prayer, Praise-Worship* and various *Thanksgiving* prayers).

482 - Thanksgiving for God's Past Work in Our Lives-Prayer (Pss. 105:1)

We should express gratitude for God's past work in our lives when He guided us, forgave us, used us, and protected us (1 Chron. 16:7 ff., 29:3; Job 5:2 ff.; Pss. 91:1-12, 105:1; Isa. 12:5-6, 42:10-12). (See *Gratitude-Prayer,* and various *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* prayers).

483 - Thanksgiving for Redemption-Prayer (Pss. 107:2)

We should give outer expression with our mouths for the inward salvation we've experienced. The fact God has redeemed us from sin should motivate us to tell everyone about what God has done for us (Pss. 31:5, 107:2, 119:46; Jer. 15:16; Matt. 10:18; Acts 4:13-14; 1 Peter 3:15). (See various *Thanksgiving* and *Praise* prayers).

484 - Thanksgiving-Prayer (Eph. 1:16)

This is giving God a great crescendo of thanks and praise for everything He has done for others and for us. Just as we should grow in every area of our Christian lives, so we should grow in our giving of thanks to God (1 Thess. 1:3-4, 3:9; 2 Thess. 1:3, 2:13). (See various *Thanksgiving* prayers).

485 - Thirst-Praying (Rev. 22:17)

This is recognizing our unquenchable spiritual need that can be filled by only God Himself. We come to God and His Word for the supply of life-giving spiritual water, and for enjoyable fellowship with Him (Pss. 42:1, 2; Matt. 5:5; John 4:13-15, 7:37; 1 Peter 2:2; Rev. 7:16). (See *Hunger-Prayer, Well-Digging Prayer*).

486 - Today's Response in Prayer (Heb. 3:7)

We must pray to serve God effectively *today* because we cannot serve Him in the past or future. We can only obey God *now* (Pss. 95:7; Isa. 55:6; 2 Cor. 6:1-2; Heb. 3:7; James 4:13-15). (See *Daily-Prayer, First Prayer Each Day, Morning-Prayer*).

487 - Tongue-Discipline Prayer (James 3:8)

God has designed prayer to change our hearts so we can properly serve and glorify Him. But our tongue often gets in the way and hurts the things we would do for God. But the tongue is only an instrument of the heart, so we must pray for a transformed heart to have a disciplined tongue and disciplined body. Because God will punish all lies, we must discipline ourselves to tell the truth (Pss. 10:3, 12:3-4, 17:10, 64:3, 73:8-9; Prov. 12:18, 15:1, 2; 16:27, 26:20-28; Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:11; James 3:8; 1 Peter 3:10; 2 Peter 2:18). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Old-Nature Praying, Transformation-Prayer*).

488 - Torn-Veil Prayer (Mark 15:38)

The "torn-veil" is God's invitation to approach Him in prayer. The "torn veil" in the temple when Christ died is a "symbolic message" that we now have immediate access to God (Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:16). We can act on Jesus' invitation, "Come to Me" (Matt. 11:28) and pray at any time or in any situation (Exod. 26:31-34, 40:21; Lev. 16:2; Matt. 27:51; Heb. 4:14-16, 6:19, 9:12, 10:12; Rev. 22:17). (See *Intercessor's-Prayer, Jesus' Name-Prayer, New Covenant-Praying*, and various *Worship* prayers).

489 – Transfer-Faith Praying (1 Sam. 7:8)

This is transferring the faith of the leader to the followers, and sometimes *vice versa* (1 Sam. 14:7), when both agree together to express faith. Apparently, Jonathan's faith influenced his armor-bearer so they together won a great victory over a large number

of enemies, "Do all that is in your heart. Go then; here I am with you, according to your heart" (1 Sam. 14:7) (Amos 3:3; Matt. 18:19; Acts 2:1-4, 5:41-42). (See *Agreement-Prayer, Consensus-Prayer, Fellowship-Praying, Oneness-Prayer*).

490 - Transformation-Prayer (Rom. 8:29)

Fundamentally, the purpose of prayer—regardless of the various forms it takes—is for us to establish and maintain a relationship with God. When we establish a daily prayer time and seek to enter into a relationship with the Lord, we will be changed. Often, people aren't transformed through prayer because they make prayer something other than a relationship with God. When we experience the presence of God in our life, we *will* change for we cannot come face to face with God without being transformed in some way. If we don't allow prayer to change us, we become severely limited in what our future prayers can accomplish. Prayer must change us before it can change our circumstances. As we come into the presence of God, we must first submit to Him and all He wants us to do. Then treat prayer as a personal discipline that will transform us into dedicated disciples of Jesus Christ. Next we need to allow the love of God to flow into our lives to transform us and then share that love with those around us. Prayer focuses on God, which draws us toward God's transformational presence. "And we know that all things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose...to be transformed to the image of His Son" (Rom. 8:28-29, *ELT*). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Fruitful-Praying, Supernatural-Praying, Triumphant-Praying*).

491 - Trial-Prayer (1 Peter 1:7)

We should pray when we suffer trials, knowing we are being purified of sin and character flaws. Trials make us more like Jesus Christ (Job 23:12; Pss. 66:10, 12; Prov. 17:3; Isa. 43:10; Mal. 3:3; James 1:3; 1 Peter 1:7; Rev. 2:10). (See *Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer, Spiritual-Protective Prayer*).

492 - Trinity-Response Prayer (Matt. 3:16-17)

We believe in one God in three eternal persons: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. They are equal in nature but separate in person. The Father sent Jesus into the world (John 3:16), and the Father and Son sent the Holy Spirit (John 15:26) (Matt. 28:19; 2 Cor. 13:14). (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Face-Down Worship, Praise-Worthy Prayer, Worthy-Worship*).

493 - Triumphant-Praying (2 Cor. 2:14)

We should rejoice in God for His greatness and power and for the victories He has accomplished in our lives. A triumphant prayer recognizes God's perfect plan in our lives and submits to His will. (See *Fruitful-Praying* and various *Victory* prayers).

494 - Trouble-Praying (2 Cor. 1:4)

Trouble is a by-product of life. "Yet man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upward" (Job 5:7). How we deal with our troubles determines the quality of our life and the production of our hands. So we should (1) be prepared for trouble; (2) be tough so problems won't overwhelm us; (3) learn from each problem so we won't face it again; (4) have a strategy to handle all future problems; and (5) be willing to help others in their trouble (Gen. 3:17-19; Pss. 90:8-9; Eccl. 1:8, 2:22, 5:15-17; John 15:18; Heb. 12:3-12; 1 Peter 4:12-19). (See *Pain-Praying, Protection-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer, Testing Response of Prayer*).

495 - True-Heart Praying (Heb. 10:22)

We are exhorted to "draw near with a true heart" (Heb. 10:22). We come sincerely to the Father with a heart endeavor to know Him intimately. We come in full assurance that God exists, and that He will answer when we diligently seek Him. And we are to come to God with a pure conscience that is cleansed from guilt. (Pss. 73:28; Isa. 29:13; Jer. 30:21; Heb. 10:22; James 4:8). (See *Confession-Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer, Honest-Praying, Intimacy-Prayer*).

496 - True-Worshipers Prayer (Pss. 15:1)

Believers should live a God-conscious life so that when they enter the presence of God, their words match their actions (Pss. 1:1-4, 15:1, 24:3-5, 27:4, 84:4,10; 90:1-2, 91:1; Heb. 10:25). (See *Face-Down Worship, Praise Worship-of God, Praise-Worthy Prayer*).

497 - Trusting-Prayer (Rom. 11:33)

The human mind can never understand all that is revealed by God about Himself, and there is much about God we will never know or understand. Yet we worship God by faith, which means we trust Him for all He is, and we surrender our minds to worship His greatness (Pss. 107:8; Prov. 25:3; Rom. 11:33; Eph. 1:7, 3:18-21; Col. 1:27; Rev. 19:1-7). (See *Believing-Prayer, Faith-Praying, Faith-Based Praying, Possibility-Praying,* and various *Worship* prayers).

498 - Truth in Love Commitment-Prayer (2 John 1)

We should pray for a biblical balance between truth and love, so that we are grounded equally in both truth and love (John 8:32; Gal. 2:5, 14; 3:1; Col. 1:5; 2 Thess. 2:13; 1 Tim. 2:4; 1 John 2:21). (See *Love-Expressing Prayer, Truth-Praying*).

499 - Truth-Living Prayer (3 John 4)

An intercessor must know truth and then ask for strength and wisdom to live the truth. Since truth is what is consistent with and corresponds to the laws of the universe, we

should pray to live a consistent life that reflects the laws of God (Hosea 14:9; Mal. 2:6; Gal. 2:14; Eph. 5:2; 1 John 1:6, 7, 2:6; 3 John4). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Truth-Praying*).

500 - Truth-Praying (John 18:32)

We cannot pray a lie in God's presence, for God is light, and no darkness can remain in His presence. In God's presence we cannot think a lie, believe a lie, nor speak a lie. Pilate stood before Jesus and asked, "What is truth?" not realizing he was standing before absolute truth. Then Pilate spoke the truth, "I find no fault in Him" (John 18:38-40). That's a truthful statement because there is no sin in Jesus. He is the perfect God-man (Matt. 27:18-21; Mark 15:11; Luke 23:4-16; 1 Peter 1:19, 2:22-23). (See *True-Worshiping Prayer, Truth-Living Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

501 - Two-Prayer (Matt. 18:19)

God answers when two people agree and pray together for the request they both want from God. "Again I say to you that if two of you agree on earth concerning anything that they ask, it will be done for them by My Father in heaven" (Matt. 18:19). (See *Support-Prayer, Transfer-Faith Praying, Two-Pray Praying*).

502 - Two-Way Worship Prayer (John 4:23)

As we give worship to God, we enjoy His presence. Jesus said, "The Father is seeking such to worship Him" (John 4:23), which means He comes with His presence when we worship Him. Therefore, worship is a two-way relationship (Pss. 100, 103:1, 104:1, 107:1; John 4:23; 1 Tim. 1:17). (See *Face-Down Worship, Worship-Prayer,* and various *Worship* prayers).

503- Unanswered-Prayer (James 4:3)

Unanswered prayer usually distresses us and many times it weakens our faith. That's because we view prayer from our perspective and not from God's point of view. When our prayers are not answered, we should ask ourselves, "Lord, what are You teaching me?" Maybe we have to go back to the beginning of prayer to learn the nature and purpose of prayer. God answers our prayers in three ways: yes, no, wait, and sometimes He says, "You've got to be kidding!" Sometimes we ask for things that would go against the very nature of God if He were to answer those requests. Nor can we ask God to go against the laws of nature. The same is true of prayers that contradict the nature of time. God doesn't undo history. On other occasions, God may not answer our requests because He wants us to *do something about the issue*. Sometimes God doesn't answer our prayers because we ask for things that are contrary to His plans. Some prayers are not answered because they fall within the "mystery of God," that is, God's unknown purpose (Rom. 11:33-36) (Job

27:8-9, 35:12; Pss. 18:41, 66:18; Isa. 1:15; Jer. 11:11; Micah 3:4; Zech. 7:13; 1 John 3:22). (See *Deliverance-Prayer, Unbiblical-Prayer,* and various "*No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

504 - Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer (Heb. 3:12)

We must recognize that we have an old nature that pulls us away from God and causes us to doubt. Therefore, we ask God to keep our hearts strong in faith, and we must be faithful to study the Scriptures, and to continually attend worship services, and to be faithful in serving Him (Matt 13:58, 17:20; Mark 9:24; Rom. 4:20; 1 Tim. 1:13; Heb. 3:12, 4:11). (See *Temptation-Victory Prayer, Unpardonable Sin Unto Death-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

505 - Unbiblical-Prayer (James 4:3)

Sometimes we approach God with the wrong spirit or ask for selfish things, or we approach God with a sinful desire. God doesn't answer prayers that are contrary to His will, or that violate the laws of nature. We must pray for (1) our spiritually blinded eyes to be opened to see things as they are; (2) for our selfish spirit to be crucified with Christ; and (3) for wisdom to pray with the proper motivation (Job 27:8-10; Prov. 1:28; Isa. 1:15-16, 59:1-2; Matt. 20:22; Luke 15:12, 16:1 ff.; James 4:3). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Unanswered-Prayer,* and various "*No" Answers to Prayer* prayers).

506 - Unknown-Answer to Prayer (Mark 9:24)

Sometimes we don't know if God has answered our prayer, or the extent of God's answers. And other times we may never know how God answered our prayer until we get to heaven. (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Diversionary Answer to Prayer*).

507 - Unknown-Danger Prayer (Gen. 15:1)

This is when we ask God to protect us when we can't protect ourselves, and we don't know we are in danger. We ask God to protect us physically, spiritually, financially, socially, and reputation-wise. This is a prayer of thanksgiving to God for the ways He protects His people from dangers they know and don't know. God removed Adam and Eve from the garden to protect them from further complications in their relationship with Him. (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Triumphant-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

508 - Unlimited-Prayer (Phil. 4:13)

Because our strength is in Jesus Christ, we can pray for anything Christ can do. Since prayer is a relationship with God, we can do all things through prayer that Christ can do (Phil. 4:13). (See *Interventional-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Supernatural-Praying*).

509 - Unpardonable-Sin Prayer (Matt. 12:30-32)

What sin is so great that God would not pardon it? There are several views: (1) to attribute the miracles of Christ to satan, and this could be done only when Christ lived on earth; (2) to curse the Holy Spirit; (3) to continually sin so that one's heart becomes so hardened that he couldn't be saved; (4) to commit suicide because the person couldn't repent and ask forgiveness; (5) to die without receiving Christ which means the person rejected (blasphemed) every endeavor of the Holy Spirit to bring them to salvation (Isa. 1:18; Mark 3:29; John 8:44; 1 Cor. 11:29-30; Heb. 6:4, 10:26-29; 1 John 1:9, 5:17-18). (See *Doubting God's Ability-Prayer, Sin Unto Death-Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer*).

510 - Unsaved-Prayer (Acts 10:2)

God does not honor the prayers of unsaved people, nor does He hear the prayers of people in world religions that reject Jesus. Yet when any person outside Christ honestly seeks God and prays, God will hear them and save them when they pray in Jesus' name (Pss. 66:18; Isa. 59:1-2; Matt. 7:21-23; John 8:32, 10:9, 14:6; Acts 4:12, 10:2). (See *Atheist-Prayer, False-Prayer, God Haters'-Prayer*).

511 - Urgent-Prayer (Luke 11:1-11)

Sometimes we need an answer right away, or we feel an urgent need to pray and so we pray with a sense of urgency. (See *Death-Facing Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Desperate-Prayer, Emergency-Prayer, Priority-Faith Prayer*).

512 - Useful-Vessel Prayer (2 Tim. 2:20-21)

Christians are likened to all kinds of vessels, made from different materials, designed for different jobs. We should pray to be a clean vessel so we can be used of God, that is, "cleanses himself" (Acts 9:15; Rom. 9:21; 1 Cor. 3:16-17; 2 Tim. 2:20-21; 1 Peter 2:5). (See *Blocked-Prayer, Clean-Conscience Prayer, Hindrances to Prayer, Purity-Prayer, Yielding-Prayer*).

513 - Victorious-Results in Prayer (James 1:12)

Our faith will be tested in many ways, and when we are victorious, we can pray with more authority and confidence. We will probably get more answers to our prayers after we are victorious, than before (Job 5:7, 13:15, 14:1; Pss. 94:12; Prov. 3:11-12; Heb. 12:5; James 1:12). (See *Confident-Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Overcoming-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

514 - Victory Over Doubt-Prayer (Mark 11:23)

The cycle of doubt and despondency may be broken in a person's life by intercessory prayer. In a tangible answer to prayer, God may use things, events, testimony, or other things to break doubt or dependency (Gen. 45:26-28; Pss. 85:6; Hosea 6:2). (See *Doubting God's Ability Prayer, Unbelief-Hindrance to Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

515 - Victory Over Temptation-Prayer (Heb. 2:18)

A prayer to be victorious over temptation with Jesus' help (Matt. 6:13; Luke 4:13, 22:40; 1 Cor. 10:13; Heb. 2:18; James 1:12). (See *Temptation-Victory Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

516 - Victory over Trials-Prayer (James 1:12)

Knowing our faith will be tried or tested in many ways, we can pray for victory with authority and confidence. We will probably get more answers to our prayers after we are victorious over the test, than before. Remember, temptations come from satanic evil that wants to destroy us; but tests and trials come from God to strengthen us and validate our faith (Job 5:7, 13:15, 14:1; Pss. 94:12; Prov. 3:11-12; Heb. 12:5; James 1:12). (See *Pain-Praying, Protection-Prayer, Unknown Danger-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

517 - Victory-Prayer (2 Cor. 2:14)

We can claim God's triumph over any internal or external conflicts in our life. (See *Triumphant-Prayer* and various *Victory* prayers).

518 - Vindication-Praise Prayer (Pss. 20:7)

We should praise God when He has vindicated us because we have done right, or He has given us victory in any area of our life (Pss. 34:22, 125:1, 146:5; Jer. 17:7-8; 2 Cor. 2:14; James 5:10-11). (See *Fruit-Producing Prayer, Reward-Prayer,* and various *Victory* prayers).

519 - Vision-Motivated Prayer (Prov. 29:18)

God can give us a vision of how we can serve Him, where we can serve Him, and sometimes God gives what He wants us to accomplish. We must ask God to help us accomplish the impossible in serving Him. We must surrender our life to accomplish the vision God has given us (Gen. 29:18; Prov. 29:18; Hab. 2:1-4). (See *Dream-Motivated Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Vision-Praying* and various *Faith* prayers).

520 - Vision-Praying (Josh. 14:12)

Caleb trusted God to help him victoriously conquer the mountain that was his life-long vision. "It may be that the LORD *will be* with me, and I shall be able to drive them out"

(Josh. 14:12). It's one thing to have a dream/vision, but that is only the beginning. It's another step forward when you pray and work for your dream/vision. To capture your dream/vision involves God and man working together. By faith you have to work hard and work smart. And as you pray for your dream/vision, you have to know how God works to make your dream a possibility. (See *Dream-Motivated Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Possibility-Praying,* and various *Faith* prayers).

521 - Vow-Prayer (Rev. 10:6)

A vow is a solemn promise made to God in prayer. Usually this involves what the intercessor will do in specific service, behavior, or repentance to get an answer to prayer. Those who vow to God must keep their promise. Vowing in prayer does not mean *bargaining* with God, the *Prayer Vow* is only for those who want to go deeper into the presence of God and completely commit themselves to doing God's will. Actually, the *Prayer Vow* deals with our ability to choose. Not only must we choose God, we must also choose to do what God reveals. We should also be cautious before rushing into making vows in prayer. Making vows is permitted by God, but we need to be extremely cautious that we don't make unwise vows. Just as every disobedience weakens our will, every obedience strengthens our resolve. A reasonable place to begin might be to make a vow to be consistent in our daily quiet time with God. "But I will sacrifice to You with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay what I have vowed. Salvation *is* of the LORD" (Jonah 2:9) (Gen. 28:20-22; Judg. 11:30-31, 39; 1 Sam. 1:11; Pss. 132:2-5; Prov. 20:25; Acts 18:18; Rev. 10:6). (See *Choosing God's Core Values in Prayer, Commitment-Prayer*).

522 - Vow-Violation Prayer (Pss. 65:1)

This prayer deals with a violated vow or incomplete obedience concerning anything we promise to do for God. When we complete a fast and finish its time vow, we break our vow and eat. When we don't complete our vow-fast, or eat something contrary to our vow, it's called violating our vow-fast. We ask God's forgiveness for disobedience and God's help to completely obey anything we promised in the future. What should we do if we have made a vow and then fall? Get up and start again (Gen. 31:3, 9-13; Judg. 11:30; 1 Sam. 1:11; Pss. 65:1, 76:11; Eccl. 5:4; Jonah 2:9). (See *Commitment Prayer, Forgiveness-Prayer, Repentance-Prayer, Sin-Stopping Prayer, Sin-Realization Prayer*).

523 - Waiting Anxiously in Prayer (Pss. 42:6)

When we don't know what to do, or what to think, it's then we must trust what we know about God. We know He is there when we can't feel Him. We know He loves us when we don't experience it. We know He will do good because He said so. Trust is our solid rock assurance that what the Bible promises is true. So we must trust through our deep anxiety, knowing God's "deep" mystery is so much greater than our present "deep" anxiety (1 Sam.

30:6; Pss. 35:14, 43:5, 55:4, 5; 61:2, 142:2, 3; 143:3, 4; Mark 14:33, 34). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Reserved-Prayer, Wait-Prayer*).

524 - Waiting for Christ's Return-Prayer (1 Thess. 1:10)

This is our constant prayer in light of His any-moment return. Because He promised to return for us, we should live each moment to be pleasing to Him when He appears. We must ask God to make us patient for His coming when dealing with opportunities to serve Him. Also it's a prayer to help us properly anticipate His return, and in our renewed anticipation, to deal appropriately with sin and trials on earth (John 14:1-3; Rom. 8:24; Gal. 5:5; Phil. 3:20; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Thess. 3:5; 2 Tim. 4:8; Titus 2:13; 2 Peter 3:12-14). (See *Anticipating His Return, Waiting in Prayer, Watchful-Prayer*).

525 - Waiting in Prayer (Acts 1:14)

When the disciples asked Jesus when He would return, He answered, "It is not for you to know the times or the seasons" (Acts 1:7), but to "tarry in the city of Jerusalem" (Luke 24:49). So "these all continued with one accord in prayer and supplication" (Acts 1:14). There are several ways to interpret this command to "tarry": (1) the Pentecostal urge to "tarry" in prayer at a church altar—or anywhere—until one receives what the disciples got on Pentecost, that is, the baptism of the Holy Spirit and the gift of speaking in tongues; (2) the dispensationalist view is that we will not know when Christ will return, but the emphasis is on "wait" and "look" for the second coming of Jesus, and to pray for His power in this age; and (3) the view that dedicated Christians will search for Jesus in prayer to know Him more intimately (Job 11:7; John 5:39; Acts 1:14, 12:5; Rom. 8:27; 1 Cor. 2:11). (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Reluctant Answer to Prayer, Wait-Prayer*).

526 - Wait-Prayer (Pss. 27:14)

When we are praying to God we must realize that the timing may be wrong for an immediate answer. So we wait for His answer in His time. (See *Delayed Answer-Prayer, Non-Anxiety Prayer, Peaceful-Living Prayer, Reluctant Answers to Prayer*).

527 - Walk in the Spirit-Prayer (Gal. 5:16, 25)

To please God we seek help from the Holy Spirit to help us walk daily and live above the temptations of sin (Rom. 13:13; Gal. 5:16; 2 Cor. 5:7; Eph. 2:10, 5:1-2; Phil. 3:16; Col. 1:10, 2:6-7; 1 Thess. 2:12; 1 John 1:7). (See *Crucifixion-Prayer, Filling of the Spirit Prayer, Holy Spirit-Prayer, Spiritual Strength-Prayer*).

528 - Warfare-Protection Prayer (Rev. 12:7)

Believers recognize that we face continued opposition from satan, demons, and evil forces. This is not a "once-for-all" battle, but a constant prayer for protection from satan and for

continued victory over His constant attacks against us (Matt. 16:18; Rom. 8:38; Eph. 6:12; Col. 2:15; 1 John 4:4; Rev. 12:7). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance-Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection-Prayer*).

529 - Watchful-Prayer (1 Peter 4:7)

We should be ready at all times to meet the Lord because we don't know when He is coming. Only as we are "clear minded and self-controlled" can we pray effectively (Matt. 24:42, 25:13, 26:38; Rom. 12:12; Col. 4:2; 2 Tim. 4:5; 1 Peter 4:7; Rev. 16:15). (See *Anticipating His Return, Waiting for Christ's Return, Waiting in Prayer*).

530 - Weeping-Prayer (Acts 20:31)

Tears demonstrate our sincerity and genuine response to God. When God sees our tears, He recognizes our honest response before Him and will more likely answer our prayers. Perhaps we don't weep more often because: (1) our heart has become hardened by sin; (2) we've forgotten the reality of Jesus' presence in our life; (3) we have unconfessed sin in our life; (4) we've stopped studying the Scriptures; or (5) we are preoccupied with other concerns. Perhaps when we realize we've lost the presence of Jesus, as did Mary, then we too would weep (John 20:15) (Gen. 43:30; Num. 8:9; 1 Sam. 1:8; Pss. 126:5, 126:6; Eccl. 3:4; Ezek. 10:1; Luke 7:38, 22:62; John 11:35; Acts 20:31). (See *Abandonment-Prayer, Suffering-Prayer, Tears in Prayer*).

531 - Well-Digging Prayer (Pss. 84:6)

This is asking God to help you dig a well to find spiritual water to refresh your empty souls when we are thirsty to know God (Pss. 23:5, 34:8, 66:12, 84:6-7; Isa. 55:1-3; John 4:14, 6:35, 7:37-39; Rev. 22:17). (See *Fellowship with Jesus-Prayer, Intimacy-Prayer, Searching for God in Prayer, Thirst-Praying*).

532 - Widow's Fast and Prayer (Isa. 58:7)

The Widow's fast is "to share your bread with the hungry" and to care for the poor (Isa. 58:7), which means meeting the humanitarian needs of others. God sent the hungry prophet Elijah to a poor, starving widow—ironically, so the widow could provide food for Elijah. Just as Elijah's presence resulted in food for the widow of Zarephath, so presenting ourselves before God in prayer and fasting can be the motivation to provide for the humanitarian needs of others. (See *Fasting-Prayer, Mountain-Moving Prayer, Others-Prayer*).

533 - Will of God-Prayer (Eph. 5:17)

Because God has a plan for our life, we should pray earnestly to find His plan or will, and then ask for strength and wisdom to do it (Rom. 12:1; Eph. 5:17). (See *Guidance-Prayer, Yielding to God Prayer*).

534 - Wisdom-Directed Prayer (James 3:8)

Asking God to make us faithful and effective with the knowledge and wisdom we know (Prov. 1:5, 8:33, 9:12, 13:20; Dan. 2:21; Matt. 7:24; 1 Cor. 6:5; Gal. 6:4). (See *Insight-Prayer, Knowing-God Prayer, Spiritual-Truth Prayer, Spiritual-Wisdom Prayer, Will of God-Prayer*).

535 - Word-Praying (John 1:1, 14)

Jesus is the eternal Word of God (1) who communicates the majesty of God to us; (2) who brings us the message of salvation; (3) who shows all the attributes and nature of the Father. Worship is our only response to this revelation of Him (John 1:1-3, 14, 18; Col. 1:13-20; 1 John 1:1; Rev. 1:4-18). (See *Bible-Praying, Scripture-Praying*).

536 - Worker's-Prayer (2 Tim. 2:15)

This is a request to do our best in all tasks we do, and in whatever circumstances we find ourselves. It is a request for success in work, but also a prayer for God to be glorified in our work (Mark 14:6; John 17:4; Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 3:13-15, 15:58, 16:10; Gal. 6:4; Col. 1:10; 2 Thess. 3:10-12; 2 Tim. 2:15; Titus 3:1; Heb. 13:21). (See *Laziness-Corrective Prayer, Servanthood-Prayer, Service-Prayer*).

537 - World-Rejecting Prayer (1 John 2:15)

We must recognize that we have an old nature that tempts us to the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes (things), and sinful pride. In prayer we must reject the world, the flesh, and the devil, and then choose to follow Jesus. This is a prayer to keep ourselves pure from the domination of lust (Josh. 7:21; Pss. 73:6, 78:18, 30; Prov. 6:25; Matt. 4:8, 5:28; Rom. 13:14; James 3:16; 1 John 2:15). (See *Clean-Conscience Praying, Holiness-Prayer, Purity-Praying, Sin-Stopping Prayer, Yielding to God Prayer*).

538 - Worship-Jesus Prayer (Rev. 1:6)

The total response of the heart to Jesus when His goodness and greatness are revealed to us. Because Jesus has all power, authority, and glory, we must respond by worshiping Him with all that's within us (Pss. 72:18-19; Dan. 4:34; Phil. 2:11; 1 Tim. 6:16; Heb. 13:21; 1 Peter 4:11, 5:11; 2 Peter 3:18; Jude 25; Rev. 1:6). (See various *Praise* and *Jesus* prayers).

539 - Worship-Ministry Prayer (Heb. 13:15)

We should minister to God with our worship by praise, music, service to others, and direct worship of God. We worship by giving God our time, talents, and service (Gen. 24:26; Exod. 12:27; 2 Sam. 12:20; Job. 1:20; Heb. 1:14; Rev. 5:14). (See *Casting-Crowns Worship, Face-Down Worship, Worship-Prayer*).

540 - Worshiping God in the Backyard (Pss. 134)

When David brought the Sacred Chest to Jerusalem, he put it on Mt. Zion (Pss. 134:3). The ark was not in the tabernacle which was at Gibeon, miles from Jerusalem. The ark was placed in Zion which is connected to David's palace (that is, in David's backyard; see 1 Chron. 16:37-18:5). Zion was the place of worship (Pss. 134). The tabernacle at Gibeon was the place to sacrifice for sins. The New Testament calls this the tabernacle of David (see Acts 15:16), meaning we don't have to worship in a place (the temple or tabernacle) but that we can worship anyplace, as David did in his backyard. We learn worship from Pss. 134 (Pss. 100, 134, 145-150; John 4:24; Heb. 13). (See various *Worship* prayers).

541 - Worship-Prayer (John 4:23)

The one thing God won't legitimately do is worship Himself. He has created all things to reflect His glory and we must reflect His glory in our worship of Him. Worship is giving the *worthship* to God for who He is and what He has done. We come to God to exalt and magnify God and bow in His presence to worship Him. We must worship God in "spirit," which means our spirit is completely focused on God. Also we come in "truth," which means we come according to the principles of prayer taught in the Word of God. (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Face-Down Worship, Pleasant-Smelling Prayer, True-Worshipers Prayer*).

542 - Worship-Roar Prayer (Rev. 19:6)

The spontaneous and unrestrained shout of praise, adoration, and worship to God. Since Christ must be magnified in all parts of our being, at times we can't control ourselves, so we shout our worship to God that sounds like the roar of thunder or a mighty waterfall (Ezek. 1:24, 43:2; Job 40:9; Pss. 29:3, 77:18, 100:1; Rev. 19:6). (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Face-Down Worship, Loud-Rejoicing, Singing-Prayer,* and various *Worship* prayers).

543 - Worthy-Praying (Rev. 4:11)

When we realize that the only One worthy of our worship and adoration is God, we come to God to worship Him. Then we ask God to make us worthy of coming into His presence to offer our petitions to Him. Technically, nothing we do makes us worthy (John 14:23; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17; Col. 1:27; 2 Thess. 1:11). (See *Worship Ministry-Prayer,* and various *Worship* prayers).

544 - Worthy-Worship Prayer (Rev. 5:9)

The title deed of heaven and earth could not be opened until Jesus the Lamb of God was slain to break satan's power, both over individuals and the earth. As a result, those in heaven cried, "Worthy" in worship to Jesus Christ. Now we worship God for His plan of

the ages, and we worship God for His power that redeems all things, both believers and the universe (Gen. 3:17-19; Isa. 11:1-11; Ezek. 37:11-14; Rom. 8:18-25; Rev. 5:5, 22:1). (See *Crown-Casting Worship, Face-Down Worship, Worship-Praise, Worship-Prayer*).

545 - Wrestling-Prayer (Eph. 6:10-12)

Wrestling may involve a struggle with an old nature or it may involve wrestling with evil, demons, or satan himself. *Wresting Prayer* may involve constant petition, or "wordless" fervent intercession in God's presence when both God and we know what must be done. It involves persistence and a will to not give up until the answer comes (Dan. 10:1-14; 1 Cor. 9:25-27; 2 Tim. 2:5; Heb. 12:1-4). (See *Defensive-Warfare Prayer, Deliverance Prayer, Hedge-Protection Prayer, Protection Prayer, Sin-Realization Prayer, Warfare Protection Prayer*).

546 - Written-Prayer (1 Chron. 4:10)

Just as poets can capture their feelings and experiences in words, so written prayers can capture the deepest yearnings of our hearts. However, we should not rule out our spontaneity or conversation in prayer. Writing our prayers breaks us of meaningless repetitious prayers, and helps us become more focused on the actual substance of our requests. However, there are a few implied weaknesses when we begin reducing our heart's passion into words. Sometimes we read them without understanding the meaning behind the words. Every day we have new needs, no written prayer will be relevant to tomorrow's needs. Also, writing out our prayers can also cause us to focus on grammar and syntax instead of expressing the deep needs of our heart. (See *First Prayer Each Day, Jesus' Prayer, Lord's-Prayer, Silent-Prayer*).

547 - Wrong Motives in Prayer (James 4:3)

There are prayers we shouldn't ask God knowing the motives of our heart and wrong prayers are usually selfish. "You ask and do not receive because you ask amiss, that you may spend *it* on your pleasures" (James 4:3). (See *False-Prayer, Hypocritical-Prayer, Pretend-Praying, Questionable-Praying*).

548 - Yearning-Prayer (Pss. 63:1)

The greatest yearning of a person is for God. The problem is many are hungry and thirsty but don't know what will satisfy them. Yearning for God involves: (1) searching for God in the Word and prayers; (2) emptying our hearts of the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life; (3) showing intimate fellowship with Christ; and (4) resting in His presence (Pss. 27:4, 8; 42:1, 2; 63:1; Isa. 55:1-3; Matt. 11:28-30; John 4:14, 8:12, 15:1-7). (See *Hunger-Prayer, Thirst-Praying, Well-Digging Prayer*).

549 - Yielding-Prayer (Luke 22:42)

Sometimes we must give up what we seek in prayer because what we want may not be in God's plan for our life. We must trust the wisdom of God and ask Him for His grace to live whatever results He sends. We must pray "not My will, but Yours, be done" (Luke 22:42). When we recognize God has a plan for our life, we must yield to God to accomplish that plan (Gen. 37, 50:20; Pss. 48:1-2; Jer. 24:5, 7; Rom. 8:28; 2 Cor. 4:15-17, 5:1; Phil. 1:19-21; James 1:3-4; 1 Peter 1:7-8). (See *Commitment-Prayer, Guidance-Prayer, Service-Prayer, Will of God-Prayer*).